

# LETTERS OF SAMUEL RUTHERFORD - VOLUME 1

by Samuel Rutherford

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*The first volume of letters from the Scottish Reformed minister Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661), offering spiritual counsel, encouragement, and theological instruction to individual believers and congregations with warm pastoral concern and biblical grounding.*

99 Chapters

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## 0.1. Preface

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### PREFACE.

Most justly does the old Preface to the earlier Editions begin by telling the Reader that “These Letters have no need of any man’s epistle commendatory, the great Master having given them one, written by His own hand on the hearts of all who favour the things of God.” Every one who knows these “Letters” at all, is aware of their most peculiar characteristic, namely, the discovery they present of the marvellous intercourse carried on between the writer’s soul and his God. This Edition will be found to be the most complete that has hitherto appeared. It is the same as that of 1863, in two vols., with two slight alterations, viz. the footnotes are for the most part removed to the Glossary, and a few of the notices are condensed, but nothing omitted of any importance. On the other hand, one or two slight additions have been made. Attending carefully to the chronological arrangement, the Editor has sought, by biographical, topographical, and historical notices, to put the Reader in possession of all that was needed to enable him to enter into the circumstances in which each Letter was written, so far as that could be done. The appended Glossary of Scottish words and expressions (many of them in reality old English), the Index of Places and Persons, the Index of Special Subjects, and the prefixed Contents of Each Letter, will, it is confidently believed, be found both interesting and useful. The Sketch of Rutherford’s Life may be thought too brief; but the limits within which such a Sketch must necessarily be confined, when occupying the place of a mere Introduction, rendered brevity inevitable.

Every Letter hitherto published is to be found in this Edition. The ten additional Letters of the Edition 1848, along with two more, added since that time, are all inserted in their chronological place. The publishers have taken great pains with the typography.

## 0.2. Sketch of Samuel Rutherford

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### SKETCH OF SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

Wherever the palm-tree is, there is water," says the Eastern proverb; and so, wherever the godly flourish, there, we are sure, must the Word of God be found. In the history of the Reformation we read of Brother Martin, a poor monk at Basle, whose hope of salvation rested solely on the Lord Jesus, long before Luther sounded the silver trumpet that summoned sin-convinced souls to the One Sacrifice. Having written out his confession of faith, his statement of reliance on the righteousness of Christ alone, the monk placed the parchment in a wooden box, and shut up the wooden box in a hole of the wall of his cell. It was not till last century that this box, with its interesting contents, was discovered: it was brought to light only when the old wall of the monastery was taken down. The palm-tree speaks of the existence of water at its root; the pure Word of God taught this man his simple faith. And herein we learn how it was that Basle so early became a peculiar centre of light in that region; the prayer and the faith of that hidden one, and others like-minded, and the Word on which they fed, may explain it all.

There is a fact not unlike the above in the history of the district where Samuel Rutherford laboured so lovingly. The people of that shire tell that there was found, some generations ago, in the wall of the old castle of Earlston, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, a copy of "Wickliffe's Bible." It was deposited in that receptacle in order to be hid from the view of enemies; but from time to time it was the lamp of light to a few souls, who, perhaps in the silence of night, found opportunity to draw it out of its ark, and peruse its pages. It seems that the Lollards of Kyle (the adjoining district) had brought it to Earlston. We know that there were friends and members of the family of Earlston who embraced the Gospel even in those days. In the sixteenth century, some of the ancestors of Viscount Kenmure are found holding the doctrines of Wickliffe, which had been handed down to them. May we not believe that the Gordons of Earlston, in after days, were not a little indebted to the faith and prayers of these ancient witnesses who hid the sacred treasure in the castle wall? As in the case of the monk of Basle, their faith and patience were acknowledged in after days by the blessing sent down on that quarter, when the Lord, in remembrance of His hidden ones, both raised up the Gordons of Earlston, with many others of a like spirit, and also sent thither His servant Samuel Rutherford, to sound forth the Word of Life, and make the lamp of truth blaze, like a torch, over all that region.

Samuel Rutherford was born about the year 1600. His father is understood to have been a respectable farmer. He had two brothers, James and George. But the place of his birth was not near the scene of his after labours. It is almost certain that Nisbet, a village of Roxburghshire close to the Teviot, in the parish of Crailing, was his birthplace; the name Rutherford frequently occurs in the churchyard. Not long ago, there were some old people in that parish who remembered the gable-end of the house in which it was said that he was born, and which, from respect to his memory, was permitted to stand as long as it could keep together. And there was there a village well where, when very young, Samuel nearly lost his life.[1] He had been amusing himself with

some companions, when he fell in, and was left there till they ran and procured assistance; but on returning to the spot they found him seated on a knoll, cold and dripping, yet uninjured. He told them that “A bonnie white man came and drew him out of the well!” Whether or not he really fancied that an angel had delivered him, we cannot tell; but it is plain that, at all events, his boyish thoughts were already wandering in the region of the sky.

[1] This village well is about three feet deep. It is now closed up and worked by a pump.

He owed little to his native place. There was not so much of Christ known in that parish then as there is now; for in after days he writes, “My soul’s desire is, that the place to which I owe my first birth—in which, I fear, Christ was scarcely named, as touching any reality of the power of godliness—may blossom as the rose” (Letter 334.). We have no account of his revisiting these scenes of his early life, though he thus wrote to his friend, Mr. Scott, minister of the adjoining parish of Oxnam. Like Donald Cargill, born in Perthshire yet never known to preach there even once, Rutherford had his labours in other parts of the land, distant from his native place. In this arrangement we see the Master’s sovereignty. The sphere is evidently one of God’s choosing for the man, instead of being the result of the man’s gratifying his natural predilections. It accords, too, with the example of the Master, who never returned to Bethlehem, where He was born, to do any of His works.

Jedburgh is a town three or four miles distant from Nisbet, and thither Samuel went for his education; either walking to it, and returning home at evening,—as a school-boy would scarcely grudge to do,—or residing in the town for a season. The school at that time met in a part of the ancient Abbey, called, from this circumstance, the Latiners’ Alley. In the year 1617 we find him farther from home,—removed to Edinburgh, which, forty years before, had become the seat of a College, though not as yet a University. There he obtained, in 1621, the degree of Master of Arts. A single specimen (not elegant, however) of his Latin verse remains in the lines he prefixed to an edition of Row’s “Hebrew Grammar,” published at Glasgow, 1644—

Verba Sionææ gentis, submersa tenebris Cimmeriis, mendax Kimchius ore crepat.

Quæ vos Rabbini sinuosa ænigmata vultis, Nunc facilem linguam dicite quæso sacram.

Falleris, Hippocrates; male parcæ stamina vitæ

Curta vocas, artem vociferare μακρᾶν;

Sit cita mors, rapido sit et hora fugacior Euro, Bellerophontæis vita volato rotis:

Rouæi Hebracis sit mors male grata Camoenis.

Haec relege, ast artem dixeris esse brevem.

Soon after, he was appointed Regent, or Professor, of Humanity, though there were three other competitors; for his talents had attracted the notice of many. But, on occasion of a rumour that charged him with some irregularity—whether with or without foundation, it is now difficult to ascertain—he demitted his office in 1625, and led a private life, attending prelections on theology, and devoting himself to that study. That there could not have been anything very serious in the rumour, may be inferred from the fact that no church court took any notice of the matter, though

these were days when the reins of discipline were not held with a slack hand. But it is not unlikely that this may have been the time of which he says in a letter, "I knew a man who wondered to see any in this life laugh or sport."<sup>[2]</sup> It may have been then that he was led by the Spirit to know the things that are freely given us of God.<sup>[3]</sup> We have no proof that he was converted at an earlier period, but rather the opposite. He writes, "Like a fool as I was, I suffered my sun to be high in the heaven, and near afternoon, before ever I took the gate by the end."<sup>[4]</sup> And again, "I had stood sure, if in my youth I had borrowed Christ for my bottom."<sup>[5]</sup> The clouds returned after the rain; family trials, and other similar dealings of Providence, combined to form his character as a man of God and as a pastor.

[2] Letter 224.

[3] 1 Corinthians 2:12.

[4] Letter 177.

[5] Letter 241. In 1627 he was settled at Anwoth,<sup>[6]</sup> a parish situated in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, on the river Fleet, near the Solway. The church stood in a wide hollow, or valley, at the foot of the Boreland Hill. Embosomed in wood, with neither the smoke nor the noise of a village near, it must always have been a romantic spot—the very ideal of a country church, set down to cherish rural godliness. Though at this period Episcopacy had been obtruded upon Scotland, and many faithful ministers were suffering on account of their resistance to its ceremonies and services, yet he appears to have been allowed to enter on his charge without any compliance being demanded, and "without giving any engagement to the bishop." He began his ministry with the text, John 9:39. The same Lord that would not let Paul and Timothy preach in Asia,<sup>[7]</sup> nor in Bithynia, and yet sent to the one region the beloved John,<sup>[8]</sup> and to the other the scarcely less beloved Peter,<sup>[9]</sup> in this instance prevented John Livingstone going to Anwoth, which the patron had designed, and sent Rutherford instead. This was the more remarkable, because Livingstone was sent to Ancrum, the parish that borders on Nisbet, while he who was by birth related to that place was despatched to another spot. This is the Lord's doing. Ministers must not choose according to the flesh.

[6] See notice of the topography at Letter 198. It is a mile and a half from the modern Gatehouse of Fleet, a clean, English-looking village.

[7] Acts 16:6-7.

[8] Revelation 1:11.

[9] 1 Peter 1:1.

During the first years of his labours here, the sore illness of his wife was a bitter grief to him. Her distress was very severe. He writes of it: "She is sore tormented night and day.—My life is bitter unto me.—She sleeps none, and cries as a woman travailing in birth; my life was never so wearisome."<sup>[10]</sup> She continued in this state for no less than a year and a month, ere she died. Besides all this, his two children had been taken from him. Such was the discipline by which he was trained for the duties of a pastor, and by which a shepherd's heart of true sympathy was imparted to him.

[10] Letter 18 The parish of Anwoth had no large village near the church. The people were scattered over a hilly district, and were quite a rural flock. But their shepherd knew that the Chief Shepherd counted them worth caring for; he was not one who thought that his learning and talents would be ill spent if laid out in seeking to save souls, obscure and unknown. See him setting out to visit! He has just laid aside one of his learned folios, to go forth among his flock. See him passing along yonder field, and climbing that hill on his way to some cottage, his “quick eyes” occasionally glancing on the objects around, but his “face upward” for the most part, as if he were gazing into heaven. He has time to visit, for he rises at three in the morning, and at that early hour meets his God in prayer and meditation, and has space for study besides. He takes occasional days for catechising. He never fails to be found at the sick-beds of his people. Men said of him, “He is always praying, always preaching, always visiting the sick, always catechising, always writing and studying.” He was known to fall asleep at night talking of Christ, and even to speak of Him during his sleep. Indeed, himself speaks of his dreams being of Christ.[11] [11] Letter 286. His preaching could not but arrest attention. Though his elocution was not good, and his voice rather shrill, he was, nevertheless, “one of the most moving and affectionate preachers in his time, or perhaps in any age of the church.”[12] “In the pulpit (says one of his friends), he had a strange utterance—a kind of skreigh, that I never heard the like. Many times I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ.” An English merchant said of him, even in days when controversy had sorely vexed him and distracted his spirit, “I came to Irvine, and heard a well-favoured, proper old man (David Dickson), with a long beard, and that man showed me all my heart. Then I went to St. Andrews, where I heard a sweet, majestic-looking man (R. Blair), and he showed me the majesty of God. After him I heard a little, fair man (Rutherford), and he showed me the loveliness of Christ.”[13] [12] “Wodrow’s Church Hist.” i. 205.

[13] “M’Crie’s Sketches.”

Anwoth was dear to him rather as the sphere appointed him by his Master, than because of the fruit he saw of his labours. Two years after being settled there, he writes, “I see exceedingly small fruit of my ministry. I would be glad of one soul, to be a crown of joy and rejoicing in the day of Christ.” His people were “like hot iron, which cooleth when out of the fire.” In a sermon on Song of Solomon 2:8, he complains of it being spiritually winter in Anwoth. “The very repairing of God’s house, in our own parish church, is a proof. Ye need not go any farther. The timber of the house of God rots, and we cannot move a whole parish to spend twenty or thirty pounds Scots upon the house of God, to keep it dry.” Still he laboured in hope, and laboured often almost beyond his strength. Once he says, “I have a grieved heart daily in my calling.” He speaks of his pained breast, at another time, on the evening of the Lord’s day, when his work was done.[14] But he had seasons of refreshing to his own soul at least; especially when the Lord’s Supper was dispensed. Of these seasons he frequently speaks. He asks his friend, Marion M’Naught, to help with her prayers on such an occasion, “that being one of the days wherein Christ was wont to make merry with His friends.”[15] It was then that with special earnestness he besought the Father to distribute “the great Loaf, Christ, to the children of His family.”

[14] Letter 185.

[15] Letter 14

Another church was filled, but not altogether by parishioners.[16] Many came from great distances; among others, several that were converted, seventeen years before, under John Welsh, at Ayr. These all helped him by their prayers, as did also a goodly number of godly people in the parish itself, who were the fruit of the ministry of his predecessor. Yet over the unsaved he yearned most tenderly. At one time we hear him say, "I would lay my dearest joys in the gap between you and eternal destruction." [17] At another, "My witness is in heaven, your heaven, would be two heavens to me, and your salvation two salvations." He could appeal to his people, "My day-thoughts and my night-thoughts are of you;" and he could appeal to God, "O my Lord, judge if my ministry be not dear to me; but not so dear by many degrees as Christ my Lord." [18]

[16] The oak pulpit out of which he preached was preserved till a few years ago. The old church (60 feet by 18) is in the shape of a barn, and could hold only 250 sitters. It is now entirely a ruin. The years 1631 and 1633 were carved on some of the seats—perhaps the seats of the Gordons, or other heritors. We may add, while speaking of this old edifice, where "the swallows building their nest," seemed to the exiled pastor "blessed birds," that the rusty key of that kirk-door is now deposited in the New College, Edinburgh, sent to the museum there as a precious relic several years ago by a friend, through Dr. Welsh. The church is now roofless, its walls overgrown with ivy, in which the sparrows build their nests at will. The tomb of Lady Cardoness, an antique pile at the side of the wall, was removed in 1878, though the slabs are preserved.

[17] Letter 217.

[18] Letter 217.

All classes of people of Anwoth were objects of his care. He maintained a friendly intercourse with people of high rank, and very many of his Letters are addressed to such persons. He seems to have been remarkably blessed to the gentry in the neighbourhood—more far than to the common people. There was at that time some friend of Christ to be found in almost every gentleman's seat many miles around Anwoth.

OLD CHURCH OF ANWOTH. But the herd boys were not beneath his special attention. He writes of them when at Aberdeen, and exclaims, "O if I might but speak to thee, or your herd boys, of my worthy Master." [19] He had a heart for the young of all classes, so that he would say of two children of one of his friends, "I pray for them by name;" [20] and could thus take time to notice one, "Your daughter desires a Bible and a gown. I hope she shall use the Bible well, which, if she do, the gown is the better bestowed." He lamented over the few that cry "Hosanna" in their youth. "Christ is an unknown Christ to young ones; and therefore they seek Him not, because they know Him not."

[19] Letter 163.

[20] Letter 14

He dealt with individual parishioners so closely and so personally as to be able to appeal to them regarding his faithfulness in this matter. He addresses one of them, Jean M'Millan: "I did what I could to put you within grips of Christ; I told you Christ's testament and latter-will plainly." [21] He so carried them on his heart (like the priest with the twelve tribes on his breastplate), that he could declare to Gordon of Cardoness, "Thoughts of your soul depart not from me in my sleep." [22] "My

soul was taken up when others were sleeping, how to have Christ betrothed with a bride in that part of the land,” viz. Anwoth.[23] He so prayed over them and for them, that he fears not to say, “There I wrestled with the angel and prevailed. Woods, trees, meadows, and hills, are my witnesses that I drew on a fair match betwixt Christ and Anwoth.”[24] It is related that, on first coming to the parish, there was a piece of ground on Mossrobin farm, in the hollow of a hill, where on Sabbath afternoon the people used to play at foot-ball. On one occasion he repaired to that spot, and pointed out their sin, solemnly calling on the objects round to be witnesses against them, especially three large stones[25] close at hand on the slope of the hill, two of which still remain, and are called “Rutherford’s Witnesses.” The third was wantonly dislodged some years ago; and it is said that the other two were removed to the other side of the stone dyke, where they are now, for the sake of security. This is the spot which is especially taken notice of by Dr. Chalmers, in recording a visit to Anwoth and its neighbourhood (Life, vol. 3: 130):—

“Wednesday, August 23, 1826.—Started at five o’clock; ordered the gig forward on the public road to meet us after a scramble of about two miles among the hills, in the line of ‘Rutherford’s Memorials.’ Went first to his church; the identical fabric he preached in, and which is still preached in.[26] The floor is a causeway. There are dates of 1628[27] and 1633 on some old carved seats. The pulpit is the same, and I sat in it. It is smaller than Kilmany, and very rude and simple. The church bell is said to have been given him by Lady Kenmure, one of his correspondents in his Letters. It is singularly small for a church, having been the Kenmure house bell. We then passed to the new church that is building; but I am happy to say the old fabric and Rutherford’s pulpit are to be spared. It is a cruel circumstance that they pulled down (and that only three weeks ago) his dwelling-house, his old manse; which has not been used as a manse for a long time, but was recently occupied. It should have been spared. Some of the masons who were ordered to pull it down refused it, as they would an act of sacrilege, and have been dismissed from their employment. We went and mourned over the rubbish of the foundation. Then ascended a bank, still known by the name of Rutherford’s Walk.[28] Then went further among the hills, to Rutherford’s Witnesses,—so many stones which he called to witness against some of his parishioners who were amusing themselves at the place with some game on the Sunday, and whom he meant to reprove. The whole scene of our morning’s walk was wild, and primitive, and interesting.”

[21] Letter 132 [22] Letter 180.

[23] Letter 186.

[24] Letter 277.

[25] Joshua 24:27.

[26] It has not been preached in since the year 1827.

[27] A mistake for 1631.

[28] It was a walk among trees, close to the manse.

Once, while in Anwoth, his labours were interrupted (Letter 12:) by a tertian fever which laid him aside for thirteen weeks. Even when well recovered he could for a long time only preach on the Sabbath: visiting and catechising were at a stand. This was just before his wife’s death in 1630,

and he writes in the midst of it, "Welcome, welcome, cross of Christ, if Christ be with it." "An afflicted life looks very like the way that leads to the kingdom." And some years thereafter, when his mother (who came from Nisbet and resided with him six years after his first wife's death) was in a dangerous illness, he touchingly informs one of his correspondents, to whom he writes from Anwoth, "My mother is weak, and I think shall leave me alone; but I am not alone, because Christ's Father is with me." [29]

[29] Letter 49 And what was his recreation? The manse of Anwoth had many visits of kind friends, who, in Rutherford's fellowship, felt that saying verified, "They that dwell under His shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn." [30] The righteous compassed him about, because the Lord had dealt bountifully with him. His Letters would be enough of themselves to show that his friendship and counsel were sought by the godly on all sides. One of his visitors was his own brother, George, at Kirkcudbright. This good man was a teacher in that town, who often repaired to Anwoth to take sweet counsel with Samuel; and then, together, they talked of and prayed for their only other brother James, an officer in the Dutch service, who had sympathy with their views, and, in after days, conveyed to Samuel the invitation to become Professor at Utrecht. Visits of those friends who resided near were not unfrequent—such as the Gordons, Viscount Kenmure and his lady, and Marion M'Naught. But at times Anwoth manse was lighted up by the glad visit of unexpected guests. There is a tradition that Archbishop Usher, passing through Galloway, turned aside on a Saturday to enjoy the congenial society of Rutherford. He came, however, in disguise; and being welcomed as a guest, took his place with the rest of the family when they were catechised, as was usual, that evening. The stranger was asked, "How many commandments are there?" His reply was "Eleven." [31] The pastor corrected him; but the stranger maintained his position, quoting our Lord's words, "A NEW COMMANDMENT I give unto you, that ye love one another." They retired to rest, all interested in the stranger. Sabbath morning dawned. Rutherford arose and repaired, as was his custom, for meditation to a walk that bordered on a thicket, [32] but was startled by hearing the voice of prayer—prayer too from the heart, and in behalf of the souls of the people that day to assemble. It was no other than the holy Archbishop Usher; and soon they came to an explanation, for Rutherford had begun to suspect he had "entertained angels unawares." With great mutual love they conversed together; and at the request of Rutherford, the Archbishop went up to the pulpit, conducted the usual service of the Presbyterian pastor, and preached on "the New Commandment."

[30] Hosea 14:7.

[31] In the parish church of Chiseldon, North Wilts, there are to be seen Eleven Commandments inscribed on a slab (which is affixed to the chancel arch); the additional one consisting of our Saviour's precept—"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another" (John 13:34). The church is quite an ancient one, dating back to 1641.

[32] The place is still pointed out by tradition, as "Rutherford's Walk." It was close to the old manse, which was pulled down many years ago. It stood about a quarter of a mile from the church, and bore the name, Bushy Bield, or Bush o' Bield, i.e., the bush of shelter. Some make it Bush o' Biel, and say it is a corruption of Bosco-bello, fair-wood, Boscobel.

BUSH O' BEILD—RUTHERFORD'S HOUSE.

Scarcely less interesting is the record of another unlooked-for meeting. Rutherford had one day left home to go to the neighbouring town of Kirkcudbright, the next day being a day of humiliation in that place. Having no doubt spent some time with his like-minded brother, he turned his steps to the house of another friend, Provost Fullerton, whose wife was Marion M'Naught. While sitting with them in friendly converse a knock at the door was heard, and then a step on the threshold. It was worthy Mr. Blair, who, on his way from London to Portpatrick, had sought out some of his godly friends, that with them he might be refreshed ere he returned to Ireland. He told them, when seated, that "he had a desire to visit both Mr. Rutherford at Anwoth, and Marion M'Naught at Kirkcudbright; but not knowing how to accomplish both, had prayed for direction at the parting of the road, and laid the bridle on the horse's neck. The horse took the way to Kirkcudbright, and there he found both the friends he so longed to see." It was a joyful and refreshing meeting on all sides. Wodrow tells<sup>[33]</sup> another incident that, in part, bears some resemblance to this. Rutherford had been reasoning at Stirling with the Marquis of Argyle, and had set out homeward. But his horse was very troublesome, and he was feeling in his mind that he should have been more urgent and plain! He returned, and dealt freely this time. And now his horse went on pleasantly all the way.

[33] "Analecta," vol. 2.p. 161. In 1634 he attended the remarkable deathbed of Lord Kenmure, a narrative of which he published fifteen years after, in "The Last and Heavenly Speeches and Glorious Departure of John Viscount Kenmure." The inroads of Episcopacy were at this time threatening to disquiet Anwoth. His own domestic afflictions were still affecting him; for he writes that same year, in referring to his wife's death many years before, "which wound is not yet fully healed and cured." About that time, too, there was a proposal (never carried into effect) to call him to Cramond near Edinburgh,<sup>[34]</sup> and another to get him settled at Kirkcudbright.

[34] Letter 43. His friend and neighbour Mr. Dalgleish, minister of Kirkdale and Kirkmabreck, was translated to Cramond in 1639.

Meanwhile he persevered in study as well as in labours, and with no common success. He had a metaphysical turn, as well as great readiness in using the accumulated learning of other days. It might be instructive to inquire why it is that wherever godliness is healthy and progressive, we almost invariably find learning in the Church of Christ attendant on it: while on the other hand, neglect of study is attended sooner or later by decay of vital godliness. Not that all are learned in such times; but there is always an element of the kind in the circle of those whom the Lord is using. The energy called forth by the knowledge of God in the soul leads on to the study of whatever is likely to be useful in the defence or propagation of the truth; whereas, on the other hand, when decay is at work and lifelessness prevailing, sloth and ease creep in, and theological learning is slighted as uninteresting and dry. With Samuel Rutherford and his contemporaries we find learning side by side with vital, and singularly deep, godliness. Gillespie, Henderson, Blair, Dickson, and others, are well-known examples. Nor less distinguished was Rutherford, who was led by circumstances in 1636 to publish his elaborate defence of grace against the Arminians, in Latin. Its title is, "Exercitationes de Gratia." So highly was it esteemed at Amsterdam, where it was published, that a second edition was printed that very year; and repeated invitations were addressed soon after to the author to come to Holland, and occupy one or other of their Divinity chairs. Soon after, the contest for Christ's kingly office became increasingly earnest and keen. To Rutherford it appeared no small matter. "I could wish many pounds added to my cross to know that by my suffering Christ was set forward in His kingly office in this land."<sup>[35]</sup> July 27, 1636, was a

day that put his principles to the test. He was called before the High Commission Court, because of nonconformity to the acts of Episcopacy, and because of His work against the Arminians. The Court was presided over by Sydserff, Bishop of Galloway, and was held at Wigton, about ten miles from Anwoth, across the Bay. He appeared in person there, and defended himself. The issue could not be doubtful, though Lord Lorn made every exertion in his behalf. He was deprived of his ministerial office, which he had exercised at Anwoth for a period of nine years,[36] and banished to Aberdeen. The next day (writing at evening on the subject), he tells of his sentence, and calls it, "The honour that I have prayed for these sixteen years." He made up his mind to leave Anwoth at once, observing, with a submissiveness which we might wonder at in the author of "Lex Rex," "I propose to obey the king, who has power over my body." His only alarm was lest this separation from his flock might be a chastisement on him from the Lord, "because I have not been so faithful in the end as I was in the two first years of my ministry, when sleep departed from mine eyes through care for Christ's lambs." [37] [35] Letter 115. See also Letter 54.

[36] Letter 269.

[37] Letter 109. On leaving Anwoth he directed his steps by Irvine, spending a night there with his beloved friend David Dickson. What a night that must have been! To hear these two in solemn converse! The one could not perhaps handle the harp so well as the other; for David Dickson could express his soul's weary longings and its consoling hopes in such strains as that which has made his name familiar in Scotland, "O mother dear Jerusalem;" but Rutherford, nevertheless, had so much of poetry and sublime enthusiasm in his soul, that any poet could sympathise with him to the full. Many of his letters "from Christ's palace in Aberdeen" are really strains of true poetry. What else is such an effusion as this, when, rising on eagles' wings, he exclaims, "A land that has more than four summers in the year! What a singing life is there! There is not a dumb bird in all that large field, but all sing and breathe out heaven, joy, glory, dominion, to the High Prince of that new-found land. And verily the land is sweeter than He is the glory of that land." [38] "O how sweet to be wholly Christ's, and wholly in Christ; to dwell in Immanuel's high and blessed land, and live in that sweetest air, where no wind bloweth but the breathings of the Holy Ghost, no sea nor floods flow but the pure water of life that floweth from under the throne and from the Lamb, no planting, but the tree of life that yieldeth twelve manner of fruits every month! What do we here but sin and suffer? O when shall the night be gone, the shadows flee away, and the morning of the long, long day, without cloud or night, dawn? The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' O when shall the Lamb's wife be ready, and the Bridegroom say, 'Come?'" [39] Whoever compares such breathings with David Dickson's hymn will see how congenial were their feelings and their hopes, and even their mode of expressing what they felt and hoped, though the one used prose and the other tried more memorable verse.

[38] Letter 323.

[39] Letter 334.

We follow Rutherford to Aberdeen, the capital of the North, whither he was accompanied by a deputation of his affectionate parishioners from Anwoth, in whose company he would forget the length and tediousness of the way. He arrived here in September 1636. This town was at that time the stronghold of Episcopacy and Arminianism, and in it the state of religion was very low. "It consisted of Papists, and men of Gallio's naughty faith." [40] The clergy and doctors took the

opportunity of Rutherford's arrival to commence a series of attacks on the special doctrines of grace which he held. But in disputation he foiled them; and when many began to feel drawn to him in consequence of his earnest dealings and private exhortations, there was a proposal made to remove him from the town. "So cold," writes he, "is northern love!" But (added he) "Christ and I will bear it;"[41] deeply feeling his union to Him who said to Saul, "Why persecutest thou Me?" Often, on the streets,[42] he was pointed as "the banished minister;" and hearing of this, he remarked, "I am not ashamed of my garland." He had visitors from Orkney, and from Caithness, to the great annoyance of his persecutors.[43] Some blamed him for not being "prudent enough," as we have seen men ready to do in similar cases in our own day; but he replies, "It is ordinary that that should be part of the cross of those who suffer for Him." Still he enjoyed, in his solitude, occasional intercourse with some of the godly ones, among whom were Lady Pitsligo, Lady Burnet of Largs, Andrew Cant, and James Martin. His deepest affliction was separation from his flock at Anwoth. Nothing can exceed his tender sorrow over this flock.[44]

[40] Letter 66. Dr. James Sibbald, said to have been a man of great learning, was minister in one of the churches of New Aberdeen. Rutherford attended his preaching, and finding that he taught Arminianism, testified against him.

[41] Letter 117.

[42] The impression of some readers might be that he was in prison. But he never was so. He was in exile; but the whole town was his prison. He was, in this respect, like Shimei confined to Jerusalem (Letters 68., 69., etc.). His house was in the Upper Kirkgate.

[43] Letter 161.

[44] Letter 181.

#### MARKET CROSS, ABERDEEN

It was a saying of his own, "Gold may be gold, and bear the King's stamp upon it, when it is trampled upon by men." And this was true of himself. But he came out of his trial not only unscorched, but, as his many letters from Aberdeen show, greatly advanced in every grace. The Latin lines prefixed to the early editions of these Letters scarcely exaggerate when they sing—

"Quod Chebar et Patmos divinis vatibus olim;

Huic fuerant sancto claustra Abredæa viro." But we err if we suppose that it was only while there that he experienced that almost ecstatic enjoyment of his Lord. He carried it away with him; for is not this the same strain as pervades his Letters, when, preaching in 1644, before the House of Commons in London, he exclaims, "O for eternity's leisure, to look on Him, to feast upon a sight of His face! O for the long summer day of endless ages to stand beside Him and enjoy Him! O time, O sin, be removed out of the way! O day! O fairest of days, dawn!"

He was, during part of two years, closely confined to that town, though not in prison; but in 1638 public events had taken another turn. The Lord had stirred up the spirit of the people of Scotland, and the covenant was again triumphant in the land. Rutherford hastened back to Anwoth. During his absence, "For six quarters of a year," say his parishioners, "no sound of the Word of God was heard in our kirk." The swallows had made their nests there undisturbed for two summers. His

Letters do not refer to the proceedings of the Glasgow Assembly of 1638. It is well known, however, that he was no mere indifferent spectator to what then took place, but was present, and was member of several committees which at that time sat on the affairs of the church. Presbytery being fully restored by that Assembly, it was thought right that one so gifted should be removed to a more important sphere. He was sent by the church to several districts to promote the cause of Reformation and the Covenant; and at length, in spite of his reluctance, arising chiefly from love to his flock—his rural flock at Anwoth—he was constrained to yield to the united opinion of his brethren, and be removed to the Professor's Chair in St. Andrews in 1639, and become Principal of the New College. He bargained to be allowed to preach regularly every Sabbath in his new sphere; for he could not endure silence when he might speak a word for his Lord. He seems to have preached also, as occasion offered, in the parishes around, especially at Scoonie, in which the village of Leven stands.[45]

[45] "In 1650, Mr. Samuel Rutherford, minister of St. Andrews, did preach the preparation sermon in Song of Solomon 5:2. Mr. Samuel had a lecture on Monday following on the 20th chapter of Matthew's Gospel."

"1651, July 13.—The comm. was given at Scoonie. Mr. Alex. Moncrieff, m. there, did preach the Preparation Sermon, and on Monday morning Mr. Sa. Rutherford did preach; his text at both occasions was Luke 7:36 till 39 ver. At this time was present, besides Mr. Sa. Rutherford, Mr. Ja. Guthrie, and Mr. David Bennet, Mr. Ephraim Melvin, and Mr. William Oliphant, m. in Dumfermlin. Thither did resort many strangers, so that the throng was great. Mr. Ephraim and Mr. D. Bennet both did sit within the pulpit while the minister had his sermon." So again, "In 1652, June 13.—Mr. S. R. of St. Andrews, did preach on the Sabbath afternoon; his lecture Luke 14; his sermon Luke 7:36; Luke 7:38, to end. Mr. S. did exhort on Monday following, on his foresaid text, Luke 7:40; Luke 7:44." Once more, "1653, Aug. 11.—A fast kept at Scoonie kirk, Mr. S. R. in the morning, lecture, Jonah 2; his text, Revelation 3:1, at end. Afternoon preached on same; his lecture Psalms 130:131." "1654, Jan. 4.—Being Saturday, there was a Preparation Sermon for a Thanksgiving preached at Scoonie in Fyfe, for the continuance of the Gospel in the land and for the spreading of it in some places of the Highlands in Scotland, where in some families two and in some families one, began to call on God by prayer. Mr. Samuel Rutherford, m. in St. Andrews, preached on Saturday; his text, Isaiah 49:9-12. On the Sabbath, Mr. Alex. Moncrieff, m., then preached; his lecture, 1 Thess. ch. 1; his text, Colossians 1:27. In the afternoon of the Sabbath, Mr. Samuel preached again upon his forementioned text. On Monday morning, Mr. Samuel had a lecture on Psalms 88. He did read the whole Psalm. Observe, that on Saturday Mr. Samuel had this expression in his prayer after sermon, desiring that the Lord would rebuke Presbyteries and others that had taken the keys and the power in their hands, and kepted out, and would suffer none to enter (meaning in the ministry) but such as said as they said."—"Lamont's Diary." His hands were necessarily filled with work in his new sphere; yet still he relaxed nothing of his diligence in study. Nor did he lack anything of former blessing. It was here the English merchant heard him preach so affectingly on the loveliness of Christ; while such was his success as a Professor that "the University became a Lebanon out of which were taken cedars for building the house of God throughout the land." In the year 1640, he married his second wife, Jean M'Math, "a woman," says one, "of such worth, that I never knew any among men exceed him, nor any among women exceed her. He who heard either of them pray or speak, might have learnt to bemoan his own

ignorance. Oh how many times I have been convinced, by observing them, of the evil of unseriousness unto God, and unsavouriness in discourse." They had seven children; but only one survived the father, a little daughter, Agnes, who does not seem to have been a comfort to her godly mother.[46]

[46] In the "Statistical Account of Scotland" it is stated that in 1642 he was presented to the church of Mid-Calder. But he must have declined it at once; for in 1643 Mr. Hugh Kennedy is found the ordained and settled pastor of that parish. In July 1643, the Westminster Assembly began their sittings; and to it he was sent up as one of the Commissioners from the Church of Scotland. A sketch of a "Shorter Catechism" exists in MS., in the library of the Edinburgh University, in Rutherford's handwriting, very much resembling the Catechism as it now stands, from which it has been inferred that he had the principal hand in drawing it up for the Assembly. He continued four years attending the sittings of this famous synod, and was of much use in their deliberations. So prominent a part did he take, that the great Milton has singled him out for attack in his lines, "On the new forcers of conscience, under the Long Parliament." Milton knew him only as an opponent of his sectarian and independent principles, and so could scorn measures proposed by "Mere A. S.[47] and Rutherford." But had he known the soul of the man, would not even Milton have found a sublimity of thought and feeling in his adversary, that at times approached his own lofty poesy? How interesting, in any point of view, to find the devoted pastor of Anwoth, on the streets of London, crossing the path of England's greatest poet.

[47] A. S. stands for Adam Stewart, who wrote a pamphlet, "Zerubbabel to Sanballat."

During his residence in London he was tried with many afflictions. Several of his family died; and his own health began to give way, so that he and his brother minister, Mr. G. Gillespie, visited Epsom to drink the waters. Yet such was the amazing spirit of the man, under a sense of duty, that amid the trials and bustle of that time he wrote, "The Due Right of Presbyteries," "Lex Rex," i.e.. "The Law, The King," and "Trial and Triumph of Faith." Nor was he soured by controversy. In the preface to one of his controversial works, he discovers his large-hearted charity and manly impartiality in regard to what he saw in these parts. He writes: "I judge that in England the Lord hath many names, and a fair company, that shall stand at the side of Christ when He shall render up the kingdom to the Father; and that in that renowned nation there be men of all ranks, wise, valorous, generous, noble, heroic, faithful, religious, gracious, learned." [48] [48] Preface to "Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist."

Returning home to St. Andrews, he resumed his labours both in the college and in the pulpit with all his former zeal. In 1644, it appears from the old minutes of Lanark Presbytery, a vacancy having occurred, Rutherford was unanimously called to Lanark. He was inclined to go, but the Presbytery of St. Andrews refused to loose him. He had often preached at Lanark. He declined two invitations to the professorship in Holland; one from Harderwyck in 1648, the other from Utrecht in 1651; though the former offered the chair both of Divinity and of Hebrew. He joined the Protestors in determinedly opposing the proceedings of the Commission of Assembly, who had censured such as protested against the admission to power of persons in the class of malignants. His friend David Dickson keenly opposed him, and Mr. Blair also, though less violently.[49] It was this controversy that made John Livingstone say, in a letter to Blair, "Your and Mr. D. Dickson's accession to these resolutions is the saddest thing I have seen in my time. My wife and I have had

more bitterness in this respect, these several months, than ever we had since we knew what bitterness meant.” Rutherford wrote too violently on this matter.[50] Some say he was naturally hot and fiery; but at this time all parties were greatly excited. Still he did not lose his brotherly love—the same brotherly love that led him so fervently to embrace Archbishop Usher as a fellow-believer. We may get a lesson for our times from his remarks on occasion of these bitter controversies. “It is hard when saints rejoice in the sufferings of saints, and redeemed ones hurt, and go nigh to hate, redeemed ones. For contempt of the communion of saints, we have need of new-born crosses, scarce ever heard of before.—Our star-light hideth us from ourselves, and hideth us from one another, and Christ from us all.” And then he subjoins (and is he not borne out by the words of the Lord in John 17:22?): “A doubt it is if we shall have fully one heart till we shall enjoy one heaven.” The state of things lay heavy on his mind: “I am broken and wasted by the wrath that is upon this land.”

[49] When the Lord’s Supper was to be dispensed, Blair in vain used every argument to induce Rutherford to take part with himself and Mr. Wood in serving tables; and, being forced to do it alone, began thus: “We must have water in our wine while here. O to be above, where there will be no mistakes!”—“Wodrow’s Anal.”

[50] “Brodie’s Diary” (May 27, 1653) says that S. R. in a conference in “Warriston’s Chambers” retorted, that he had heard much of peace with men, but would like better to hear of a peace with God, and with sin, that His wrath may be turned away, without which a patched peace would be little effectual (p. 43). In June a longer conference (pp. 48, 49, 50).

It was in 1651 that he published his work “De Divinâ Providentiâ,” a work in which he assailed Jesuits, Socinians, and Arminians. Richard Baxter (tinged as he was with the Arminian theology), in referring to this treatise, remarked (says Wodrow), that “His Letters were the best piece, and this work the worst, he had ever read.” Of course, this was the language of controversy, for the book is one of great ability. It was this work, indeed, that drew forth several invitations from foreign Universities. The ten years that followed were times of much distraction, being the times of Cromwell and the Commonwealth, as well as of the Protesters and Resolutioners. In 1651 the Scottish nation resolved to crown Charles II., as lawful king, at Scone; and when the young king was at St. Andrews, in prospect of that event, he visited the colleges. It fell to Rutherford to deliver, on that occasion, an oration in Latin before His Majesty, on a subject which he could handle well, both as a patriot and a Christian, “The Duty of Kings.”

Milton sings—

“God doth not need Either man’s work, or His own gifts; His state Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed, And post o’er land and ocean without rest:

They also serve who only stand and wait.”

It is mentioned in “Lamont’s Diary,” 27th Sept. 1653, that at the Provincial Synod of Fyfe, which met at St. Andrews, Mr. Samuel Rutherford presented a paper to the Moderator, relating to the sins of the ministry, which was not accepted. Upon the refusal of it, some words passed between Rutherford and Mr. Robert Blair, the Moderator, anent the public business. At the close of that meeting, two English officers entered; upon which they were asked, “If they had come to sit and voice with them?” They said, “No; only to see that they ruled nothing in prejudice to the

Commonwealth.” The days were evil, and Rutherford was longing now for such quiet service. He sometimes refers to this desire; he wishes for a harbour in his latter days; only (adds he), “failing is serving”—and he did delight in serving his Lord to the last.[51] His friend M’Ward, in an advertisement prefixed to the earlier editions of the Letters, bitterly laments the loss of a Commentary on Isaiah, on which “this true Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God,”[52] employed his leisure time during the closing years of his life.[53] “His heart travailed more,” says he, “in birth of this piece than ever I knew him of any; neither was there ever anything he put his hand to that would have so powerfully persuaded this panter after the enjoyment of his Master’s company, to have had his heaven and the immediate fruition of God suspended for a season, as the eager desire he had to finish this work before he finished his course.” But all these papers were carried off, and never recovered. So true is it, that of the seed we sow, we “know not whether shall prosper, either this or that” (Ecclesiastes 11:6).

[51] In 1655, we find in “Diary of Brodie of Brodie,” p. 141:—“Quhil Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Blair, Mr. Wood, and many others, are labouring in places, and as we hear come small speed; Oh, is it not a marvel that weshould be discouraged!”

[52] 2 Chronicles 26:5.

[53] He planned a Commentary on Hosea in 1657, but the design was not executed. Reference is made to this in Letter 110. When Charles II. was fully restored, and had begun to adopt arbitrary measures, Rutherford’s work, “Lex Rex,” was taken notice of by the Government; for, reasonable as are its principles in defence of the liberty of subjects, its spirit of freedom was intolerable to rulers, who were, step by step, advancing to acts of cruelty and death. Indeed, it was so hateful to them, that they burnt it, in 1661, first at Edinburgh, by the hands of the hangman; and then, some days after, by the hands of the infamous Sharpe, under the windows of its author’s College in St. Andrews. He was next deposed from all his offices; and, last of all, was summoned to answer at next Parliament a charge of high treason. But the citation came too late. He was already on his deathbed, and on hearing of it, calmly remarked, that he had got another summons before a superior Judge and judicatory, and sent the message, “I behove to answer my first summons; and, ere your day arrive, I will be where few kings and great folks come.”

We have no account of the nature of his last sickness, except that it was a lingering disease. He had a daughter who died a few weeks before himself. All that is told us of his deathbed is characteristic of the man. At one time he spoke much of “the white stone” and “the new name.” When he was on the threshold of glory, ready to receive the immortal crown, he said, “Now my tabernacle is weak, and I would think it a more glorious way of going home to lay down my life for the cause, at the Cross of Edinburgh or St. Andrews; but I submit to my Master’s will.” Some days before his death, after a fainting fit, he said, “Now I feel, I believe, I enjoy, I rejoice.” And turning to Mr. Blair, “I feed on manna: I have angels’ food. My eyes shall see my Redeemer. I know that He shall stand on earth at the latter day, and I shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Him in the air.”[54] When asked, “What think ye now of Christ?” he replied, “I shall live and adore Him. Glory, glory to my Creator and Redeemer for ever. Glory shineth in Immanuel’s land.” The same afternoon he said, “I shall sleep in Christ; and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with His likeness. O for arms to embrace Him!” Then he cried aloud, “O for a well-tuned harp!” This last expression he used more than once, as if already stretching out his hand to get his golden harp, and join the

redeemed in their new song. He also said on another occasion, "I hear Him saying to me, 'Come up hither.'" His little daughter Agnes (the only survivor of six children), eleven years of age, stood by his bedside; he looked on her, and said, "I have left her upon the Lord." Well might the man say so, who could so fully testify of his portion in the Lord, as a goodly heritage. To four of his brethren, who came to see him, he said, "My Lord and Master is chief of ten thousands of thousands. None is comparable to Him, in heaven or in earth. Dear brethren, do all for Him. Pray for Christ. Preach for Christ. Do all for Christ; beware of men-pleasing. The Chief Shepherd will shortly appear." He often called Christ "His Kingly King." While he spoke even rapturously, "I shall shine! I shall see Him as He is! I shall see Him reign, and all His fair company with Him, and I shall have my large share"—he at the same time would protest, "I renounce all that ever He made me will or do as defiled or imperfect as coming from myself. I betake myself to Christ for sanctification as well as justification." Repeating 1 Corinthians 1:30, he said, "I close with it! Let Him be so. He is my all and all." "If He should slay me ten thousand times I will trust." He spoke as if he knew the hour of his departure; not perhaps as Paul (2 Timothy 4:6) or Peter (2 Peter 1:14), yet still in a manner that seems to indicate that the Lord draws very near His servants in that hour, and gives glimpses of what He is doing. On the last day of his life, in the afternoon, he said, "This night will close the door, and fasten my anchor within the veil, and I shall go away in a sleep by five o'clock in the morning." And so it was. He entered Immanuel's land at that very hour, and is now (as himself would have said) "sleeping in the bosom of the Almighty," till the Lord come.

[54] "Lamont's Diary," p. 133.

We may add his latest words. "There is nothing now between me and the Resurrection but 'This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise.'" He interrupted one speaking in praise of his painfulness in the ministry, "I disclaim all. The port I would be in at is redemption and forgiveness of sin through His blood." Two of his biographers record that his last words were, "Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land!" as if he had caught a glimpse of its mountain-tops.

It was at St. Andrews he died, on 30th March 1661, and there he was buried. "Lamont's Diary," p. 133, says: "He was interred on the 30th of March, in the ordinary burial place." Had he lived a few weeks his might have been the cruel death endured by his friend James Guthrie, whom he had encouraged, by his letters, in stedfastness to the end. The sentence which the Parliament passed, when told that he was dying, did him no dishonour. When they had voted that he should not die in the College, Lord Burleigh rose and said, "Ye cannot vote him out of heaven." His death was lamented throughout the land; and to this day few names are so well known and honoured. So great was the reverence which some of the godly had for this man of God, that they requested to be buried where his body was laid. This was Thomas Halyburton's dying request.[55] An old man in the parish of Crailing (in which Nisbet, his birthplace, is situated) remembers the veneration entertained for him by the great-grandfather of the present Marquis of Lothian. This good Marquis used to lift his hat, as often as he passed the spot where stood the cottage in which Samuel Rutherford was born. He was twice married. His widow survived him fourteen years.

[55] See (ch. 6) of "Memoir of Halyburton," who, on his deathbed, quoted Rutherford's words, "Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land."

RUINS OF ST. ANDREWS CATHEDRAL.

If ever there was any portrait of him, it is not now known. The portraits sometimes given of him are all imaginary. We are most familiar with the likeness of his soul. There is one expressive line in the epitaph on his tombstone, in the churchyard at the boundary wall opposite the door of St Regulus' Tower—

“What tongue, what pen, or skill of men, Can famous Rutherford commend! His learning justly raised his fame, True godliness adorn'd his name.

He did converse with things above, Acquainted with Immanuel's love.” A monument to his memory was erected in 1842, by subscription, on the Boreland Hill, in the parish of Anwoth. It is sixty feet in height, and thus, seen all around, it seems to remind the inhabitants of that region how God once visited His people there. His letters have long been famous among the godly. The present edition of them has several things to recommend it. 1. The Letters are chronologically arranged. 2. They have biographical notices prefixed to a large number of them. Most of these are from the pen of the Rev. James Anderson. The present editor has added, here and there, topographical notes that seemed to have some interest, most of them gleaned on the spot. The explanatory notes in the edition by the Rev. C. Thomson, 1836, have often been consulted with much advantage. 3. There are contents prefixed to each Letter, describing generally what are the main subjects of each. 4. There are some new letters inserted in this collection; and there is a facsimile of an unpublished letter directed to the Provost of Edinburgh, at the time when there was an attempt made to call Rutherford to that city. The letter, which is preserved in the Records of the Edinburgh Town Council, entreats them to drop the matter. It is written in a very small hand, as was usual with him, and the seal on it has the armorial bearing of the Rutherford family.

#### RUTHERFORD'S MONUMENT ON BORELAND HILL.

If it be asked how it came about that these letters should have been at first printed in an order entirely unchronological, the explanation is simple: The first edition appeared in 1664, and in it there were only two hundred and eighty-four of his letters gathered and published; but many being edified thereby, an edition soon appeared with sixty-eight more letters appended. All these seem to have been printed very much in the order in which they came to hand, and the additional sixty-eight, more especially, disturbed all arrangement. The collector was Mr. M'Ward,[56] who, as a student, being much beloved by Rutherford, went to the Westminster Assembly with him as his amanuensis or secretary. He was afterwards successor to Andrew Gray in Glasgow, and finally minister in Rotterdam. He gave them to the public with an enthusiastic recommendation, under the title, “Joshua Redivivus;[57] published for the use of all the people of God, but more particularly for those who are now, or afterwards may be, put to suffering for Christ and His cause; by a well-wisher to the work and people of God. John 16:2; John 2 Thessal. 1: 6.” The edition was in duodecimo, and was printed at Rotterdam. Not only were the Letters first published in Holland, but also, in 1674, there appeared a Dutch translation of them at Flushing.

[56] In “Lamont's Diary,” April 1650, we read of “Mr. Robert Makeward, sometime servant (i.e. secretary) to Mr. Samuel Rutherford, minister of St. Andrews.”

[57] Why “Joshua”? Did he think of the faithful witnessing in Joshua 24? Or is the reference to Joshua as one of the spies? See Letter 118.

It will be noticed, in reading the Letters as they stand chronologically, that at times the pen of the ready writer ran on with amazing rapidity. He has written many in one day when his heart was overflowing. It was easy to write when the Lord was pouring on him the unction that teacheth all things. He would have written still more, but he had heard that people looked up to him and overpraised his Letters. During his confinement at Aberdeen, he wrote about two hundred and twenty of these letters.

There are a few distasteful expressions in these epistolary effusions, the sparks of a fancy that sought to appropriate everything to spiritual purposes; but as to extravagance in the thoughts conveyed, there is none. An old Memoir of Richard Cameron, the martyr, mentions at the close that it had become a fashion among “profane preachers and expectants” to say of these Letters, “They are fit only for old wives.” Dr. Love, on the other hand, protests, “The haughty contempt of that book which is in the heart of many will be ground for condemnation when the Lord cometh to make inquisition after such things” (Letter 14:). The extravagance in sentiment alleged against them by some is just that of Paul, when he spoke of knowing “the height and depth, length and breadth,” of the love of Christ; or that of Solomon, when the Holy Ghost inspired him to write “The Song of Songs.” Rather would we say of these Letters, what Livingstone in a letter says of John Welsh’s dying words, “O for a sweet fill of this fanatic humour!” In modern days, Richard Cecil has said of Rutherford, “He is one of my classics; he is a real original;” and, in older times, Richard Baxter, some of whose theological leanings might have prejudiced him, if anything could, said of his Letters, “Hold off the Bible, such a book the world never saw.” They were long ago translated into Dutch, and of late years they have been translated into German. Both in these, and in his other writings, we see sufficient proof that had he cultivated literature as a pursuit, he might have stood high in the admiration of men.[58]

[58] Even in his controversial works, sparks of the same poetic fire fly out when opportunity occurs. In his Treatise “De Divina Providentiâ,” the following paragraph occurs, extolling the glory of Godhead wisdom. “Comparantur cum illa increata sapientia Dei Patris umbratiles scintillulæ creatæ gloriolæ quotquot nominis celebritate inclaruerunt. Delirat Plato. Mentitur Aristoteles. Cicerobalbutit, hæsitat, nescit Latine loqui. Demosthenes mutus et elinguis obstupescit; virtutis viam ignorat Seneca; nihil canit Homerus; male canit Virgilius! Accedant ad Christum qui virtutis gloria fulgent! Aristides virtutem mentitur. Fabius cespitat, a via justitiæ deviat. Socratesne hoc quidem scit, se nihil scire. Catolevis et futilis est; Solonest mundi et voluptatum servus et mancipium, non legislator. Pythagoras nec sophos, nec philosophus est. Bias nec mundi nec inanis gloriæ contemptor. Alexander Macedo ignavus est,” &c. Another work bears this title: “Exercitationes Apologeticæ pro Divinâ Gratiâ, studio et industria Samuelis Rhætorfortis, Anwetensis, in Gallovidiâ, Scotiæ provinciâ Pastoris.” The preface, or dedication, to Gordon of Kenmure, is very characteristic, ending thus: “Non enim ignoras in hac valle miseriarum minime sistendum, neque tentorium figendum; ad æternitatem ipsam (quod vere magnum nomen est & ineffabile) te vocari; crescere iter, decrescere diem, omnia alia aliena, tempus tantum nostrum esse, si modo nostrum est.” In this preface he calls himself “Pastor Anwetensis,” the old spelling of Anwoth being Anweth. His correspondents were chiefly persons residing either in Galloway, where Anwoth was, or in Ayrshire; for these two counties at that time were rich in godly men of some standing. His pen suggests often, by a few strokes, very much that is profound and impressive. There is something not easily forgotten in the words used to express

the Church's indestructibility when he says, "The bush has been burning these five thousand years, and no man yet saw the ashes of that fire" (Letter 317.). How much truth is conveyed in that saying, "Losses for Christ are but goods given out in bank in Christ's hand." There is an ingenious use of Scripture that often delights the reader; as when he speaks of "The corn on the house-tops that never got the husbandman's prayer," or of "Him that counteth the basons and knives of His house (Ezra 1:9-10), and bringeth them back safe to His second temple" (Letter 333.).

It is a curious fact that only in Letter 325., does he speak of the Holy Spirit, though elsewhere (see "Life of Grace") very full are his statements of the Spirit's work. The truth is, a man full of the Holy Ghost is full of Christ and testifies to Him.

These letters will ever be precious to—

1. All who are sensible of their own, and the Church's decay and corruptions.—The wound and the cure are therein so fully opened out: self is exposed, specially spiritual self. He will tell you, "There is as much need to watch over grace, as to watch over sin." He will show you God in Christ, to fill up the place usurped by self. The subtleties of sin, idols, snares, temptations, self-deceptions, are dragged into view from time to time. And what is better still, the cords of Christ are twined round the roots of these bitter plants, that they may be plucked up. Nor is it otherwise in regard to corruption in public, and in the Church. We do not mean merely the open corruption of error, but also the secret "grey hairs" of decay. Hear him cry, "There is universal deadness on all that fear God. O where are the sometime quickening breathings and influences from heaven that have refreshed His hidden ones!" And then he laments, in the name of the saints, "We are half satisfied with our witheredness; nor have we as much of his strain who doth eight times breathe out that suit (Psalms 119), Quicken me!" "We live far from the well, and complain but dryly of our dryness."

2. All who delight in the Surety's imputed righteousness.—If thoroughly aware of the body of sin in ourselves we cannot but feel that we need a person in our stead—the person of the God-man in the room of our guilty person. "To us a Son is given;" not salvation only, but a Saviour. "He gave Himself for us."

These letters are ever leading us to the Surety and His righteousness. The eye never gets time to rest long on anything apart from Him and His righteousness. We are shown the deluge-waters undried up, in order to lead us into the ark again: "I had fainted, had not want and penury chased me to the storehouse of all."

3. All who rejoice in the Gospel of free grace.—Lord Kenmure having said to him, "Sin causeth me to be jealous of His love to such a man as I have been," he replied, "Be jealous of yourself, my Lord, but not of Jesus Christ." In his "Trial and Triumph of Faith" he remarks, "As holy walking is a duty coming from us, it is no ground of true peace. Believers often seek in themselves what they should seek in Christ." It is to the like effect he says in one of his letters, "Your heart is not the compass that Christ saileth by,"—turning away his friend from looking inward, to look upon the heart of Jesus. And this is his meaning, when he thus lays the whole burden of salvation on the Lord, and leaves nothing for us but acceptance, "Take ease to thyself, and let Him bear all." [59] Then, pointing us to the risen Saviour as our pledge of complete redemption, "Faith may dance, because Christ singeth;" [60] "Faith apprehendeth pardon, but never payeth a penny for it." [61] On his death-bed he said to his friends, "I disclaim all that ever God made me will or do, and I look

upon it as defiled and imperfect.” And so in his Letters he will admit of no addition, or intermixture of other things, “The Gospel is like a small hair that hath no breadth, and will not cleave in two.”[62] He exhorts to Assurance as being the way to be humbled very low before God: “Complaining is but a humble backbiting and traducing of Christ’s new work in the soul.” “Make meikle of assurance, for it keepeth your anchor fixed.”[63] He warns us, in his “Trial and Triumph of Faith,” “not to be too desirous of keen awakenings to chase us to Christ. Let Christ tutor me as he thinketh good. He has seven eyes: I have but one, and that too dim.” In a similar strain he writes:—“The law shall never be my doomster, by Christ’s grace; I shall find a sure enough doom in the Gospel to humble and cast me down. There cannot be a more humble soul than a believer. It is no pride in a drowning man to catch hold of a rock.”[64] How much truth there is here! Naaman never was humble in any degree, until he felt himself completely healed of his scaly leprosy; but truly he was humbled and humble then. And what one word is there that suggests so many humbling thoughts as that word “grace”?

[59] Letter 182.

[60] Letter 183.

[61] Letter 182.

[62] Letter 279.

[63] Letter 288.

[64] Letter 230.

4. All who seek to grow in holiness.—The Holy Ghost delights to show us the glorious Godhead, in the face of Jesus. And this is a very frequent theme in these Letters. “Take Christ for sanctification, as well as justification,” is often his theme. And in him we see a man who seems to have fought for holiness as unceasingly and as eagerly as other men seek for pardon and peace. In him “Holiness to the Lord” seems written on every affection of the heart, and on every fresh-springing thought.

Fellowship with the living God is a distinguishing feature in the holiness given by the Holy Ghost; we get “access by one Spirit to the Father through Him.”[65] Rutherford could sometimes say, “I have been so near Him that I have said, ‘I take instruments that this is the Lord.’”[66] And he could from experience declare, “I dare avouch, the saints know not the length and largeness of the sweet Earnest, and of the sweet green sheaves before the harvest, that might be had on this side of the water, if we should take more pains.”[67] “I am every way in your case, as hard-hearted and dead as any man, but yet I speak to Christ through my sleep.”[68] All this is from the pen of a man who was a metaphysician, a controversialist, a leader in the church, and learned in ancient and scholastic lore. Why are there not such gracious, as well as great men now?

[65] Ephesians 2:18.

[66] Letter 99 [67] Letter 202.

[68] Letter 286.

5. All afflicted persons.—Here he had the very “tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to him that was weary.” And with what tender sympathy does he speak, leading the mourner so

gently to the heart of Jesus! He knew the heart of a stranger, for he had been a stranger. “Let no man after me slander Christ for His cross.”[69] Yes, says he, His most loved are often His most tried: “The lintel-stone and pillars of His New Jerusalem suffer more knocks of God’s hammer and tools than the common side-wall stones.”[70] Even as to reproach and calumny, he declares, “I love Christ’s worst reproaches.”

[69] Letter 107

[70] Letter 102

It was to Hugh M’Kail, uncle of the youthful martyr, that he penned the words, “Some have written me that I am possibly too joyful of the cross; but my joy overleapeth the cross—it is bounded and terminated on Christ.”[71] And there it was he found a well of comfort never dry.

[71] Letter 206.

6. All who love the Person of Christ.—We have too often been satisfied with speculative truth and abstract doctrine. On the one hand, the orthodox have too often rested in the statements of our Catechisms and Confessions; and, on the other, the “Election-doubters” (as Bunyan would have called them) have pressed their favourite dogma, that Christ died for all men, as if mere assent to a proposition could save the soul. Rutherford places the truth before us in a more accurate, and also more savoury way, full of life and warmth. The Person of Him who gave Himself for His church is held up in all its attractiveness. With him, it is ever the Person as much as the work done; or rather, never the one apart from the other. Like Paul, he would fain know Him, as well as the power of His resurrection.[72]

[72] Php 3:10.

Once, when Lord Kenmure asked him, “What will Christ be like when He cometh?” his reply was, “All lovely.” And this is everywhere the favourite theme with him. At times he tells of His love. “His love surroundeth and surchargeth me.”[73] “If His love was not in heaven, I should be unwilling to go thither.”[74] Often he checks his pen to tell of Christ Himself, “Welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet cross of Christ;”—then correcting his language, “Welcome, fair, lovely, royal King, with Thine own cross.”[75] “O if I could doat as much upon Himself as I do upon His love.”[76] “I fear I make more of His love than of Himself.”[77] How startling yet how true, is this remark, “I see that in communion with Christ we may make more gods than one,”[78]—meaning that we may be tempted to make the enjoyment itself our god. It was his habitual aim to pass through privileges, joys, even fellowship, to God Himself: “I have casten this work upon Christ, to get me Himself.”[79] “I would be farther in upon Christ than at His joys; in, where love and mercy lodgeth; beside His heart.”[80] “He who sitteth on the throne is His lone a sufficient heaven.”[81] “Sure I am He is the far best half of heaven.”[82]

[73] Letter 104

[74] Letter 104

[75] Letter 61 [76] Letter 160.

[77] Letter 179.

[78] Letter 168.

[79] Letter 187.

[80] Letter 286.

[81] Letter 352.

[82] Letter 279. In a word, such was his soul's view of the living Person, that he writes, "Holiness is not Christ, nor the blossoms and flowers of the tree of life, nor the tree itself." [83] He had found out the true fountain-head, and would direct all Zion's travellers thither. And let a man try this; let the Holy Spirit lead a man to this Person;—and surely his experience will be, "None ever came up dry from David's well."

[83] Letter 336.

7. All who love that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God our Saviour.—The more we love the Person of Christ, the more ought we to love His appearing; and the more we cherish both feelings, the holier shall we become. Rutherford abounds in aspirations for that day; he is one who "looks for and hastens unto the coming of the day of God!" While in exile at Aberdeen in 1637, he writes, "O when will we meet! O how long is it to the dawning of the marriage day! O sweet Jesus, take wide steps! O my Lord, come over mountains at one stride! O my Beloved, flee as a roe or young hart upon the fountains of separation." Now and then he utters the expression of an intense desire for the restoration of Israel to their Lord, and the fulness of the Gentiles; but far oftener his desires go forth to his Lord Himself. "O fairest among the sons of men, why stayest Thou so long away? O heavens, move fast! O time, run, run, and hasten the marriage day!" To Lady Kenmure his words are, "The Lord hath told you what you should be doing till He come. 'Wait and hasten,' saith Peter, 'for the coming of the Lord.' Sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and the breaking of that day, of the coming of the Son of Man, when the shadows shall flee away. Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky." Those saints who feel most keenly the world's enmity, and the Church's imperfection, are those who will most fervently love their Lord's appearing. It was thus with Daniel on the banks of Ulai, and with John in Patmos; and Samuel Rutherford's most intense aspirations for that day are breathed out in Aberdeen. His description of himself on one occasion is, "A man often borne down and hungry, and waiting for the marriage supper of the Lamb." [84] He is now gone to the "mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense;" and there he no doubt still wonders at the unopened, unsearchable treasures of Christ. But O for his insatiable desires Christward! O for ten such men in Scotland to stand in the gap!—men who all day long find nothing but Christ to rest in, whose very sleep is a pursuing after Christ in dreams, and who intensely desire to "awake with His likeness."

[84] Letter 63

### 0.3. List of his Works

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#### LIST OF HIS WORKS.

1. Exercitationes Apologeticæ pro Divina Gratia. Amstelodami, 12mo, 1636. Franekeræ, 1651.
2. A Peaceable and Temperate Plea for Paul's Presbytery in Scotland. London, 4to, 1642.
3. A Sermon before the House of Commons, on Daniel 6:26. London, 4to, 1644.
4. A Sermon before the House of Lords, on Luke 7:22; Mark 4:38; Matthew 8:26. London, 4to, 1645.
5. "Lex Rex:" The Law and the Prince. London, 4to, 1644. In Fullarton's Scottish Nation, 1862, mention is made of another work which is in reality the same as this; on Civil Polity. London, 4to, 1657. It is not, however, a separate work, but merely one of the editions of the well-known Lex Rex—the edition of 1657, which has the following title:—Lex Rex; a Treatise of Civil Polity; being a Resolution of Forty-three Questions concerning Prerogative, Right, and Privilege, in reference to the Supreme Prince and People. The change in the title was a device of the printer, in order to elude the Government, who sought to suppress the book.
6. The Due Right of Presbyteries. London, 4to, 1644.
7. The Trial and Triumph of Faith. London, 4to, 1645.
8. The Divine Right of Church Government and Excommunication. London, 4to, 1646. Appended to this is A Dispute touching Scandal and Christian Liberty.
9. Christ Dying and Drawing Sinners to Himself. London, 4to, 1647.
10. A Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist. London, 1648. To which is appended, A Modest Survey of the Secrets of Antinomianism.
11. A Free Disputation against Pretended Liberty of Conscience. London, 4to, 1649.
12. The Last and Heavenly Speeches of John Gordon, Viscount Kenmure. Edinburgh, 4to, 1649.
13. Disputatio Scholastica de Divina Providentia. Edinburgh, 4to, 1651.
14. The Covenant of Life Opened. Edinburgh, 4to, 1655.
15. A Survey of Mr. Hooker's Church Discipline; or, A Survey of the Survey of that Summe of Discipline penned by Mr. Thomas Hooker. London, 4to, 1658.
16. Influences of the Life of Grace. The last work published in his lifetime. London, 4to, 1659. The original title page adds:—"A Practical Treatise concerning the way, manner, and means of having and improving spiritual dispositions and quickening influences from Christ, the Resurrection and the Life."

## POSTHUMOUS.

17. Joshua Redivivus; or, Mr. Rutherford's Letters. First Edition, 12mo, 1664. No printer's name and no place mentioned.

18. Examen Arminianismi. Ultrajecti (Utrecht), 12mo, 1668.

19. A Testimony left by Mr. S. Rutherford to the Work of Reformation in Great Britain and Ireland before his death. Date uncertain.

20. Twelve Communion Sermons. Glasgow, 1876. This collection includes Christ's Napkin; and Song of Solomon 2:14-17, Christ and the Dove's Heavenly Salutation. These have internal evidence in their favour, viz. the language and general strain of thought. Add to these The Lamb's Marriage, Revelation 19:7; and another on Song of Solomon 2:1-8 appended to a second edition, 1877, with the title, "Fourteen Communion Sermons," 1877.

21. The Cruel Watchmen. The Door of Salvation Opened. Edinburgh, 1735. Song of Solomon 5:7-10. These two are doubtful; at all events, very imperfect, as usually printed. The old edition of The Cruel Watchmen is good.

22. There is a Treatise on Prayer; The Power and Prevalency of Truth and Prayer evidenced, in a Practical Discourse upon Matthew 9:27-31. Printed in the year 1713. It is a small duodecimo of 111 pp., and has this note appended: "The rest of this Discourse cannot be found, it being above fifty years since the author died."

An old Catalogue of the most Vendible Books, in 1658, gives as one of his works, A Rationale on the Book of Common Prayer, 8vo. But this is a mistake; Antony Sparrow wrote the book entitled, The Rationale, or Practical Exposition of the Book of Common Prayer.

The Diaries of Brodie of Brodie (Spalding Club—Preface p. 19:), refer to "Shorthand Notes of two Sermons by S. Rutherford." Brodie used to correspond with him, for we find, August 6, 1655: "Mr. Rutherford exhorted me in his letter that my right hand might not know what my left hand did; and he says that he knows not but that the Lord may divorce the mother, but be a sanctuary to the little ones." We find further that S. R. wrote urging Brodie "to present Mr. Thomas Ross to Ila."

23. Quaint Sermons (eighteen in number), by S. R., never before published, with a prefatory note by Rev. And. A. Bonar. Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1885.

## 001. To Marion M'Naught.—Children to be Dedicated to God

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1.—For Marion M'Naught, on the return home of her daughter.

[In the early editions the date stands "1624," by a mistake for "1627;" for Rutherford was not settled in Anwoth in 1624. For a full notice of Marion M'Naught, see what is prefixed to Letter 6.]  
(CHILDREN TO BE DEDICATED TO GOD.)

WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. I have sent to you your daughter Grizel with Robert Gordon, who came to fetch her. I am in good hopes that the seed of God is in her, as in one born of God; and God's seed will come to God's harvest. I have her promise she shall be Christ's. For I have told her she may promise much in His worthy name; for He becomes caution to His Father for all such as resolve and promise to serve Him. I will remember her to God. I trust you will acquaint her with good company, and be diligent to know with whom she loveth to haunt. Remember Zion, and our necessities. I bless your daughter from our Lord, and pray the Lord to give you joy and comfort of her. Remember my love to your husband, to William and Samuel your sons. The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Yours at all power in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, June 6, 1627.

## 002. To a Christian Gentlewoman, on the death of a Daughter.—Christ's Sympathy with, and Prop...

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2.—To a Christian Gentlewoman on the death of her daughter.

(CHRIST'S SYMPATHY WITH, AND PROPERTY IN US—REASONS FOR RESIGNATION.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered to you. I was indeed sorrowful at my departure from you, especially since ye were in such heaviness after your daughter's death. Yet I do persuade myself, ye know that the weightiest end of the cross of Christ that is laid upon you lieth upon your strong Saviour; for Isaiah saith, "In all your afflictions He is afflicted" (Isaiah 63:9). O blessed Second who suffereth with you! and glad may your soul be even to walk in the fiery furnace with one like unto the Son of Man, who is also the Son of God. Courage! up your heart! When ye do tire, He will bear both you and your burden (Psalms 55:22). Yet a little while and ye shall see the salvation of God. Remember of what age your daughter was, and that just so long was your lease of her. If she was eighteen, nineteen, or twenty years old, I know not; but sure I am, seeing her term was come, and your lease run out, ye can no more justly quarrel your great Superior for taking His own at His just term day, than a poor farmer can complain that his master taketh a portion of his own land to himself when his lease is expired. Good mistress, if ye would not be content that Christ would hold from you the heavenly inheritance which is made yours by His death, shall not that same Christ think hardly of you if ye refuse to give Him your daughter willingly, who is a part of His inheritance and conquest? I pray the Lord to give you all your own, and to grace you with patience to give God His also. He is an ill debtor who payeth that which he hath borrowed with a grudge. Indeed, that long loan of such a good daughter, an heir of grace, a member of Christ (as I believe), deserveth more thanks at your Creditor's hands, than that ye should gloom and murmur when He craveth but His own. I believe you would judge them to be but thankless neighbours who would pay you a sum of money after this manner. But what? Do you think her lost, when she is but sleeping in the bosom of the Almighty? Think her not absent who is in such a friend's house. Is she lost to you who is found to Christ? If she were with a dear friend, although you should never see her again, your care for her would be but small. Oh, now, is she not with a dear Friend? and gone higher, upon a certain hope that ye shall, in the Resurrection, see her again, when (be ye sure) she shall neither be hectic nor consumed in body? You would be sorry either to be, or to be esteemed, an atheist; and yet, not I, but the Apostle, thinketh those to be hopeless atheists who mourn excessively for the dead (Thess. 4: 13). But this is not a challenge on my part. I do speak this only fearing your weakness; for your daughter was a part of yourself; and, therefore, nature in you, being as it were cut and halved, will indeed be grieved. But ye have to rejoice, that when a part of you is on earth, a great part of you is glorified in heaven. Follow her, but envy her not; for indeed it is self-love in us that maketh us mourn for them that die in the Lord. Why? Because for them we cannot mourn, since they are never happy till they be dead; therefore we mourn for our own private respect. Take heed, then, that in showing your affection in mourning for your daughter, ye be not, out of self-affection, mourning for yourself.

Consider what the Lord is doing in it. Your daughter is plucked out of the fire, and she resteth from her labours; and your Lord, in that, is trying you, and casting you in the fire. Go through all fires to your rest; and now remember that the eye of God is upon the bush burning and not consumed; and He is gladly content that such a weak woman as you should send Satan away, frustrate of his design. Now honour God, and shame the strong roaring lion, when ye seem weakest. Should such an one as ye faint in the day of adversity? Call to mind the days of old. The Lord yet liveth. Trust in Him, although He should slay you. Faith is exceeding charitable, and believeth no evil of God.[85] Now is the Lord laying, in the one scale of the balance, your making conscience of submission to His gracious will, and in the other, your affection and love to your daughter. Which of the two will ye then choose to satisfy? Be wise, then; and as I trust ye love Christ better than a sinful woman, pass by your daughter, and kiss the Lord's rod. Men do lop the branches off their trees round about, to the end they may grow up high and tall. The Lord hath this way lopped your branch in taking from you many children, to the end you should grow upward, like one of the Lord's cedars, setting your heart above, where Christ is, at the right hand of the Father. What is next, but that your Lord cut down the stock after He hath cut the branches? Prepare yourself; you are nearer your daughter this day than you were yesterday. While ye prodigally spend time in mourning for her, ye are speedily posting after her. Run your race with patience. Let God have His own; and ask of Him, instead of your daughter which He hath taken from you, the daughter of faith, which is patience; and in patience possess your soul. Lift up your head: ye do not know how near your redemption doth draw, Thus recommending you to the Lord, who is able to establish you, I rest, your loving and affectionate friend in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, April 23, 1628.

[85] So in his "sermon before the House of Lords," 1645: "Faith thinketh no evil of Christ." Also Letters 20 and 92 "Love believeth no evil."

KENMURE HOUSE.

### 003. To Lady Kenmure, on occasion of illness and spiritual depression.—Acquiescence in God's ...

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3.—To the Viscountess of Kenmure, on occasion of illness and spiritual depression.

[Lady Jane Campbell, Viscountess of Kenmure, was the third daughter of Archibald Campbell, seventh Earl of Argyle, and sister to the Marquis of Argyle who was beheaded in 1661. She was a woman distinguished, in her day, for the depth of her piety, and her warm attachment to the Presbyterian interest in Scotland. Nor was she less distinguished for generosity and munificence, than for piety. Her bounty was in a particular manner extended to those whom suffering for conscience' sake had reduced to poverty or exile. In the year 1628 she was married to Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar, afterwards Viscount Kenmure and Lord Gordon of Lochinvar, which is not far from Carsphairn. This union did not last many years. In 1634 she became a widow, his Lordship having died at Kenmure Castle, on the 12th of September that year, in the 35th year of his age. But her sorrow on this occasion was alleviated by the Christian resignation and faith which he was enabled to exercise under his last illness. To this noble man she had two daughters, who died in infancy, one about the beginning of the year 1629, and the other in 1634, as may be gathered from allusions to these bereavements, contained in two consolatory letters written to her by Rutherford in these years. She had also, by the same marriage, a son, John, second Viscount of Kenmure, who, however, died under age and unmarried, in August 1649. This event forms the subject of a letter written to her by Rutherford the 1st of October that year. She married a second husband, on the 21st of September 1640, the Hon. Sir Henry Montgomery of Giffen, second son of Alexander, fifth Earl of Eglinton; but this marriage was without issue. Sir Henry's religious views were congenial to her own; and he is described as an "active and faithful friend of the Lord's kirk." She was soon left a widow a second time, in which state she lived till a very venerable age, having survived the Restoration a number of years, as appears from the fact that Livingstone, at the time of his death (which took place at Rotterdam in 1672), speaks of her as the oldest acquaintance he then had alive in Scotland. She was a regular correspondent of Rutherford, the last of whose letters to her is dated July the 24th, 1661, after the execution of her brother above mentioned. Nor after Mr. Rutherford's death was she unmindful of his widow. "Madam," says Mr. M'Ward, in a letter to her, "Mrs. Rutherford gives me often an account of the singular testimony which she met with of your Ladyship's affection to her and her daughter."

Kenmure Castle is well seen from the road that leads along the banks of the Ken. The loch, the river, the old baronial house, combine to attract notice. It is built on an insulated knoll, well wooded all around. It is four miles from Dalry, and the approach is through an avenue of lime-trees. The old garden has a hedge of very lofty beech trees, and a curious dial with a Latin inscription, dated "1623. Joannes Bonar fecit"—the name of the person who (it is said) brought it from the Continent.]

(ACQUIESCENCE IN GOD'S PURPOSE—FAITH IN EXERCISE—ENCOURAGEMENT IN VIEW OF SICKNESS AND DEATH—PUBLIC AFFAIRS.)

MADAM,—All dutiful obedience in the Lord remembered. I have heard of your Ladyship's infirmity and sickness with grief; yet I trust ye have learned to say, "It is the Lord, let Him do whatsoever seemeth good in His eyes." It is now many years since the apostate angels made a question, whether their will or the will of their Creator should be done; and since that time, froward mankind hath always in that same suit of law compeared to plead with them against God, in daily repining against His will. But the Lord being both party and judge, hath obtained a decreet, and saith, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10). It is then best for us, in the obedience of faith, and in an holy submission, to give that to God which the law of His almighty and just power will have of us. Therefore, Madam, your Lord willeth you, in all states of life, to say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven:" and herein shall ye have comfort, that He, who seeth perfectly through all your evils, and knoweth the frame and constitution of your nature, and what is most healthful for your soul, holdeth every cup of affliction to your head, with His own gracious hand. Never believe that your tender-hearted Saviour, who knoweth the strength of your stomach, will mix that cup with one drachm-weight of poison. Drink then with the patience of the saints, and the God of patience bless your physic.

I have heard your Ladyship complain of deadness, and want of the bestirring power of the life of God. But courage! He who walked in the garden, and made a noise that made Adam hear His voice, will also at some times walk in your soul, and make you hear a more sweet word. Yet, ye will not always hear the noise and the din of His feet, when He walketh. Ye are, at such a time, like Jacob mourning at the supposed death of Joseph, when Joseph was living. The new creature, the image of the second Adam, is living in you; and yet ye are mourning at the supposed death of the life of Christ in you. Ephraim is bemoaning and mourning (Jeremiah 31:18), when he thinketh God is far off and heareth not; and yet God is like the bridegroom (Song of Solomon 2:9), standing only behind a thin wall and laying to His ear; for He saith Himself, "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself." I have good confidence, Madam, that Christ Jesus, whom your soul through forests and mountains is seeking, is within you. And yet I speak not this to lay a pillow under your head, or to dissuade you from a holy fear of the loss of your Christ, or of provoking and "stirring up the Beloved before He please," by sin. I know, in spiritual confidence, the devil will come in, as in all other good works, and cry "Half mine;" and so endeavour to bring you under a fearful sleep, till He whom your soul loveth be departed from the door, and have left off knocking. And, therefore, here the Spirit of God must hold your soul's feet in the golden mid-line, betwixt confident resting in the arms of Christ, and presumptuous and drowsy sleeping in the bed of fleshly security. Therefore, worthy lady, so count little of yourself, because of your own wretchedness and sinful drowsiness, that ye count not also little of God, in the course of His unchangeable mercy. For there be many Christians most like unto young sailors, who think the shore and the whole land doth move, when the ship and they themselves are moved; just so, not a few do imagine that God moveth and saileth[86] and changeth places, because their giddy souls are under sail, and subject to alteration, to ebbing and flowing. But "the foundation of the Lord abideth sure." God knoweth that ye are His own. Wrestle, fight, go forward, watch, fear, believe, pray; and then ye have all the infallible symptoms of one of the elect of Christ within you.

[86] So it is in the earlier editions; not "faileth."

Ye have now, Madam, a sickness before you; and also after that a death. Gather then now food for the journey. God give you eyes to see through sickness and death, and to see something

beyond death. I doubt not but that, if hell were betwixt you and Christ, as a river which ye behoved to cross ere you could come at Him, but ye would willingly put in your foot, and make through to be at Him, upon hope that He would come in Himself, in the deepest of the river, and lend you His hand. Now, I believe your hell is dried up, and ye have only these two shallow brooks, sickness and death, to pass through; and ye have also a promise that Christ shall do more than meet you, even that He shall come Himself, and go with you foot for foot, yea and bear you in His arms. O then! O then! for the joy that is set before you; for the love of the Man (who is also “God over all, blessed for ever”), that is standing upon the shore to welcome you, run your race with patience. The Lord go with you. Your Lord will not have you, nor any of His servants, to exchange for the worse. Death in itself includeth both the death of the soul and the death of the body; but to God’s children the bounds and the limits of death are abridged and drawn into a more narrow compass. So that when ye die, a piece of death shall only seize upon you, or the least part of you shall die, and that is the dissolution of the body; for in Christ ye are delivered from the second death; and, therefore, as one born of God, commit not sin (although ye cannot live and not sin), and that serpent shall but eat your earthly part. As for your soul, it is above the law of death. But it is fearful and dangerous to be a debtor and servant to sin; for the count of sin ye will not be able to make good before God, except Christ both count and pay for you.

I trust also, Madam, that ye will be careful to present to the Lord the present estate of this decaying kirk. For what shall be concluded in Parliament anent[87] her, the Lord knoweth. Sure I am, the decree of a most fearful parliament in heaven is at the very point of coming forth, because of the sins of the land. For “we have cast away the law of the Lord, and despised the words of the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 5:24). “Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter” (Isaiah 59:14). Lo! the prophet, as if he had seen us and our kirk, resembleth Justice to be handled as an enemy holden out at the ports of our city [so is she banished!], and Truth to a person sickly and diseased, fallen down in a deadly swooning fit in the streets, before he can come to an house. “The priests have caused many to stumble at the law, and have corrupted the covenant of Levi” (Malachi 2:3). “But what will they do in the end?” Therefore give the Lord no rest for Zion. Stir up your husband, your brother,[88] and all with whom ye are in favour and credit, to stand upon the Lord’s side against Baal. I have good hope that your husband loveth the peace and prosperity of Zion. The peace of God be upon him, for his intended courses anent the establishment of a powerful ministry in this land. Thus, not willing to weary your Ladyship further, I commend you now, and always, to the grace and mercy of that God who is able to keep you, that ye fall not. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Your Ladyship’s servant at all dutiful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, July 27, 1628.

[87] “In reference to her,”—alluding to the known design of Charles I. to enforce conformity to Episcopacy.

[88] The Marquis of Argyle.

## 004. To Lady Kenmure, on death of her infant Daughter.—Tribulation the Portion of God's Peopl...

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4.—To the Elect and Noble Lady, myLady Kenmure, on occasion of the death of her infant daughter.

(TRIBULATION THE PORTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE, AND INTENDED TO WEAN THEM FROM THE WORLD.)

MADAM,—Saluting your Ladyship with grace and mercy from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,—I was sorry, at my departure, leaving your Ladyship in grief, and would still be grieved at it, if I were not assured that ye have One with you in the furnace, whose visage is like unto the Son of God. I am glad that ye have been acquainted from your youth with the wrestlings of God, and that ye get scarce liberty to swallow down your spittle, being casten from furnace to furnace, knowing if ye were not dear to God, and if your health did not require so much of Him, He would not spend so much physic upon you. All the brethren and sisters of Christ must be conform to His image and copy in suffering (Romans 8:29). And some do more vively resemble the copy than others. Think, Madam, that it is a part of your glory to be enrolled among those whom one of the elders pointed out to John, “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Behold your Forerunner going out of the world all in a lake of blood, and it is not ill to die as He did. Fulfill with joy the remnant of the grounds and “remainders of the afflictions of Christ” in your body (Colossians 1:24). Ye have lost a child: nay she is not lost to you who is found to Christ. She is not sent away, but only sent before, like unto a star, which going out of our sight doth not die and evanish, but shineth in another hemisphere. Ye see her not, yet she doth shine in another country. If her glass was but a short hour, what she wanteth of time that she hath gotten of eternity; and ye have to rejoice that ye have now some plenishing up in heaven. Build your nest upon no tree here; for ye see God hath sold the forest to death; and every tree whereupon we would rest is ready to be cut down, to the end we may fly<sup>[89]</sup>and mount up, and build upon the Rock, and dwell in the holes of the Rock. What ye love besides Jesus, your husband, is an adulterous lover. Now it is God's special blessing to Judah, that He will not let her find her paths in following her strange lovers. “Therefore, behold I will hedge up her way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them” (Hosea 2:6-7). O thrice happy Judah, when God buildeth a double stone wall betwixt her and the fire of hell! The world, and the things of the world, Madam, is the lover ye naturally affect beside your own husband Christ. The hedge of thorns and the wall which God buildeth in your way, to hinder you from this lover, is the thorny hedge of daily grief, loss of children, weakness of body, iniquity of the time, uncertainty of estate, lack of worldly comfort, fear of God's anger for old unrepented-of sins. What lose ye, if God twist and plait the hedge daily thicker? God be blessed, the Lord will not let you find your paths. Return to your first husband. Do not weary, neither think that death walketh towards you with a slow pace. Ye must be riper ere ye be shaken. Your days are no longer than Job's, that were “swifter than a

post, and passed away as the ships of desire, and as the eagle that hasteth for the prey" (9: 25, 26, margin). There is less sand in your glass now than there was yesternight. This span-length of ever-posting time will soon be ended. But the greater is the mercy of God, the more years ye get to advise, upon what terms, and upon what conditions, ye cast your soul in the huge gulf of never-ending eternity. The Lord hath told you what ye should be doing till He come. "Wait and hasten," saith Peter, "for the Coming of our Lord." All is night that is here, in respect of ignorance and daily ensuing troubles, one always making way to another, as the ninth wave of the sea to the tenth; therefore sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and the breaking of that day of the Coming of the Son of Man, when the shadows shall flee away. Persuade yourself the King is coming; read His letter sent before Him, "Behold, I come quickly" (Revelation 3:11). Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky, and think that ye have not a morrow. As the wise father said, who, being invited against to-morrow to dine with his friend, answered, "Those many days I have had no morrow at all." I am loth to weary you. Show yourself a Christian, by suffering without murmuring, for which sin fourteen thousand and seven hundred were slain (Numbers 16:49). In patience possess your soul. They lose nothing who gain Christ. Thus remembering my brother's and my wife's humble service to your Ladyship, I commend you to the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus, assuring you that your day is coming, and that God's mercy is abiding you. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

[89] In the earlier editions it is given "fly" throughout; not "flee."

Yours in the Lord Jesus at all dutiful obedience,

S. R.

Anwoth, Jan. 15, 1629.

## **005. To Lady Kenmure, when removing from Anwoth.—Changes—Loss of Friends—This World no abidin...**

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5.—To myLady Kenmure, upon her removal with her husband from the parish of Anwoth.

(CHANGES AND LOSS OF FRIENDS—THIS WORLD NO ABIDING PLACE.)

MADAM,—Saluting you in Jesus Christ,—to my grief I must bid you (it may be, for ever) farewell, in paper, having small assurance ever to see your face again till the last general assembly, where the whole church universal shall meet; yet promising, by His grace, to present your Ladyship and your burdens to Him who is able to save you, and give you an inheritance with the saints, after a more special manner than ever I have done before.[90]

[90] Lord Kenmure and his lady resided at Rusco, in the parish of Anwoth, during the first two years of Rutherford's ministry there; but they were now about to leave it. See Letter 147.

Ye are going to a country where the Sun of righteousness, in the Gospel, shineth not so clearly as in this kingdom; but if ye would know where He whom your soul loveth doth rest, and where He feedeth at the noontide of the day, wherever ye be, get you forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed yourself beside the shepherds' tents (Song of Solomon 1:7-8), that is, ask for some of the watchmen of the Lord's city, who will tell you truly, and will not lie, where ye shall find Him whom your soul loveth. I trust ye are so betrothed in marriage to the true Christ, that ye will not give your love to any false Christ. Ye know not how soon your marriage-day will come; nay, is not eternity hard upon you? It were time, then, that ye had your wedding garment in readiness. Be not sleeping at your Lord's Coming. I pray God you may be upon your feet standing when He knocketh. Be not discouraged to go from this country to another part of the Lord's earth: "The earth is His, and the fulness thereof." This is the Lord's lower house; while we are lodged here, we have no assurance to lie ever in one chamber, but must be content to remove from one corner of our Lord's nether house to another, resting in hope that, when we come up to the Lord's upper city, "Jerusalem that is above," we shall remove no more, because then we shall be at home. And go wheresoever ye will, if your Lord go with you, ye are at home; and your lodging is ever taken before night, so long as He who is Israel's dwelling-house is your home (Psalms 90:1). Believe me, Madam, my mind is that ye are well lodged, and that in your house there are fair ease-rooms and pleasant lights, if ye can in faith lean down your head upon the breast of Jesus Christ: and till this be, ye shall never get a sound sleep. Jesus, Jesus, be your shadow and your covering. It is a sweet soul-sleep to lie in the arms of Christ; for His breath is very sweet.

Pray for poor friendless Zion. Alas! no man will speak for her now, although at home in her own country she hath good friends, her husband Christ, and His Father her Father-in-law. Beseech your husband to be a friend to Zion, and pray for her.

I have received many and divers dashes and heavy strokes since the Lord called me to the ministry; but indeed I esteem your departure from us amongst the weightiest. But I perceive God

will have us to be deprived of whatsoever we idolize, that He may have His own room. I see exceeding small fruit of my ministry, and would be glad to know of one soul to be my crown and rejoicing in the day of Christ. Though I spend my strength in vain, yet my labour is with my God (Isaiah 49:4). I wish and pray that the Lord would harden my face against all, and make me to learn to go with my face against a storm. Again I commend you, body and spirit, to Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sin in His own blood. Grace, grace, grace for ever be with you. Pray, pray continually. Your Ladyship's at all dutiful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Sept. 14, 1629.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

## 006. To Marion M'Naught, telling of his Wife's illness.—Inward Conflict, arising from Outward...

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6.—For Marion M'Naught, on occasion of the illness of his wife.

[Marion M'Naught was daughter to the Laird of Kilquhanatie, in Kirkpatrick Durham (see Letter 25.), the representative of an ancient family, now extinct, and connected also with the house of Kenmure, through her mother, Margaret Gordon, sister to Lord Kenmure. She became the wife of William Fullerton, Provost of Kirkcudbright, and was a woman extensively known and held in honour by the most eminent Christians and ministers of her day, on account of her rare godliness and public spirit. We find in "The Last and Heavenly Speeches of Viscount Kenmure," that by the special desire of that nobleman (who was her relative), she was in continual attendance on him as he lay on his deathbed. Her name is sometimes spelt "M'Knaight," or "M'Knaichte," the modern "Macknight." She had three children—one daughter, Grizzel, and two sons, Samuel and William,—who are often affectionately remembered in Rutherford's letters to her. The following epitaph was inscribed on her tomb, in the churchyard of Kirkcudbright:—

"Marion M'Naught, sister to John M'Naught of Kilquhanatie, an ancient and honourable baron, and spouse to William Fullerton, Provost of Kirkcudbright, died April 1643, age 58.

Sexum animis, pietate genus, genorosa, locumque Virtute exsuperans, conditur hoc tumulo." The tombstone was lost sight of, but in 1863 was discovered again in removing the earth for a grave close by. It was only in 1860 that her house (in which the meeting between Blair and Rutherford took place) was pulled down. It stood at the foot of the High Street, which was then the principal street of the town. A relative of this lady's husband, Fullerton of Carlton (see Letter 157.), wrote on her the following acrostic:—

M

More happy than imaginèd can be,

A

And blessed, are such as with heart sincere

R

Resolve to cleave to Christ, to live and die

I

In Him, with Him, and for Him to appear.

O

O what transcendent glory grows from grace!

N

None but—no, not—the soul refined shall

M'

Make to appear; that life, that light, that peace,

K

Known only to the pure possessors all.

N

Now, THOU, by grace, art into glory gone,

A

And gained the garland of eternal bliss,

I

In seeing Him who, on that glorious throne,

C

Created, uncreated, glory is.

H

Heaven's quire did sing at thy conversion sweet,

T

Time posts thy final comforts to complete.

(Append. to "Minute-Book of Committee of Covenanters.")] (INWARD CONFLICT ARISING FROM OUTWARD TRIAL.)

LOVING AND DEAR SISTER,—If ever you would pleasure me, entreat the Lord for me, now when I am so comfortless, and so full of heaviness, that I am not able to stand under the burthen any longer. The Almighty hath doubled His stripes upon me, for my wife is so sore tormented night and day, that I have wondered why the Lord tarrieth so long. My life is bitter unto me, and I fear the Lord be my contrair party. It is (as I now know by experience) hard to keep sight of God in a storm, especially when He hides Himself, for the trial of His children. If He would be pleased to remove His hand, I have a purpose to seek Him more than I have done. Happy are they that can win away with their soul. I am afraid of His judgments. I bless my God that there is a death, and a heaven. I would weary to begin again to be a Christian, so bitter is it to drink of the cup that Christ drank of, if I knew not that there is no poison in it. God give us not of it till we vomit again, for we have sick souls when God's physic works not. Pray that God would not lead my wife into temptation. Woe is my heart, that I have done so little against the kingdom of Satan in my calling; for he would fain attempt to make me blaspheme God in His face. I believe, I believe, in the strength of Him who hath put me in His work, he shall fail in that which he seeks. I have comfort in this, that my

Captain, Christ, hath said, I must fight and overcome the world, and with a weak, spoiled, weaponless devil, “the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me” (John 16:33; John 14:30). Desire Mr. Robert[91] to remember me, if he love me. Grace, grace be with you, and all yours.

[91] Mr. Robert Glendinning, then minister of Kirkcudbright. His grave may be seen there.

Remember Zion. There is a letter procured from the King by Mr. John Maxwell to urge conformity, to give the communion at Christmas in Edinburgh.[92] Hold fast that which you have, that no man take the crown from you. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

[92] Mr. J. Maxwell here mentioned was at this time a minister in Edinburgh, and afterwards became Bishop of Ross,—a man of talent, but devoid of principle, whose aim was to secure the favour of the notorious Laud, by forwarding his designs for forcing Episcopacy upon the Scottish people. The letter above referred to was from the King, urging the adoption of the English service.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth, Nov. 17, 1629.

## 007. To Lady Kenmure.—The Earnest of the Spirit—Communion with Christ—Faith in the Promises

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7.—To myLady Kenmure.

(THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT—COMMUNION WITH CHRIST—FAITH IN THE PROMISES.)

MADAM,—I have longed exceedingly to hear of your life and health, and growth in the grace of God. I lacked the opportunity of a bearer, in respect I did not understand of the hasty departure of the last, by whom I might have saluted your Ladyship, and therefore I could not write before this time. I entreat you, Madam, let me have two lines from you concerning your present condition. I know ye are in grief and heaviness; and if it were not so, ye might be afraid, because then your way should not be so like the way that (our Lord saith) leadeth to the New Jerusalem. Sure I am, if ye knew what were before you, or if ye saw but some glances of it, ye would with gladness swim through the present floods of sorrow, spreading forth your arms out of desire to be at land. If God have given you the Earnest of the Spirit, as part of payment of God's principal sum, ye have to rejoice; for our Lord will not lose His earnest, neither will He go back or repent Him of the bargain. If ye find at some time a longing to see God, joy in the assurance of that sight, howbeit that feast be but like the Passover, that cometh about only once a year. Peace of conscience, liberty of prayer, the doors of God's treasure cast up to the soul, and a clear sight of Himself looking out, and saying, with a smiling countenance, "Welcome to Me, afflicted soul;" this is the earnest that He giveth sometimes, and which maketh glad the heart, and is an evidence that the bargain will hold. But to the end ye may get this earnest, it were good to come oft into terms of speech with God, both in prayer and hearing of the word. For this is the house of wine, where ye meet with your Well-Beloved. Here it is where He kisseth you with the kisses of His mouth, and where ye feel the smell of His garments; and they have indeed a most fragrant and glorious smell. Ye must, I say, wait upon Him, and be often communing with Him, whose lips are as lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, and by the moving thereof He will assuage your grief; for the Christ that saveth you is a speaking Christ; the church knoweth Him by His voice (Song of Solomon 2:8), and can discern His tongue amongst a thousand. I say this to the end ye should not love those dumb masks of antichristian ceremonies, that the church[93] where ye are for a time hath cast over the Christ whom your soul loveth. This is to set before you a dumb Christ. But when our Lord cometh, He speaketh to the heart in the simplicity of the Gospel.

[93] Episcopal.

I have neither tongue nor pen to express to you the happiness of such as are in Christ. When ye have sold all that ye have, and bought the field wherein this pearl is, ye will think it no bad market; for if ye be in Him, all His is yours, and ye are in Him; therefore, "because He liveth, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). And what is that else, but as if the Son had said, "I will not have heaven except My redeemed ones be with Me: they and I cannot live asunder. Abide in Me, and I in you." O sweet communion, when Christ and we are through-other,[94] and are no longer two! "Father, I will that

those whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, to behold My glory that Thou hast given Me" (John 17:24). Amen, dear Jesus, let it be according to that word. I wonder that ever your heart should be cast down, if ye believe this truth. I and they are not worthy of Jesus Christ, who will not suffer forty years' trouble for Him, since they have such glorious promises. But we fools believe those promises as the man that read Plato's writings concerning the immortality of the soul: so long as the book was in his hand he believed all was true, and that the soul could not die; but so soon as he laid by the book, he began to imagine that the soul is but a smoke or airy vapour, that perisheth with the expiring of the breath. So we at starts do assent to the sweet and precious promises; but, laying aside God's book, we begin to call all in question. It is faith indeed to believe without a pledge, and to hold the heart constant at this work; and when we doubt, to run to the Law and to the Testimony, and stay there. Madam, hold you here: here is your Father's testament,—read it; in it He hath left to you remission of sins and life everlasting. If all that ye have here be crosses and troubles, down-castings, frequent desertions, and departure of the Lord, who is suiting you in marriage, courage! He who is wooer and suitor should not be an household man with you till ye and He come up to His Father's house together. He purposeth to do you good at your latter end (Deuteronomy 8:16), and to give you rest from the days of adversity (Psalms 94:13). "It is good to bear the yoke of God in your youth" (Lamentations 3:27). "Turn in to your stronghold as a prisoner of hope" (Zechariah 9:12). "For the vision is for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Habakkuk 2:3). Hear Himself saying, "Come, My people" (rejoice, He calleth on you!), "enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, till the indignation be past" (Isaiah 26:20). Believe, then, believe and be saved; think not hard if ye get not your will, nor your delights in this life; God will have you to rejoice in nothing but Himself. God forbid that ye should rejoice in anything but in the cross of Christ (Galatians 6:14).

[94] Mixed up with each other. Our church, Madam, is decaying,—she is like Ephraim's cake (Hosea 7:9); "and grey hairs are here and there upon her, and she knoweth it not." She is old and grey-haired, near the grave, and no man taketh it to heart. Her wine is sour and is corrupted. Now if Phinehas's wife did live she might travail in birth and die, to see the ark of God taken, and the glory depart from our Israel. The power and life of religion is away. "Woe be to us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out" (Jeremiah 6:4). Madam, Zion is the ship wherein ye are carried to Canaan; if she suffer shipwreck, ye will be cast overboard upon death and life, to swim to land upon broken boards. It were time for us, by prayer, to put upon our master-pilot, Jesus, and to cry, "Master, save us; we perish." Grace, grace be with you. We would think it a blessing to our kirk to see you here; but our sins withhold good things from us. The great Messenger of the Covenant preserve you in body and spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth, Feb. 1, 1630.

## 008. To Marion M'Naught.—His Wife's Illness—Wrestlings with God

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8.—For Marion M'Naught, on occasion of his wife's illness.

(WRESTLINGS WITH GOD.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Jesus Christ remembered. I am in good health; honour to my Lord; but my wife's disease increaseth daily, to her great torment and pain night and day. She has not been in God's house since our communion, neither out of her bed. I have hired a man to Edinburgh to Doctor Jeally and to John Hamilton.[95] I can hardly believe her disease is ordinary, for her life is bitter to her; she sleeps none, but cries as a woman travailing in birth. What will be the event, He that hath the keys of the grave knoweth. I have been many times, since I saw you, that I have besought the Lord to loose her out of body, and to take her to her rest. I believe the Lord's tide of afflictions will ebb again; but at present I am exercised with the wrestlings of God, being afraid of nothing more than this, that God has let loose the tempter upon my house. God rebuke him and his instruments. Because Satan is not cast out but by fasting and prayer, I entreat you remember our estate to our Lord, and entreat all good Christians whom ye know, but especially your pastor,[96] to do the same. It becomes us still to knock, and to lie at the Lord's door, until we die knocking. If He will not open, it is more than He has said in His word. But He is faithful. I look not to win away to my home without wounds and blood. Welcome, welcome cross of Christ, if Christ be with it. I have not a calm spirit in the work of my calling here, being daily chastised; yet God hath not put out my candle, as He does to the wicked. Grace, grace be with you and all yours.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth.

[95] Probably a relative of his wife, whose name was Eupham Hamilton. He was an apothecary in Edinburgh, and is mentioned among the godly in Livingstone's "Characteristics."

[96] The Rev. Mr. Robert Glendinning, then minister of Kirkcudbright.

## 009. To Marion M'Naught.—Recommending a Friend to her Care—Prayers asked

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9.—For Marion M'Naught, recommending a friend to her love.

(PRAYERS ASKED.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. At the desire of this bearer, whom I love, I thought to request you if ye can help his wife with your advice, for she is in a most dangerous and deadly-like condition. For I have thought she was changed in her carriage and life, this sometime bypast, and had hope that God would have brought her home; and now, by appearance, she will depart this life, and leave a number of children behind her. If ye can be entreated to help her, it is a work of mercy. My own wife is still in exceeding great torment night and day. Pray for us, for my life was never so wearisome to me. God hath filled me with gall and wormwood; but I believe (which holds up my head above the water), “It is good for a man,” saith the Spirit of God, “that he bear the yoke in his youth” (Lamentations 3:27).

I do remember you. I pray you be humble and believe; and I entreat you in Jesus Christ, pray for John Stuart and his wife, and desire your husband to do the same. Remember me heartily to Jean Brown. Desire her to pray for me and my wife: I do remember her. Forget not Zion. Grace, grace upon them, and peace, that pray for Zion. She is the ship we sail in to Canaan. If she be broken on a rock, we will be cast overboard, to swim to land betwixt death and life. The grace of Jesus be with your husband and children.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 010. To Marion M'Naught.—Submission, Perseverance, and Zeal recommended

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10.—For Marion M'Naught.

(SUBMISSION, PERSEVERANCE AND ZEAL RECOMMENDED.)

WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST,—I could not get an answer written to your letter till now, in respect of my wife's disease; and she is yet mightily pained. I hope that all shall end in God's mercy. I know that an afflicted life looks very like the way that leads to the kingdom; for the Apostle hath drawn the line and the King's market-way, "through much tribulation, to the kingdom" (Acts 14:22; 1 Thessalonians 3:4). The Lord grant us the whole armour of God.

Ye write to me concerning your people's disposition, how that their hearts are inclined toward the man ye know, and whom ye desire most earnestly yourself. He would most gladly have the Lord's call for transplantation; for he knows that all God's plants, set by His own hand, thrive well; and if the work be of God, He can make a stepping-stone of the devil himself for setting forward the work. For yourself, I would advise you to ask of God a submissive heart. Your reward shall be with the Lord, although the people be not gathered (as the prophet speaks); and suppose the work do not prosper, God shall account you "a repairer of the breaches." And take Christ caution, ye shall not lose your reward. Hold your grip fast. If ye knew the mind of the glorified in heaven, they think heaven come to their hand at an easy market, when they have got it for threescore or fourscore years wrestling with God. When ye are come thither, ye shall think, "All I did, in respect of my rich reward, now enjoyed of free grace, was too little." Now then, for the love of the Prince of your salvation, who is standing at the end of your way, holding up in His hand the prize and the garland to the race-runners, Forward, forward; faint not. Take as many to heaven with you as ye are able to draw. The more ye draw with you, ye shall be the welcomer yourself. Be no niggard or sparing churl of the grace of God; and employ all your endeavours for establishing an honest ministry in your town, now when ye have so few to speak a good word for you. I have many a grieved heart daily in my calling. I would be undone, if I had not access to the King's chamber of presence, to show Him all the business. The devil rages, and is mad to see the water drawn from his own mill; but would to God we could be the Lord's instruments to build the Son of God's house.

Pray for me. If the Lord furnish not new timber from Lebanon to build the house, the work will cease. I look to Him, who hath begun well with me. I have His handwrite, He will not change. Your daughter is well, and longs for a Bible. The Lord establish you in peace. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours at all power in Christ,

S. R.M

Anwoth.

## 011. To Lady Kenmure.—God's Inexplicable Dealings with His People well ordered—Want of Ordina...

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11.—To myLady Kenmure.

(GOD'S INEXPLICABLE DEALINGS WITH HIS PEOPLE WELL ORDERED—WANT OF ORDINANCES—CONFORMITY TO CHRIST—TROUBLES OF THE CHURCH—DEATH OF MR. RUTHERFORD'S WIFE.)

MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you. I received your Ladyship's letter, in the which I perceive your case in this world smelleth of a fellowship and communion with the Son of God in His sufferings. Ye cannot, ye must not, have a more pleasant or more easy condition here, than He had, who "through afflictions was made perfect" (Hebrews 2:10). We may indeed think, Cannot God bring us to heaven with ease and prosperity? Who doubteth but He can? But His infinite wisdom thinketh and decreeth the contrary; and we cannot see a reason of it, yet He hath a most just reason. We never with our eyes saw our own soul; yet we have a soul. We see many rivers, but we know not their first spring and original fountain; yet they have a beginning. Madam, when ye are come to the other side of the water, and have set down your foot on the shore of glorious eternity, and look back again to the waters and to your wearisome journey, and shall see, in that clear glass of endless glory, nearer to the bottom of God's wisdom, ye shall then be forced to say, "If God had done otherwise with me than He hath done, I had never come to the enjoying of this crown of glory." It is your part now to believe, and suffer, and hope, and wait on; for I protest, in the presence of that all-discerning eye, who knoweth what I write and what I think, that I would not want the sweet experience of the consolations of God for all the bitterness of affliction. Nay, whether God come to His children with a rod or a crown, if He come Himself with it, it is well. Welcome, welcome, Jesus, what way soever Thou come, if we can get a sight of Thee! And sure I am, it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bedside and draw by the curtains, and say, "Courage, I am Thy salvation," than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong, and never to be visited of God.

Worthy and dear lady, in the strength of Christ, fight and overcome. Ye are now yourself alone, but ye may have, for the seeking, three always in your company, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I trust they are near you. Ye are now deprived of the comfort of a lively ministry; so was Israel in their captivity; yet hear God's promise to them: "Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God, although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come" (Ezekiel 11:16). Behold a sanctuary! for a sanctuary, God Himself in the place and room of the temple of Jerusalem! I trust in God, that carrying this temple about with you, ye shall see Jehovah's beauty in His house.

We are in great fears of a great and fearful trial to come upon the kirk of God; for these, who would build their houses and nests upon the ashes of mourning Jerusalem, have drawn our King upon

hard and dangerous conclusions against such as are termed Puritans, for the rooting of them out. Our prelates (the Lord take the keys of His house from these bastard porters!) assure us that, for such as will not conform, there is nothing but imprisonment and deprivation.[98] The spouse of Jesus will ever be in the fire; but I trust in my God she shall not consume, because of the good-will of Him who dwelleth in the Bush; for He dwelleth in it with good-will. All sorts of crying sins without controlment abound in our land. The glory of the Lord is departing from Israel, and the Lord is looking back over His shoulder, to see if any one will say, "Lord, tarry," and no man requesteth Him to stay. Corrupt and false doctrine is openly preached by the idol-shepherds of the land. For myself, I have daily griefs, through the disobedience unto, and contempt of, the word of God. I was summoned before the High Commission by a profligate person in this parish, convicted of incest. In the business, Mr. Alexander Colvill[99] (for respect to your Ladyship) was my great friend, and wrote a most kind letter to me. The Lord give him mercy in that day. Upon the day of my compearance, the sea and winds refused to give passage to the Bishop of St. Andrews.[100] I entreat your Ladyship, thank Mr. Alexander Colvill with two lines of a letter.

[98] The prelates, when the Courts of High Commission were erected in 1610, were invested with the powers of imprisoning and depriving Nonconformists.

[99] One of the judges.

[100] Archbishop Spottiswoode. My wife now, after long disease and torment, for the space of a year and a month, is departed this life. The Lord hath done it; blessed be His name. I have been diseased of a fever tertian for the space of thirteen weeks, and am yet in the sickness, so that I preach but once on the Sabbath with great difficulty. I am not able either to visit or examine the congregation. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Your Ladyship's at all obedience,

S. R.

Anwoth, June 26, 1630.

## 012. To Marion M'Naught.—God Mixeth the Cup—The Reward of the Wicked—Faithfulness—Forbearance...

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12.—For Marion M'Naught.

(GOD MIXETH THE CUP—THE WICKED HAVE THEIR REWARD—FAITHFULNESS—FORBEARANCE—TRIALS.)

WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My love in the Lord Jesus remembered. I understand that you are still under the Lord's visitation, in your former business with your enemies, which is God's dealing. For, till He take His children out of the furnace that knoweth how long they should be tried, there is no deliverance; but after God's highest and fullest tide, that the sea of trouble is gone over the souls of His children, then comes the gracious long-hoped-for ebbing and drying up of the waters. Dear sister, do not faint; the wicked may hold the bitter cup to your head, but God mixeth it, and there is no poison in it. They strike, but God moves the rod; Shimei curseth, but it is because the Lord bids Him. I tell you, and I have it from Him before whom I stand for God's people, that there is a decret given out, in the great court of the highest heavens, that your present troubles shall be dispersed as the morning cloud, and God shall bring forth your righteousness, as the light of the noontide of the day. Let me intreat you, in Christ's name, to keep a good conscience in your proceedings in that matter, and beware of yourself: yourself is a more dangerous enemy than I, or any without you. Innocence and an upright cause is a good advocate before God, and shall plead for you, and win your cause. And count much of your Master's approbation and His smiling. He is now as the king that is gone to a far country. God seems to be from home (if I may say so), yet He sees the ill servants, who say, "Our Master deferreth His coming," and so strike their fellow-servants. But patience, my beloved; Christ the King is coming home; the evening is at hand, and He will ask an account of His servants. Make a fair, clear count to Him. So carry yourself as at night you may say, Master, I have wronged none; behold, you have your own with advantage. O! your soul then will esteem much of one of God's kisses and embracements, in the testimony of a good conscience. The wicked, howbeit they be casting many evil thoughts, bitter words, and sinful deeds behind their back, yet they are, in so doing, clerks to their own process, and doing nothing all their life but gathering dittayes against themselves; for God is angry at the wicked every day. And I hope your present process shall be sighted one day by Him, who knoweth your just cause; and the bloody tongues, crafty foxes, double-ingrained hypocrites, shall appear as they are before His majesty, when He shall take the mask off their faces. And O, thrice happy shall your soul be then, when God finds you covered with nothing but the white robe of the saint's innocence, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

You have been of late in the King's wine-cellar, where you were welcomed by the Lord of the inn, upon condition that you walk in love. Put on love, and brotherly kindness, and long-suffering; wait as long upon the favour and turned hearts of your enemies as your Christ waited upon you, and as dear Jesus stood at your soul's door, with dewy and rainy locks, the long cold night. Be angry, but sin not. I persuade myself, that holy unction within you, which teacheth you all things, is also

saying, "Overcome evil with good." If that had not spoken in your soul, at the tears of your aged pastor, you would not have agreed, and forgiven his foolish son, who wronged you; but my Master bade me tell you, God's blessing shall be upon you for it; and from Him I say, Grace, grace, grace, and everlasting peace be upon you. It is my prayer for you, that your carriage may grace and adorn the Gospel of that Lord who hath graced you. I heard your husband also was sick; but I beseech you in the bowels of Jesus, welcome every rod of God, for I find not in the whole book of God a greater note of the child of God, than to fall down and kiss the feet of an angry God. And when He seems to put you away from Him, and loose your hands that grip Him, to look up in faith, and say, "I shall not, I will not, be put away from Thee. Howbeit Thy Majesty draw to free Thyself of me, yet, Lord, give me leave to hold, and cleave unto Thyself." I will pray, that your husband may return in peace. Your decret comes from heaven; look up thither, for many (says Solomon) seek the face of the ruler, but every man's Judgment cometh from the Lord. And be glad that it is so, for Christ is the clerk of your process, and will see that all go right; and I persuade myself He is saying, "Yonder servants of mine are wronged; for My blood, Father, give them justice." Think you not, dear sister, but our High Priest, our Jesus, the Master of requests, presents our bills of complaint to the great Lord Justice? Yea I believe it, since He is our Advocate, and Daniel calls Him the Spokesman, whose hand presents all to the Father. For other business, I say nothing, till the Lord give me to see your face. I am credibly informed, that multitudes of England, and especially worthy preachers, and silenced preachers of London, are gone to New England; and I know one learned holy preacher, who hath written against the Arminians, who is gone thither.[101] Our Blessed Lord Jesus, who cannot get leave to sleep with His spouse in this land, is going to seek an inn where He will be better entertained. And what marvel? Wearied Jesus, after He had travelled from Geneva, by the ministry of worthy Mr. Knox, and was laid in His bed, and reformation begun, and the curtains drawn, had not gotten His dear eyes well together, when irreverent bishops came in, and with the din and noise of ceremonies, holy days, and other Romish corruptions, they awake our Beloved. Others came to His bedside, and drew the curtains, and put hands on His servants, banished, deprived, and confined them; and for the pulpit they got a stool and a cold fire in the Blackness;[102]and the nobility drew the covering off Him, and have made Him a poor naked Christ, spoiling His servants of the tithes and kirk rents. And now there is such a noise of crying sins in the land, as the want of the knowledge of God, of mercy, and truth; such swearing, whoring, lying, and blood touching blood; that Christ is putting on His clothes, and making Him,[103] like an ill-handled stranger, to go to other lands. Pray Him, sister, to lie down again with His beloved.

[101] The emigration of preachers and people to New England was the consequence of the persecuting measures pursued by Archbishop Laud for enforcing conformity, in the prosecution of his favourite scheme of bringing the Church of England as near to that of Rome as could consort with his own supremacy and that of his sovereign. About seventy ministers and four thousand other persons emigrated to the American continent to escape the tyranny of Laud and his agents.

[102] Blackness Castle, on the Forth, was used as a prison.

[103] In the sense of making a show of or appearing as if He would go; Luke 24:28.

Remember my dearest love to John Gordon, to whom I will write when I am strong, and to John Brown, Grissel, Samuel, and William; grace be upon them. As you love Christ, keep Christ's

favour, and put not upon Him when He sleeps, to awake Him before He please. The Lord Jesus be  
with your spirit. Your brother in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, July 21, 1630.

## 013. To Marion M'Naught, when exposed to reproach for her principles.—Jesus a Pattern of Pati...

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13.—For Marion M'Naught, when exposed to reproach for her principles.

(JESUS A PATTERN OF PATIENCE UNDER SUFFERING.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—I have been thinking, since my departure from you, of the pride and malice of your adversaries; and ye may not (since ye have had the Book of Psalms so often) take hardly with this; for David's enemies snuffed at him, and through the pride of their heart said, "The Lord will not require it" (Psalms 10:13). I beseech you, therefore, in the bowels of Jesus, set before your eyes the patience of your forerunner Jesus, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously (1 Peter 2:23). And since your Lord and Redeemer with patience received many a black stroke on His glorious back, and many a buffet of the unbelieving world, and says of Himself, "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isaiah 4:6); follow Him, and think it not hard that you receive a blow with your Lord. Take part with Jesus of His sufferings, and glory in the marks of Christ. If this storm were over, you must prepare yourself for a new wound; for, five thousand years ago, our Lord proclaimed deadly war betwixt the Seed of the Woman and the seed of the Serpent. And marvel not that one town cannot keep the children of God and the children of the devil, for one belly could not keep Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25:22); one house could not keep peaceably together Isaac, the son of the promise, and Ishmael, the son of the handmaid (Genesis 21:10). Be you upon Christ's side of it, and care not what flesh can do. Hold yourself fast by your Saviour, howbeit you be buffeted, and those that follow Him. Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). If you can possess your soul in patience, their day is coming. Worthy and dear sister, know to carry yourself in trouble; and when you are hated and reproached, the Lord shows it to you—"All this is come upon us, yet have we not gotten Thee, neither have we dealt falsely in Thy covenant" (Psalms 44:17). "Unless Thy law had been my delight, I had perished in mine affliction" (Psalms 119:92). Keep God's covenant in your trials. Hold you by His blessed word, and sin not. Flee anger, wrath, grudging, envying, fretting. Forgive an hundred pence to your fellow-servant, because your Lord hath forgiven you ten thousand talents. For I assure you by the Lord, your adversaries shall get no advantage against you, except you sin and offend your Lord in your sufferings. But the way to overcome is by patience, forgiving and praying for your enemies, in doing whereof you heap coals upon their heads, and your Lord shall open a door to you in your troubles. Wait upon Him, as the night watch waiteth for the morning. He will not tarry. Go up to your watch-tower, and come not down; but by prayer, and faith, and hope, wait on. When the sea is full, it will ebb again; and so soon as the wicked are come to the top of their pride, and are waxed high and mighty, then is their change approaching. They that believe make not haste.

Remember Zion, forget her not, for her enemies are many; for the nations are gathered together against her. "But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel: for He shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion" (Micah 4:12-13). Behold, God hath gathered His enemies together, as sheaves to the threshing. Let us stay and rest upon these promises. Now again, I trust in our Lord you shall by faith sustain yourself, and comfort yourself in your Lord, and be strong in His power; for you are in the beaten and common way to heaven when you are under our Lord's crosses. You have reason to rejoice in it, more than in a crown of gold; and rejoice, and be glad to bear the reproaches of Christ. I rest, recommending you and yours for ever to the grace and mercy of God.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Feb. 11, 1631.

## 014. To Marion M'Naught, in prospect of the Lord's Supper.—Abundance in Jesus—The Restoration...

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14.—For Marion M'Naught, in the prospect of a Communion season.

(ABUNDANCE IN JESUS—THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS—ENEMIES OF GOD.)

WELL-BELOVED IN THE LORD,—You are not unacquainted with the day of our Communion. I entreat, therefore, the aid of your prayers for that great work, which is one of our feast days, wherein our Well-beloved Jesus rejoiceth, and is merry with His friends.

Good cause have we to wonder at His love, since the day of His death was such a sorrowful day to Him, even the day when His mother, the kirk, crowned Him with thorns, and He had many against Him, and compeared His lone in the fields against them all; yet He delights with us to remember that day. Let us love Him, and be glad and rejoice in His salvation. I am confident that you shall see the Son of God that day, and I dare in His name invite you to His banquet. Many a time you have been well entertained in His house; and He changes not upon His friends, nor chides them for too great kindness. Yet I speak not this to make you leave off to pray for me, who have nothing of myself, but in so far as daily I receive from Him, who is made of His Father a running-over fountain, at which I and others may come with thirsty souls, and fill our vessels. Long hath this well been standing open to us. Lord Jesus, lock it not up again upon us. I am sorry for our desolate kirk; yet I dare not but trust, so long as there be any of God's lost money here He shall not blow out the candle. The Lord make fair candlesticks in His house, and remove the blind lights.

I have been this time bypast thinking much of the incoming of the kirk of the Jews.[104] Pray for them. When they were in their Lord's house, at their Father's elbow, they were longing for the incoming of their little sister, the kirk of the Gentiles. They said to their Lord, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" (Song of Solomon 8:8). Let us give them a meeting. What shall we do for our elder sister, the Jews? Lord Jesus, give them breasts. That were a glad day to see us and them both sit down to one table, and Christ at the head of the table. Then would our Lord come shortly with his fair guard to hold His great court.

[104] So in his "Trial of Faith" p. 133 (published 1655).

Dear sister, be patient, for the Lord's sake, under the wrongs that you suffer of the wicked. Your Lord shall make you see your desire on your enemies. Some of them shall be cut off; "they shall shake off their unripe grapes as the vine, and cast off their flower as the olive" (Job 15:33): God shall make them like unripe sour grapes, shaken off the tree with the blast of God's wrath; and therefore pity them, and pray for them. Others of them must remain to exercise you. God hath said of them, Let the tares grow up until harvest (Matthew 13:30). It proves you to be your Lord's wheat. Be patient; Christ went to heaven with many a wrong. His visage and countenance was all marred more than the sons of men. You may not be above your Master; many a black stroke

received innocent Jesus, and He received no mends, but referred them all to the great court-day, when all things shall be righted. I desire to hear from you within a day or two, if Mr. Robert remain in his purpose to come and help us. God shall give you joy of your children. I pray for them by their names. I bless you from our Lord, your husband and children. Grace, grace, and mercy be multiplied upon you.

Yours in the Lord for ever,

S. R.

Anwoth, May 7, 1631.

## 015. To Marion M'Naught.—The threatened Introduction of the Service-Book—Troubles of the Chur...

15.—For Marion M'Naughton occasion of the threatened introduction of the Episcopalian Service-Book.

(TROUBLES OF THE CHURCH—PRIVATE WRONGS.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. I have received a letter from Edinburgh, certainly informing me that the English service, and the organs, and King James' Psalms, are to be imposed upon our kirk; and that the bishops are dealing for a General Assembly. A. R. hath confirmed the news also, and says he spoke with Sir William Alexander, who is to come down with his prince's warrant for that effect. I am desired in the received letter to acquaint the best-affected about me with that storm: therefore I entreat you, and charge you in the Lord's name, pray; but do not communicate this to any till I see you. My heart is broken at the remembrance of it, and it was my fear, and answereth to my last letter except one, that I wrote unto you. Dearly beloved, be not casten down, but let us, as our Lord's doves, take us to our wings (for other armour we have none), and flee into the hole of the rock. It is true A. R. says, the worthiest men in England are banished, and silenced, about the number of sixteen or seventeen choice Gospel preachers, and the persecution is already begun. Howbeit I do not write this unto you with a dry face, yet I am confident in the Lord's strength, Christ and His side shall overcome; and you shall be assured; the kirk were not a kirk, if it were not so. As our dear Husband, in wooing His kirk, received many a black stroke, so His bride, in wooing Him, gets many blows, and in this wooing there are strokes upon both sides. Let it be so. The devil will not make the marriage go back, neither can he tear the contract; the end shall be mercy. Yet notwithstanding of all this, we have no warrant of God to leave off all lawful means. I have been writing unto you the counsels and draughts of men against the kirk; but they know not, as Micah says, the counsel of Jehovah. The great men of the world may make ready the fiery furnace for Zion; but trow ye that they can cause the fire to burn? No. He that made the fire, I trust, shall not say amen to their decreets. I trust in my Lord, that God hath not subscribed their bill, and their conclusions have not yet passed our great King's seal. Therefore, if ye think good, address yourself first to the Lord, and then to A. R., anent the business that you know. Sir W. Alexander of Menstrie, afterwards Earl of Stirling.

I am most unkindly handled by the presbytery; and (as if I had been a stranger, and not a member of that seat, to sit in judgment with them) I was summoned by their order as a witness against B. A. But they have got no advantage in that matter. Other particulars you shall hear, God willing, at meeting.

Anent the matter betwixt you and I. E., I remember it to God. I entreat you in the Lord, be submissive to His will; for the higher that their pride mounts up, they are the nearer to a fall. The Lord will more and more discover that man. Let your husband, in all matters of judgment, take

Christ's part, for the defence of the poor and needy, and the oppressed, for the maintenance of equity and justice in the town. And take you no fear. He shall take your part, and then you are strong enough. What? Howbeit you receive indignities for your Lord's sake, let it be so. When He shall put His holy hand up to your face in heaven, and dry your face, and wipe the tears from your eyes, judge if ye will not have cause then to rejoice. Anent other particulars, if you would speak with me, appoint any of the first three days of the next week in Carletoun,hor 106\_106" id="FNanchor 106\_106">ote 106\_106">[106] when Carletoun is at home, and acquaint me with your desires. And remember me to God, and my dearest affection to your husband; and for Zion's sake hold not your peace. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and your husband and children.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth, June 2, 1631. hor 106\_106">[106] Carleton, in Galloway (see note at Letter 157.), not far from Anwoth, where Mr. Fullerton, a true friend, resided.

## 016. To Marion M'Naught.—Proposal to Remove him from Anwoth—Babylon's Destruction, and Christ...

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16.—For Marion M'Naught, on occasion of a proposal to remove him from Anwoth.

(BABYLON'S DESTRUCTION AND CHRIST'S COMING—THE YOUNG INVITED.)

WORTHY AND DEAR MISTRESS,—My dearest love in Christ remembered. As to the business which I know you would so fain have taken effect, my earnest desire is, that you stand still. Haste not, and you shall see the salvation of God. The great Master Gardener, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a wonderful providence, with His own hand (I dare, if it were for edification, swear it), planted me here,[107] where, by His grace, in this part of His vineyard, I grow.—I dare not say but Satan and the world (one of his pages whom he sends on his errands) have said otherwise. And here I will abide till the great Master of the Vineyard think fit to transplant me. But when He sees meet to loose me at the root, and to plant me where I may be more useful, both as to fruit and shadow, and when He who planted pulleth up that He may transplant, who dare put to their hand and hinder? If they do, God shall break their arm at the shoulder blade, and do His turn. When our Lord is going west, the devil and world go east; and do you not know that it hath been ever this way betwixt God and the world—God drawing, and they holding, God “yea,” and the world “nay”? But they fall on their back and are frustrate, and our Lord holdeth His grip.

[107] At Anwoth.

Wherefore doth the word say, that our Christ, the Goodman of this house, His dear kirk, hath feet like fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace (Revelation 1:15)? For no other cause but because where our Lord setteth down His brazen feet, He will forward; and whithersoever He looketh, He will follow His look; and His feet burn all under them, like as fire doth stubble and thorns. I think He hath now given the world a proof of His exceeding great power, when He is doing such great things, wherein Zion is concerned, by the sword of the Swedish king,[108] as of a Gideon. As you love the glory of God, pray instantly (yea engage all your praying acquaintance, and take their faithful promise to do the like) for this king, and every one that Zion's King armeth, to execute the written vengeance on Babylon. Our Lord hath begun to loose some of Babylon's corner stones. Pray to Him to hold on, for that city must fall, and the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth must make a banquet of Babylon; for He hath invited them to eat the flesh of that whore, and to drink her blood. And the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto her, and shameful spewing shall be upon her glory. He whose word must stand hath said, “Take this cup at the hand of the Lord, and drink and be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more” (Jeremiah 25:27). Our Jesus is setting up Himself, as His Father's ensign (Isaiah 11:10), as God's fair white colours, that His soldiers may all flock about Him. Long, long may these colours stand. It is long since He displayed a banner against Babylon in the fight of men and angels. Let us rejoice and triumph in our God. The victory is certain; for when Christ and Babel wrestle, then angels and saints may prepare themselves to sing, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.” Howbeit that Prince of renown,

precious Jesus, be now weeping and bleeding in His members, yet Christ will laugh again; and it is time enough for us to laugh, when our Lord Christ laugheth,—and that will be shortly. For when we hear of wars and rumours of wars, the Judge's feet are then before the door, and He must be in heaven giving order to the angels to make themselves ready, and prepare their hooks and sickles for that great harvest. Christ will be upon us in haste; watch but a little, and ere long the skies will rive, and that fair lovely person, Jesus, shall come in the clouds, freighted and loaded with glory. And then all these knaves and foxes that destroyed the vines shall call to the hills, and cry to the mountains to cover them, and hide them from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

[108] Gustavus Adolphus.

Remember me to your husband, and desire him from me to help Christ, and to take His part, and in judgment sit ever beside Him, and receive a blow patiently for His sake; for He is worthy to be suffered for, not only to blows, but also to blood. He shall find that innocency and uprightness in judgment shall hold its feet and make him happy, when jouncing will not do it. I speak this because a person said to me, "I pray God the country be not in worse case now when the provost and bailies are agreed, than formerly,"—to whom I replied, "I trust the provost is agreed with the man's person, but not with his faults." I pray for you, with my whole soul and desire, that your children may walk in the truth, and that the Lord may shine upon them, and make their faces to shine, when the faces of others shall blush. I dare promise them, in His name, whose truth I preach, if they will but try God's service, that they shall find Him the sweetest Master that ever they served. And desire them from me but to try for a while the service of this blessed Master, and then, if His service be not sweet, if it afford not what is pleasant to the soul's taste, change Him upon trial, and seek a better. Christ is an unknown Christ to the young ones; and therefore they seek Him not, because they know Him not. Bid them come and see, and seek a kiss of His mouth; and then they will find His mouth is so sweet, that they will be everlastingly chained unto Him by their own consent. If I have any credit with your children, I entreat them in Christ's name to try what truth and reality is in what I say, and leave not His service till they have found me a liar. I give you, your husband, and them, to His keeping to whom I have,[109] and dare venture myself and soul, even to our dear Friend Jesus Christ, in whom I am,

Yours,

S. R.

Anwoth.

[109] To whom I have given, and dare venture to give.

## 017. To Marion M'Naught.—The Prospects of the Church—Arminianism—Call to Prayer—No Help but i...

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17.—For Marion M'Naught, when in distress as to prospects of the Church.

(ARMINIANISM—CALL TO PRAYER—NO HELP BUT IN CHRIST.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My dearest love in Christ remembered to you. Know that I am in great heaviness for the pitiful case of our Lord's kirk. I hear the cause why Dr. Burton[110] is committed to prison is his writing and preaching against the Arminians. I therefore entreat the aid of your prayers for myself, and the Lord's captives of hope, and for Zion. The Lord hath let and daily lets me see clearly, how deep furrows Arminianism and the followers of it draw upon the back of God's Israel (but our Lord cut the cords of the wicked!). "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Isaiah 49:14). "Zion weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are upon her cheeks; amongst all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they are become her enemies" (Lamentations 1:2). "Our silver is become dross, our wine mixed with water" (Isaiah 1:22). "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!" (Lamentations 4:1-2). It is time now for the Lord's secret ones, who favour the dust of Zion, to cry, "How long, Lord?" and to go up to their watch-tower, and to stay there, and not to come down until the vision speak; for it shall speak (Habakkuk 2:3). In the mean time, the just shall live by faith. Let us wait on and not weary. I have not a thread to hang upon and rest, but this one, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; Thy walls are continually before Me" (Isaiah 49:15-16). For all outward helps do fail; it is time therefore for us to hang ourselves, as our Lord's vessels, upon the nail that is fastened in a sure place. We would make stakes of our own fastening, but they will break. Our Lord will have Zion on His own nail. Edom is busy within us, and Babel without us, against the handful of Jacob's seed. It were best that we were upon Christ's side of it, for His enemies will get the stalks to keep, as the proverb is. Our greatest difficulty will be to win upon the rock now, when the wind and waves of persecution are so lofty and proud. Let sweet Jesus take us by the hand. Neither must we think that it will be otherwise; for it is told to the souls under the altar, "That their fellow-servants must be killed as they were" (Revelation 6:11). Surely, it cannot be long to the day. Nay, hear Him say, "Behold, I come, My dear bride; think not long. I shall be at you at once. I hear you, and am coming." Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; for the prisoners of hope are looking out at the prison windows, to see if they can behold the King's ambassador coming with the King's warrant and the keys. I write not to you by guess now, because I have a warrant to say unto you, the garments of Christ's spouse must be once again dyed in blood, as long ago her husband's were. But our Father sees His bleeding Son. What I write unto you, show it to I. G. Grace, grace, grace and mercy be with you, your husband, and children.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth.

[110] Henry Burton, an able divine of the Church of England, wrote several vigorous pieces against Popery, and against Montague's "Appello Cæsarem."

## 018. To Marion M'Naught, in prospect of the Lord's Supper.—Prayer Solicited—The Church's Pros...

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18.—For Marion M'Naught, in the prospect of a Communion season.

(PRAYER SOLICITED—THE CHURCH'S PROSPECTS.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ as remembered. Our Communion is on Sabbath come<sup>[111]</sup> eight days. I will entreat you to recommend it to God, and to pray for me in that work. I have more sins upon me now than the last time. Therefore I will beseech you in Christ, seek this petition to me from God, that the Lord would give me grace to vow and perform new obedience. I have cause to suit this of you; and show it to Thomas Carson, Fergus and Jean Brown, for I have been and am exceedingly cast down, and am fighting against a malicious devil, of whom I can win little ground. I would think a spoil plucked from him, and his trusty servant sin, a lawful and just conquest. And it were no sin to take from him, in the name of the Goodman of our house, our King Jesus. I invite you to the banquet. He saith, ye shall be dearly welcome to Him. And I desire to believe (howbeit not without great fear) He shall be as hearty in His own house as He has been before. For me, it is but small reckoning; but I would fain have our Father and Lord to break the great fair loaf, Christ, and to distribute His slain Son amongst the bairns of His house, and that if any were a step-bairn, in respect of comfort and sense, it were rather myself than His poor bairns. Therefore bid our Well-beloved come to His garden and feed among the lilies.

[111] Sabbath that comes eight days after this. And as concerning Zion, I hope our Lord, who sent His angel (Zechariah 2:1-2) with a measuring line in his hand to measure the length and breadth of Jerusalem, in token He would not want a foot length or inch of His own free heritage, shall take order with those who have taken away many acres of His own land from Him. And God will build Jerusalem in the old sted and place where it was before. In this hope rejoice and be glad. Christ's garment was not dipped in blood for nothing, but for His Bride, whom He bought with strokes. I will desire you to remember my old suits to God, God's glory and the increase of light, that I dry not up. For your town, hope and believe that the Lord will gather in His loose sheaves among you to His barn, and send one with a well-toothed, sharp hook, and strong gardies, to reap His harvest. And the Lord Jesus be Husbandman, and oversee the growing. Remember my love to your husband and to Samuel. Grace upon you and your children. Lord, make them corner-stones in Jerusalem, and give them grace in their youth to take band with the fair Chief Corner-stone, who was hewed out of the mountain without hands, and got many a knock with His Father's forehammer, and endured them all, and the stone did neither cleave nor break. Upon that stone make your soul to lie. King Jesus be with your spirit. Your friend in his well-beloved Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 019. To Lady Kenmure.—Encouragement to Abound in Faith from the Prospect of Glory—Christ's Un...

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19.—To myLady Kenmure.

(ENCOURAGEMENT TO ABOUND IN FAITH FROM THE PROSPECT OF GLORY—CHRIST'S UNCHANGEABLENESS.)

MADAM,—Having saluted you in the Lord Jesus, I thought it my duty, having the occasion of this bearer, to write again unto your ladyship, though I have no new purpose but what I wrote of before. Yet ye cannot be too often awakened to go forward towards your city, since your way is long, and (for anything ye know) your day is short. And your Lord requireth of you, as ye advance in years and steal forward insensibly towards eternity, that your faith may grow and ripen for the Lord's harvest. For the great Husbandman giveth a season to His fruits that they may come to maturity, and having gotten their fill of the tree they may then be shaken and gathered in for use; whereas the wicked rot upon the tree, and their branch shall not be green. "He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive" (Job 15:33). It is God's mercy to you, Madam, that He giveth you your fill, even to loathing, of this bitter world, that ye may willingly leave it, and, like a full and satisfied banqueter,<sup>[112]</sup> long for the drawing of the table. And at last, having trampled under your feet all the rotten pleasures that are under sun and moon, and having rejoiced as though ye rejoiced not, and having bought as though ye possessed not (1 Corinthians 7:30), ye may, like an old crazy ship, arrive at our Lord's harbour, and be made welcome, as one of those who have ever had one foot loose from the earth, longing for that place where your soul shall feast and banquet for ever and ever upon a glorious sight of the incomprehensible Trinity, and where ye shall see the fair face of the man Christ, even the beautiful face that was once for your cause more marred than any of the visages of the sons of men (Isaiah 52:14), and was all covered with spitting and blood. Be content to wade through the waters betwixt you and glory with Him, holding His hand fast, for He knoweth all the fords. Howbeit ye may be ducked, but ye cannot drown, being in His company; and ye may all the way to glory see the way bedewed with His blood who is the Forerunner. Be not afraid, therefore, when ye come even to the black and swelling river of death, to put in your foot and wade after Him. The current, how strong soever, cannot carry you down the water to hell: the Son of God, His death and resurrection, are stepping-stones and a stay to you; set down your feet by faith upon these stones, and go through as on dry land. If ye knew what He is preparing for you, ye would be too glad. He will not (it may be) give you a full draught till you come up to the well-head and drink, yea, drink abundantly, of the pure river of the water of life, that proceedeth out from the throne of God and of the Lamb (Revelation 22:1). Madam, tire not, weary not; I dare find you the Son of God caution, when ye are got up thither, and have cast your eyes to view the golden city, and the fair and never-withering Tree of Life, that beareth twelve manner of fruits every month, ye shall then say, "Four-and-twenty hours' abode in this place is worth threescore and ten years' sorrow upon earth." If ye can but say, that ye long earnestly to be carried up thither (and I hope you cannot for shame deny Him the honour of having wrought that

desire in your soul), then hath your Lord given you an earnest. And, Madam, do ye believe that our Lord will lose His earnest, and rue of the bargain, and change His mind, as if He were a man that can lie, or the son of man that can repent? Nay, He is unchangeable, and the same this year that He was the former year. And His Son Jesus, who upon earth ate and drank with publicans and sinners, and spake and conferred with whores and harlots, and put up His holy hand and touched the leper's filthy skin, and came evermore nigh sinners, even now in glory, is yet that same Lord. His honour, and His great court in heaven, hath not made Him forget His poor friends on earth. In Him honours change not manners, and He doth yet desire your company. Take Him for the old Christ, and claim still kindness to Him, and say, "O it is so; He is not changed, but I am changed." Nay, it is a part of His unchangeable love, and an article of the new covenant, to keep you that ye cannot dispoise Him, nor sell Him. He hath not played fast and loose with us in the covenant of grace, so that we may run from Him at our pleasure. His love hath made the bargain surer than so; for Jesus, as the cautioner, is bound for us (Hebrews 7:22). And it cannot stand with His honour to die in the borrows (as we use to say), and lose thee, whom He must render again to the Father when He shall give up the kingdom to Him. Consent and say "Amen" to the promises, and ye have sealed that God is true, and Christ is yours. This is an easy market. Ye but look on with faith; for Christ suffered all, and paid all.

[112] Allusion to Horace, Sat. i. 1, 19. One of the few allusions to the classics that occur in Rutherford.

Madam, fearing I be tedious to your Ladyship, I must stop here, desiring always to hear that your Ladyship is well, and that ye have still your face up the mountain. Pray for us, Madam, and for Zion, whereof ye are a part. We expect a trial. God's wheat in this land must go through Satan's sieve, but their faith shall not fail. I am still wrestling in our Lord's work, and have been tried and tempted with brethren who look awry to the Gospel. Now He that is able to keep you unto that day preserve your soul, body, and spirit, and present you before His face with His own Bride, spotless and blameless. Your Ladyship's, to be commanded always in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, Nov. 26, 1631.

## 020. To Lady Kenmure.—Assurance of Christ's Love under Trials—Fulness of Christ—Hope of Glory

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20.—To myLady Kenmure.

(ASSURANCE OF CHRIST'S LOVE UNDER TRIALS—FULNESS OF CHRIST—HOPE OF GLORY.)

MADAM,—I am grieved exceedingly that your Ladyship should think, or have cause to think, that such as love you in God, in this country, are forgetful of you. For myself, Madam, I owe to your Ladyship all evidences of my high respect (in the sight of my Lord, whose truth I preach, I am bold to say it) for His rich grace in you. My Communion, put off till the end of a longsome and rainy harvest, and the presbyterial exercise (as the bearer can inform your Ladyship), hindered me to see you. And for my people's sake (finding them like hot iron, that cooleth being out of the fire, and that is pliable to no work), I do not stir abroad; neither have I left them at all, since your Ladyship was in this country, save at one time only, about two years ago. Yet I dare not say but it is a fault, howbeit no defect in my affection; and I trust to make it up again, so soon as possibly I am able to wait upon you.

Madam, I have no new purpose to write unto you, but of that which I think (nay, which our Lord thinketh) needful, that one thing, Mary's good part, which ye have chosen (Luke 10:42). Madam, all that God hath, both Himself and the creatures, He is dealing and parting amongst the sons of Adam. There are none so poor as that they can say in His face, "He hath given them nothing." But there is no small odds betwixt the gifts given to lawful bairns and to bastards; and the more greedy ye are in suiting, the more willing He is to give, delighting to be called open-handed. I hope your Ladyship laboureth to get assurance of the surest patrimony, even God Himself. Ye will find in Christianity, that God aimeth, in all His dealings with His children, to bring them to a high contempt of, and deadly feud with the world, and to set an high price upon Christ, and to think Him One who cannot be bought for gold, and well worthy the fighting for. And for no other cause, Madam, doth the Lord withdraw from you the childish toys and the earthly delights that He giveth unto others, but that He may have you wholly to Himself. Think therefore of the Lord, as of one who cometh to woo you in marriage, when ye are in the furnace. He seeketh His answer of you in affliction, to see if ye will say, Even so I take Him. Madam, give Him this answer pleasantly, and in your mind do not secretly grudge nor murmur. When He is striking you in love, beware to strike again: that is dangerous; for those who strike again shall get the last blow.

If I hit not upon the right string, it is because I am not acquainted with your Ladyship's present condition; but I believe your Ladyship goeth on foot, laughing, and putting on a good countenance before the world, and yet ye carry heaviness about with you. Ye do well, Madam, not to make them witnesses of your grief, who cannot be curers of it. But be exceedingly charitable of your dear Lord. As there be some friends worldly of whom ye will not entertain an ill thought, far more ought ye to believe good evermore of your dear friend, that lovely fair person, Jesus Christ. The

thorn is one of the most cursed, and angry, and crabbed weeds that the earth yieldeth, and yet out of it springeth the rose, one of the sweetest-smelled flowers, and most delightful to the eye, that the earth hath. Your Lord shall make joy and gladness out of your afflictions; for all His roses have a fragrant smell. Wait for the time when His own holy hand shall hold them to your nose; and if ye would have present comfort under the cross, be much in prayer, for at that time your faith kisseth Christ and He kisseth the soul. And oh! if the breath of His holy mouth be sweet, I dare be caution, out of some small experience, that ye shall not be beguiled; for the world (yea, not a few number of God's children) know not well what that is which they call a Godhead. But, Madam, come near to the Godhead, and look down to the bottom of the well; there is much in Him, and sweet were that death to drown in such a well. Your grief taketh liberty to work upon your mind, when ye are not busied in the meditation of the ever-delighting and all-blessed Godhead. If ye would lay the price ye give out (which is but some few years' pain and trouble) beside the commodities ye are to receive, ye would see they are not worthy to be laid in the balance together: but it is nature that maketh you look what ye give out, and weakness of faith that hindereth you to see what ye shall take in. Amend your hope, and frist your faithful Lord awhile. He maketh Himself your debtor in the new covenant. He is honest; take His word: "Affliction shall not spring up the second time" (Nahum 1:9). "He that overcometh shall inherit all things" (Revelation 21:7). Of all things, then, which ye want in this life, Madam, I am able to say nothing, if that be not believed which ye have in Revelation 3:5; Revelation 3:21 : "The overcomer shall be clothed in white raiment. To the overcomer I will give to sit with Me in My throne, as I overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." Consider, Madam, if ye are not high up now, and far ben in the palace of our Lord, when ye are upon a throne in white raiment, at lovely Christ's elbow. O thrice fools are we, who, like new-born princes weeping in the cradle, know not that there is a kingdom before them! Then let our Lord's sweet hand square us and hammer us, and strike off the knots of pride, self-love, and world-worship, and infidelity, that He may make us stones and pillars in His Father's house (Revelation 3:12). Madam, what think ye to take binding with the fair corner-stone Jesus? The Lord give you wisdom to believe and hope your day is coming. I hope to be witness of your joy, as I have been a hearer and beholder of your grief. Think ye much to follow the heir of the crown, who had experience of sorrows, and was acquainted with grief? (Isaiah 53:3). It were pride to aim to be above the King's Son: it is more than we deserve, that we are equals in glory, in a manner. Now commending you to the dearest grace and mercy of God, I rest Your Ladyship's, at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Jan. 4, 1632.

## 021. To Lady Kenmure.—Self-denial—Hope of Christ's Coming—Loving God for Himself

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21.—To myLady Kenmure.

(SELF-DENIAL—HOPE OF CHRIST'S COMING—LOVING GOD FOR HIMSELF.)

MADAM,—Understanding (a little after the writing of my last letter) of the going of this bearer, I would not omit the opportunity of remembering your Ladyship, still harping upon that string, which in our whole lifetime is never too often touched upon (nor is our lesson well enough learned), that there is a necessity of advancing in the way to the kingdom of God, of the contempt of the world, of denying ourself and bearing of our Lord's cross, which is no less needful for us than daily food. And among many marks that we are on this journey, and under sail toward heaven, this is one, when the love of God so filleth our hearts, that we forget to love, and care not much for the having, or wanting of, other things; as one extreme heat burneth out another. By this, Madam, ye know, ye have betrothed your soul in marriage to Christ, when ye do make but small reckoning of all other suitors or wooers; and when ye can (having little in hand, but much in hope) live as a young heir, during the time of his non-age and minority, being content to be as hardly handled and under as precise a reckoning as servants, because his hope is upon the inheritance. For this cause God's bairns take well with spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance (Hebrews 10:34). That day that the earth and the works therein shall be burned with fire (2 Peter 3:10), your hidden hope and your life shall appear. And therefore, since ye have not now many years to your endless eternity, and know not how soon the sky above your head will rive, and the Son of man will be seen in the clouds of heaven, what better and wiser course can ye take, than to think that your one foot is here, and your other foot in the life to come, and to leave off loving, desiring, or grieving for the wants that shall be made up when your Lord and ye shall meet, and when ye shall give in your bill, that day, of all your wants here? If your losses be not made up, ye have place to challenge the Almighty; but it shall not be so. Ye shall then rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and your joy shall none take from you (1 Peter 1:8; John 16:22). It is enough, that the Lord hath promised you great things, only let the time of bestowing them be in His own carving. It is not for us to set an hour-glass to the Creator of time. Since He and we differ only in the term of payment; since He hath promised payment, and we believe it, it is no great matter. We will put that in His own will, as the frank buyer, who cometh near to what the seller seeketh, useth at last to refer the difference to his own will, and so cutteth off the course of mutual priggging. Madam, do not prigg with your frank-hearted and gracious Lord about the time of the fulfilling of your joys. It will be; God hath said it; bide His harvest, wait upon His whitsunday.[113] His day is better than your day; He putteth not the hook in the corn till it be ripe and full-eared. The great Angel of the covenant bear you company, till the trumpet shall sound, and the voice of the Archangel awaken the dead. Ye shall find it your only happiness, under whatever thing disturbeth and crosseth the peace of your mind, in this life, to love nothing for itself, but only God for Himself. It is the crooked love of some harlots, that they love bracelets,

ear-rings, and rings better than the lover that sendeth them. God will not so be loved; for that were to behave as harlots, and not as the chaste spouse, to abate from our love when these things are pulled away. Our love to Him should begin on earth, as it shall be in heaven; for the bride taketh not, by a thousand degrees, so much delight in her wedding garment as she doth in her bridegroom; so we, in the life to come, howbeit clothed with glory as with a robe, shall not be so much affected with the glory that goeth about us, as with the bridegroom's joyful race and presence. Madam, if ye can win to this here, the field is won; and your mind, for anything ye want, or for anything your Lord can take from you, shall soon be calmed and quieted. Get Himself as a pawn, and keep Him, till your dear Lord come, and loose the pawn, and rue upon you, and give you all again that He took from you, even a thousand talents for one penny. It is not ill to lend God willingly, who otherwise both will and may take from you against your will. It is good to play the usurer with Him, and take in, instead of ten of the hundred, an hundred of ten, often an hundred of one.

[113] His term-day.

Madam, fearing to be tedious to you, I break off here, commending you (as I trust to do while I live), your person, ways, burdens, and all that concerneth you, to that Almighty who is able to bear you and your burdens. I still remember you to Him, who will cause you one day to laugh. I expect that, whatever ye can do, by word or deed, for the Lord's friendless Zion, ye will do it. She is your mother; forget her not; for the Lord intendeth to melt and try this land, and it is high time we were all upon our feet, and falling about to try what claim we have to Christ. It is like the bridegroom will be taken from us, and then we shall mourn. Dear Jesus, remove not, else take us with Thee. Grace, grace be with you for ever. Your Ladyship's, at all dutiful obedience,

S. R.

Anwoth, Jan. 14, 1632.

## 022. To John Kennedy.—Deliverance from Shipwreck—Recovery from threatened Death—Use of Trials...

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22.—To John Kennedy. (Letter 75.) (DELIVERANCE FROM SHIPWRECK—RECOVERY FROM THREATENED DEATH—USE OF TRIALS—REMEMBRANCE OF FRIENDS. MY LOVING AND MOST AFFECTIONATE IN CHRIST,—I salute you with grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

I promised to write to you, and although late enough, yet I now make it good. I heard with grief of your great danger of perishing by the sea, and of your merciful deliverance with joy. Sure I am, brother, that Satan will leave no stone unrolled, as the proverb is, to roll you off your Rock, or at least to shake and unsettle you: for at that same time the mouths of wicked men were opened in hard speeches against you, by land, and the prince of the power of the air was angry with you by sea. See then how much ye are obliged to that malicious murderer, who would beat you with two rods at one time; but, blessed be God, his arm is short; if the sea and wind would have obeyed him, ye had never come to land. Thank your God, who saith, "I have the keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:18); "I kill, and I make alive" (Deuteronomy 32:39); "The Lord bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up" (1 Samuel 2:6). If Satan were jailor, and had the keys of death and of the grave, they should be stored with more prisoners. Ye were knocking at these black gates, and ye found the doors shut; and we do all welcome you back again.

I trust that ye know that it is not for nothing that ye are sent to us again. The Lord knew that ye had forgotten something that was necessary for your journey; that your armour was not as yet thick enough against the stroke of death. Now, in the strength of Jesus despatch your business; that debt is not forgiven, but fristed: death hath not bidden you farewell, but hath only left you for a short season. End your journey ere the night come upon you. Have all in readiness against the time that ye must sail through that black and impetuous Jordan; and Jesus, Jesus, who knoweth both those depths and the rocks, and all the coasts, be your pilot. The last tide will not wait you for one moment. If ye forget anything, when your sea is full, and your foot in that ship, there is no returning again to fetch it. What ye do amiss in your life to-day, ye may amend it to-morrow; for as many suns as God maketh to arise upon you, ye have as many new lives; but ye can die but once, and if ye mar or spill that business, ye cannot come back to mend that piece of work again. No man sinneth twice in dying ill; as we die but once, so we die but ill or well once. You see how the number of your months is written in God's book; and as one of the Lord's hirelings, ye must work till the shadow of the evening come upon you, and ye shall run out your glass even to the last pickle of sand. Fulfil your course with joy, for we take nothing to the grave with us, but a good or evil conscience. And, although the sky clear after this storm, yet clouds will engender another.

Ye contracted with Christ, I hope, when first ye began to follow Him, that ye would bear His cross. Fulfil your part of the contract with patience, and break not to Jesus Christ. Be honest, brother, in your bargaining with Him; for who knoweth better how to bring up children than our God? For (to lay aside His knowledge, of the which there is no finding out) He hath been practised in bringing

up His heirs these five thousand years; and His bairns are all well brought up, and many of them are honest men now at home, up in their own house in heaven, and are entered heirs to their Father's inheritance. Now, the form of His bringing up was by chastisements, scourging, correcting, nurturing; and see if He maketh exception of any of His bairns: no, His eldest Son and His Heir, Jesus, is not excepted (Revelation 3:19; Hebrews 12:7-8; Hebrews 2:10). Suffer we must; ere we were born, God decreed it; and it is easier to complain of His decree than to change it. It is true, terrors of conscience cast us down; and yet without terrors of conscience we cannot be raised up again: fears and doubtings shake us; and yet without fears and doubtings we would soon sleep, and lose our grips of Christ. Tribulation and temptations will almost loosen us to the root; and yet, without tribulations and temptations, we can now no more grow than herbs or corn without rain. Sin, and Satan, and the world will say, and cry in our ear, that we have a hard reckoning to make in judgment; and yet none of these three, except they lie, dare say in our face that our sin can change the tenor of the new covenant. Forward, then, dear brother, and lose not your grips. Hold fast the truth: for the world, sell not one dram-weight of God's truth, especially now, when most men measure truth by time, like young seamen setting their compass by a cloud; for now time is father and mother to truth, in the thoughts and practices of our evil time. The God of truth establish us; for, alas! now there are none to comfort the prisoners of hope, and the mourners in Zion. We can do little, except pray and mourn for Joseph in the stocks. And let their tongue cleave to the roof of their mouth who forget Jerusalem now in her day; and the Lord remember Edom, and render to him as he hath done to us.

Now, brother, I shall not weary you; but I entreat you to remember my dearest love to Mr. David Dickson, with whom I have small acquaintance; yet I bless the Lord, I know that he both prayeth and doeth for our dying kirk. Remember my dearest love to John Stuart, whom I love in Christ; and show him from me that I do always remember him, and hope for a meeting. The Lord Jesus establish him more and more, though he be already a strong man in Christ. Remember my heartiest affection in Christ to William Rodger,[114] whom I also remember to God. I wish that the first news I hear of him and you, and all that love our common Saviour in those bounds, may be, that they are so knit and linked, and kindly fastened in love with the Son of God, that ye may say, "Now if ye would ever so fain escape out of Christ's hands, yet love hath so bound us, that we cannot get our hands free again; He hath so ravished our hearts, that there is no loosening of His grips; the chains of His soul-ravishing love are so strong, that neither the grave nor death will break them." I hope, brother, yea I doubt not of it, that ye lay me, and my first entry to the Lord's vineyard, and my flock, before Him who hath put me into His work. As the Lord knoweth, since first I saw you, I have been mindful of you. Marion M'Naught doth remember most heartily her love to you, and to John Stuart.[115]Blessed be the Lord! that in God's mercy I found in this country such a woman, to whom Jesus is dearer than her own heart, when there be so many that cast Christ over their shoulder. Good brother, call to mind the memory of your worthy father, now asleep in Christ; and, as his custom was, pray continually, and wrestle, for the life of a dying, breathless kirk. And desire John Stuart not to forget poor Zion; she hath few friends, and few to speak one good word for her.

[114] Livingstone in his "Memor. Characteristics" mentions this godly man, a merchant in Ayr.

[115] See Letter 161.

Now I commend you, your whole soul, and body, and spirit, to Jesus Christ and His keeping, hoping that ye will live and die, stand and fall, with the cause of our Master, Jesus. The Lord Jesus Himself be with your spirit. Your loving brother in our Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, Feb. 2, 1632.

## 023. To Lady Kenmure.—Exhorting to remember her Espousal to Christ—Tribulation a Preparation ...

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23.—To myLady Kenmure.

(EXHORTING TO REMEMBER HER ESPOUSAL TO CHRIST—TRIBULATION A PREPARATION FOR THE KINGDOM—GLORY IN THE END.)

MADAM,—Your Ladyship will not (I know) weary nor offend, though I trouble you with many letters. The memory of what obligations I am under to your Ladyship, is the cause of it.

I am possibly impertinent in what I write, because of my ignorance of your present estate; but for all that is said, I have learned of Mr. W. D.[116] that ye have not changed upon, nor wearied of your sweet Master, Christ, and His service; neither were it your part to change upon Him who “resteth in His love.” Ye are among honourable company, and such as affect grandeur and court. But, Madam, thinking upon your estate, I think I see an improvident wooer coming too late to seek a bride, because she is contracted already, and promised away to another; and so the wooer’s busking and bravery (who cometh to you[117] as “who but he?”) are in vain. The outward pomp of this busy wooer, a beguiling world, is now coming in to suit[118] your soul too late, when ye have promised away your soul to Christ many years ago. And I know, Madam, what answer ye may now justly make to the late suitor; even this: “Ye are too long of coming; my soul, the bride, is away already, and the contract with Christ subscribed, and I cannot choose, but I must be honest and faithful to Him.” Honourable lady, keep your first love, and hold the first match with that soul-delighting, lovely Bridegroom, our sweet, sweet Jesus, fairer than all the children of men, “the Rose of Sharon,” and the fairest and sweetest smelled rose in all His Father’s garden. There is none like Him; I would not exchange one smile of His lovely face with kingdoms. Madam, let others take their silly, feckless heaven in this life. Envy them not; but let your soul, like a tarrowing and mislearned child, take the dorts (as we use to speak), or cast at all things and disdain them, except one only: either Christ or nothing. Your well-beloved, Jesus, will be content that ye be here devoutly proud, and ill to please, as one that contemneth all husbands but Himself. Either the King’s Son, or no husband at all; this is humble, and worthy ambition. What have ye to do to dally with a whorish and foolish world? Your jealous Husband will not be content that ye look by Him to another: He will be jealous indeed, and offended, if ye kiss another but Himself. What weights do burden you, Madam, I know not; but think it great mercy that your Lord from your youth hath been hedging in your outstraying affections, that they may not go a-whoring from Himself. If ye were His bastard, He would not nurture you so. If ye were for the slaughter, ye would be fattened. But be content; ye are His wheat, growing in our Lord’s field (Matthew 13:25; Matthew 13:38); and if wheat, ye must go under our Lord’s threshing-instrument, in His barn-floor, and through His sieve (Amos 9:9), and through His mill to be bruised (as the Prince of your salvation, Jesus, was) (Isaiah 53:10), that ye may be found good bread in your Lord’s house. Lord Jesus, bless the spiritual husbandry, and separate you from the chaff, that dow not bide the wind. I am persuaded your glass is spending itself by little and little; and if ye knew who is before you, ye would rejoice in your

tribulations. Think ye it a small honour to stand before the throne of God and the Lamb? and to be clothed in white, and to be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb? and to be led to the fountain of living waters, and to come to the Well-head, even God Himself, and get your fill of the clear, cold, sweet, refreshing water of life, the King's own well? and to put up your own sinful hand to the tree of life and take down and eat the sweetest apple in all God's heavenly paradise, Jesus Christ, your life and your Lord? Up your heart! shout for joy! Your King is coming to fetch you to His Father's house.

[116] Mr. William Dalglish, minister at Kirkmabreck.

[117] A proverbial expression, as in Herbert's Poem, 84 "Then came brave Glory passing by, With silks that whistled, Who but he."

[118] Z. Boyd's Last Battle, p. 185.

Madam, I am in exceeding great heaviness, God thinking it best for my own soul thus to exercise me, thereby, it may be, to fit me to be His mouth to others. I see and hear, at home and abroad, nothing but matter of grief and discouragement, which indeed maketh my life bitter. And I hope in God never to get my will in this world. And I expect ere long a fiery trial upon the Church; for as many men almost in England and Scotland, as many false friends to Christ, and as many pulling and drawing to pull the crown off His holy head! and for fear that our Beloved stay amongst us (as if His room[119] were more desirable than Himself), men are bidding Him go seek His lodging. Madam, if ye have a part in silly, friendless Zion (as I know ye have), speak a word on her behalf to God and man. If ye can do nothing else, speak for Jesus, and ye shall thereby be a witness against this declining age. Now, from my very soul, laying and leaving you on the Lord, and desiring a part in your prayers (as, my Lord knoweth, I remember you), I deliver over your body, spirit, and all your necessities, to the hands of our Lord, and remain for ever.

[119] His place. Your Ladyship's, in your sweet Lord Jesus and mine,

S. R.

Anwoth, Feb. 13, 1632.

## 024. To Marion M'Naught.—Christ and His Garden—Provision of Ordinances in the Church—Our Chil...

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24.—For Marion M'Naught.

(CHRIST AND HIS GARDEN—PROVISION OF ORDINANCES IN THE CHURCH—OUR CHILDREN.)

BELOVED MISTRESS,—My dearest love in Christ remembered to you. Know that Mr. Abraham[120] showed me there is to be a meeting of the bishops at Edinburgh shortly. The causes are known to themselves. It is our part to hold up our hands for Zion. Howbeit, it is reported, they came sad from court. It is our Lord's wisdom, that His kirk should ever hang by a thread; and yet the thread breaketh not, being hanged upon Him who is the sure Nail in David's house (Isaiah 22:23), upon whom all the vessels, great and small, do hang; and the Nail (God be thanked) neither crooketh nor can be broken. Jesus, that Flower of Jesse set without hands, getteth many a blast, and yet withers not, because He is His Father's noble Rose, casting a sweet smell through heaven and earth, and must grow; and in the same garden grow the saints, God's fair and beautiful lilies, under wind and rain, and all sun-burned, and yet life remaineth at the root. Keep within His garden, and you shall grow with them, till the Great Husbandman, our dear Master Gardener, come and transplant you from the lower part of His vineyard up to the higher, to the very heart of His garden, above the wrongs of the rain, sun, or wind. And then, wait upon the times of the blowing of the sweet south and north wind of His gracious Spirit, that may make you cast a sweet smell in your Beloved's nostrils; and bid your Beloved come down to His garden, and eat of His pleasant fruits (Song of Solomon 4:16). And He will come. You will get no more but this until you come up to the Well-head, where you shall put up your hand and take down the apples of the tree of life, and eat under the shadow of that tree. These apples are sweeter up beside the tree than they are down here in this piece of a clay prison-house. I have no joy but in the thoughts of these times. Doubt not of your Lord's part and the spouse's part; she shall be in good case. That word shall stand, "I shall be as the dew to Israel: he shall grow up as the lily, and cast out his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon" (Hosea 14:5-6). Christ shall set up His colours, and His ensign for the nations, and shall gather together the outcasts of Israel (Isaiah 11:12). "Then the Lord said to me, Son of man, these dead bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy unto them, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel" (Ezekiel 37:11-12). These promises are not wind, but the breast of our beloved Christ, which we must suck and draw comfort out of. Ye have cause to pity those poor creatures that stand out against Christ, and the building of His house. Silly men! they have but a feckless and silly heaven, nothing but meat and cloth, and laugh a day or two in the world, and then in a moment go down to the grave; and they shall not be able to hinder Christ's building. He that is Master of work will lead stones to the wall over their belly.

[120] Possibly, Mr. Abraham Henderson; a staunch defender of Presbytery, who, in 1605, persisted, along with eight of his brethren, in convening at Aberdeen, in face of prohibition, in order to maintain a protest in behalf of the Church's inherent right to meet in General Assembly. (See Forbes' "Apolog. Narration," p. 136.) And for that present tumult that the children of this world raise anent the planting of your town with a pastor, believe and stay upon God, as you still shame us all in believing. Go forward in the strength of the Lord; and I say from my Lord, before whom I stand, have your eyes upon none but the Lord of armies, and the Lord shall either let you see what you long to see, or then else fulfil your joy more abundantly another way. You and yours, and the children of God whom you care for in this town, shall have as much of the Son of God's supper cut and laid upon your trenchers, be who he will that carveth, as shall feed you to eternal life. And be not cast down for all that is done: your reward is laid up with God. I hope to see you laugh and leap for joy. Will the temple be built without din and tumult? No; God's stones in His house in Germany are laid with blood; and the Son of God no sooner begins to chop and hew stones with His hammer, but as soon the sword is drawn. If the work were of men, the world would set their shoulders to yours; but, in Christ's work, two or three must fight against a Presbytery (though His own court) and a city. This proveth that it is Christ's errand, and therefore that it shall thrive. Let them lay iron chains cross over the door,—stay, and believe, and wait, whill the Lion of the tribe of Judah come. And He that comes from heaven clothed with the rainbow, and hath the little book in His hand, when He taketh a grip of their chains, He will lay the door on the broadside, and come in, and go up to the pulpit, and take the man with Him whom He hath chosen for His work. Therefore, let me hear from you, whether you be in heaviness, or rejoicing under hope, that I may take part of your grief, and bear it with you, and get part of your joy, which is to me also as my own joy. And as to what are your fears anent the health or life of your dear children, lay it upon Christ's shoulders: let Him bear all. Loose your grips of them all; and when your dear Lord pulleth, let them go with faith and joy. It is a tried faith to kiss a Lord that is taking from you. Let them be careful, during the short time that they are here, to run and get a grip of the prize. Christ is standing in the end of their way, holding up the garland of endless glory to their eyes, and is crying, "Run fast, and come and receive." Happy are they (if their breath serve them) to run and not to weary, whill their Lord, with His own dear hand, puts the crown upon their head. It is not long days, but good days, that make life glorious and happy; and our dear Lord is gracious to us, who shorteneth and hath made the way to glory shorter than it was; so that the crown that Noah did fight for five hundred years, children may now obtain it in fifteen years. And heaven is in some sort better for us now than it was to Noah, for the man Christ is there now, who was not come in the flesh in Noah's days. You shall show this to your children, whom my soul in Christ blesseth, and entreat them by the mercies of God, and the bowels of Jesus Christ, to covenant with Jesus Christ to be His, and to make up the bond of friendship betwixt their souls and their Christ, that they may have acquaintance in heaven, and a friend at God's right hand. Such a friend at court is much worth.

Now I take my leave of you, praying my Christ and your Christ to fulfil your joy; and more graces and blessings from our sweet Lord Jesus to your soul, your husband's and children, than ever I wrote of the letters of A, B, C, to you. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in my sweet Master, Jesus Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, March 9, 1632.

## 025. To a Gentleman at Kirkcudbright, excusing himself from visiting

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25.—To a Gentlewoman at Kirkcudbright, excusing himself from visiting.

MISTRESS,—I beseech you to have me excused if the daily employments of my calling shall hinder me to see you according as I would wish; for I dare not go abroad, since many of my people are sick, and the time of our Communion draweth near. But frequent the company of your worthy and honest-hearted pastor, Mr. Robert (Glendinning), to whom the Lord hath given the tongue of the learned, to minister a word in season to the weary. Remember me to him and to your husband. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Your affectionate friend,

S. R.

## 026. To Marion M'Naught, after her dangerous illness.—Use of Sickness—Reproaches—Christ our E...

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26.—For Marion M'Naught, after her dangerous illness.

(USE OF SICKNESS—REPROACHES—CHRIST OUR ETERNAL FEAST—FASTING.)

DEARLY-BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. You are not ignorant what our Lord in His love-visitation hath been doing with your soul, even letting you see a little sight of that dark trance you must go through ere you come to glory. Your life hath been near the grave, and you were at the door, and you found the door shut and fast: your dear Christ thinking it not time to open these gates to you till you have fought some longer in His camp. And therefore He willeth you to put on your armour again, and to take no truce with the devil or this present world. You are little obliged to any of the two; but I rejoice in this, that when any of the two comes to suit your soul in marriage, you have an answer in readiness to tell them,—”You are too long a-coming; I have many a year since promised my soul to another, even to my dearest Lord Jesus, to whom I must be true.” And therefore you are come back to us again to help us to pray for Christ’s fair bride, a marrow dear to Him. Be not cast down in heart to hear that the world barketh at Christ’s strangers, both in Ireland and in this land; they do it because their Lord hath chosen them out of this world. And this is one of our Lord’s reproaches, to be hated and ill-entreated by men. The silly stranger, in an uncouth country, must take with a smoky inn and coarse cheer, a hard bed, and a barking, ill-tongued host. It is not long to the day, and he will to his journey upon the morrow, and leave them all. Indeed, our fair morning is at hand, the day-star is near the rising, and we are not many miles from home. What matters ill entertainment in the smoky inns of this miserable life? We are not to stay here, and we will be dearly welcome to Him whom we go to. And I hope, when I shall see you clothed in white raiment, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and shall see you even at the elbow of your dearest Lord and Redeemer, and a crown upon your head, and following our Lamb and lovely Lord whithersoever He goeth,—you will think nothing of all these days; and you shall then rejoice, and no man shall take your joy from you. It is certain there is not much sand to run in your Lord’s sand-glass, and that day is at hand; and till then your Lord in this life is giving you some little feasts.

It is true, you see Him not now as you shall see Him then. Your well-beloved standeth now behind the wall looking out at the window (Song of Solomon 2:9), and you see but a little of His face. Then, you shall see all His face and all the Saviour,—a long, and high, and broad Lord Jesus, the loveliest person among the children of men. O joy of joys, that our souls know there is such a great supper preparing for us even! Howbeit we be but half-hungered of Christ here, and many a time dine behind noon,[121] yet the supper of the Lamb will come in time, and will be set before us before we famish and lose our stomachs. You have cause to hold up your heart in remembrance and hope of that fair, long summer day; for in this night of your life, wherein you are in the body absent from the Lord, Christ’s fair moonlight in His word and sacraments, in prayer, feeling, and holy conference, hath shined upon you, to let you see the way to the city. I confess our diet here is

but sparing; we get but tastings of our Lord's comforts; but the cause of that is not because our Steward, Jesus, is a niggard, and narrow-hearted, but because our stomachs are weak, and we are narrow-hearted. But the great feast is coming, and the chambers of them made fair and wide to take in the great Lord Jesus. Come in, then, Lord Jesus, to hungry souls gaping for thee! In this journey take the Bridegroom as you may have Him, and be greedy of His smallest crumbs; but, dear Mistress, buy none of Christ's delicates-spiritual with sin, or fasting against your weak body. Remember you are in the body, and it is the lodging-house; and you may not, without offending the Lord, suffer the old walls of that house to fall down through want of necessary food. Your body is the dwelling-house of the Spirit; and therefore, for the love you carry to the sweet Guest, give a due regard to His house of clay. When He looseth the wall, why not? Welcome Lord Jesus! But it is a fearful sin in us, by hurting the body by fasting, to loose one stone or the least piece of timber in it, for the house is not our own. The Bridegroom is with you yet; so fast as that also you may feast and rejoice in Him. I think upon your magistrates; but He that is clothed in linen, and hath the writer's inkhorn by His side, hath written up their names in heaven already. Pray and be content with His will; God hath a council-house in heaven, and the end will be mercy unto you. For the planting of your town with a godly minister, have your eye upon the Lord of the harvest. I dare promise you, God in this life shall fill your soul with the fatness of His house, for your care to see Christ's bairns fed. And your posterity shall know it, to whom<sup>[122]</sup> I pray for mercy, and that they may get a name amongst the living in Jerusalem; and if God portion them with His bairns, their rent is fair, and I hope it shall be so. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

[121] Noon, or a little before it, was then the usual hour for dinner.

[122] In regard to whom I pray for the mercy Paul sought for the house of Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:6).

Yours ever in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Sept. 19, 1632.

## 027. To Lady Kenmure.—Love to Christ and Submission to His Cross—Believers kept—The Heavenly ...

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27.—To myLady Kenmure.

(LOVE TO CHRIST AND SUBMISSION TO HIS CROSS—BELIEVERS KEPT—THE HEAVENLY PARADISE.)

MADAM,—Having saluted you with grace and mercy from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, I long both to see your Ladyship, and to hear how it goeth with you.

I do remember you, and present you and your necessities to Him who is able to keep you, and present you blameless before His face with joy; and my prayer to our Lord is, that ye may be sick of love for Him, who died of love for you,—I mean your Saviour Jesus. And O sweet were that sickness to be soul-sick for Him! And a living death it were, to die in the fire of the love of that soul-lover, Jesus! And, Madam, if ye love Him, ye will keep His commandments; and this is not one of the least, to lay your neck cheerfully and willingly under the yoke of Jesus Christ. For I trust your Ladyship did first contract and bargain with the Son of God to follow Him upon these terms, that by His grace ye should endure hardship, and suffer affliction, as the soldier of Christ. They are not worthy of Jesus who will not take a blow for their Master's sake. As for our glorious Peace-maker, when He came to make up the friendship betwixt God and us, God bruised Him, and struck Him; the sinful world also did beat Him, and crucify Him, yet He took buffets of both parties, and (honour to our Lord Jesus!) He would not leave the field for all that, till He had made peace betwixt the parties. I persuade myself your sufferings are but like your Saviour's (yea, incomparably less and lighter), which are called but a "bruising of His heel" (Genesis 3:15); a wound far from the heart. Your life is hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3), and therefore ye cannot be robbed of it. Our Lord handleth us, as fathers do their young children; they lay up jewels in a place, above the reach of the short arm of bairns, else bairns would put up their hands and take them down, and lose them soon. So hath our Lord done with our spiritual life. Jesus Christ is the high coffer in the which our Lord hath hid our life; we children are not able to reach up our arm so high as to take down that life and lose it; it is in our Christ's hand. O long, long may Jesus be Lord Keeper of our life! and happy are they that can, with the Apostle (2 Timothy 1:12), lay their soul in pawn in the hand of Jesus, for He is able to keep that which is committed in pawn to Him against that day. Then, Madam, so long as this life is not hurt, all other troubles are but touches in the heel. I trust ye will soon be cured. Ye know, Madam, kings have some servants in their court that receive not present wages in their hand, but live upon their hopes: the King of kings also hath servants in His court that for the present get little or nothing but the heavy cross of Christ, troubles without and terrors within; but they live upon hope; and when it cometh to the parting of the inheritance, they remain in the house as heirs. It is better to be so than to get present payment, and a portion in this life, an inheritance in this world (God forgive me, that I should honour it with the name of an inheritance, it is rather a farm-room!), and then in the end to be casten out of God's house, with this word, "Ye have received your consolation, ye will get no more." Alas! what get

they? The rich glutton's heaven (Luke 16:25). O but our Lord maketh it a silly heaven! "He fared well," saith our Lord, "and delicately every day." O no more? a silly heaven! Truly no more, except that he was clothed in purple, and that is all. I persuade myself, Madam, ye have joy when ye think that your Lord hath dealt more graciously with your soul. Ye have gotten little in this life, it is true indeed: ye have then the more to crave, yea, ye have all to crave; for, except some tastings of the first fruits, and some kisses of His mouth whom your soul loveth, ye get no more. But I cannot tell you what is to come. Yet I may speak as our Lord doth of it. The foundation of the city is pure gold, clear as crystal; the twelve ports are set with precious stones; if orchards and rivers commend a soil upon earth, there is a paradise there, wherein groweth the tree of life that beareth twelve manner of fruits every month, which is seven score and four harvests in the year; and there is there a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; and the city hath no need of the light of the sun or moon, or of a candle, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb is the light thereof. Madam, believe and hope for this, till ye see and enjoy. Jesus is saying in the Gospel, Come and see; and He is come down in the chariot of truth, wherein He rideth through the world, to conquer men's souls (Psalms 45:4), and is now in the world saying, "Who will go with Me? will ye go? My Father will make you welcome, and give you house-room; for in My Father's house are many dwelling-places." [123] Madam, consent to go with Him. Thus I rest, commending you to God's dearest mercy.

[123] μ■vας.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 028. To Lady Kenmure, after the death of a child.—The State of the Church, Cause for God's Di...

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28.—To myLady Kenmure,after the death of a child.

(THE STATE OF THE CHURCH, CAUSE FOR GOD'S DISPLEASURE—HIS CARE OF HIS CHURCH—THE JEWS—AFFLICTED SAINTS.)

MADAM,—I am afraid now (as many others are) that, at the sitting down of our Parliament, our Lord Jesus and His spouse shall be roughly handled. And it must be so, since false and declining Scotland, whom our Lord took off the dunghill and out of hell, and made a fair bride to Himself, hath broken her faith to her sweet Husband, and hath put on the forehead of a whore. And therefore He saith He will remove. Would God we could stir up ourselves to lay hold upon Him, who, being highly provoked with the handling He hath met with, is ready to depart! Alas! we do not importune Him by prayer and supplication to abide amongst us! If we could but weep upon Him, and in the holy pertinacity of faith wrestle with Him, and say, "We will not let Thee go," it may be that then, He, who is easy to be intreated, would yet, notwithstanding of our high provocations, condescend to stay and feed among the lilies, till that fair and desirable day break, and the shadows flee away. Ah! what cause of mourning is there, when our gold is become dim, and the visage of our Nazarites, sometime whiter than snow, is now become blacker than a coal, and Levi's house, once comparable to fine gold, is now changed, and become like vessels in whom He hath no pleasure! Madam, think upon this, that when our Lord, who hath His handkerchief to wipe the face of the mourners in Zion, shall come to wipe away all tears from their eyes, He may wipe yours also, in the passing, amongst others. I am confident, Madam, that our Lord will yet build a new house to Himself, of our rejected and scattered stones, for our Bridegroom cannot want a wife. Can He live a widower? Nay, He will embrace both us, the little young sister, and the elder sister, the Church of the Jews; and there will yet be a day of it. And therefore we have cause to rejoice, yea, to sing and shout for joy. The Church hath been, since the world began, ever hanging by a small thread, and all the hands of hell and of the wicked have been drawing at the thread. But, God be thanked, they only break their arms by pulling, but the thread is not broken; for the sweet fingers of Christ our Lord have spun and twisted it. Lord, hold the thread whole!

Madam, stir up your husband to lay hold upon the covenant, and to do good. What hath he to do with the world? It is not his inheritance. Desire him to make home-over, and put to his hand to lay one stone or two upon the wall of God's house before he go hence. I have heard also, Madam, that your child is removed; but to have or want is best, as He pleaseth. Whether she be with you, or in God's keeping, think it all one; nay, think it the better of the two by far that she is with Him. I trust in our Lord that there is something laid up and kept for you; for our kind Lord, who hath wounded you, will not be so cruel as not to allay the pain of your green wound; and, therefore, claim Christ still as your own, and own Him as your One thing. So resting, I recommend your Ladyship, your soul and spirit, in pawn to Him who keepeth His Father's pawns, and will make an account of them faithfully, even to that fairest amongst the sons of men, our sweet Lord Jesus, the

fairest, the sweetest, the most delicious Rose of all His Father's great field. The smell of that Rose perfume your soul! Your Ladyship's, in his sweetest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, April 1, 1633.

## 029. To Marion M'Naught.—Christ with His People in the Furnace of Affliction—Prayer

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29.—For Marion M'Naught.

(CHRIST WITH HIS PEOPLE IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION—PRAYER.)

DEAR SISTER,—I longed much to have conferred with you at this time. I am grieved at anything in your house that grieveth you; and shall, by my Lord's grace, suit my Lord to help you to bear your burden, and to come in behind you, and give you and your burdens a put up the mountain. Know you not that Christ woeth His wife in the furnace? "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah 48:10). He casteth His love on you when you are in the furnace of affliction. You might indeed be casten down if He brought you in and left you there; but when He leadeth you through the waters, think ye not that He has a sweet, soft hand? You know His love-grip already; you shall be delivered, wait on. Jesus will make a road, and come and fetch home the captive. You shall not die in prison; but your strokes are such as were your Husband's, who was wounded in the house of His friends. Strokes are not newings to Him, and neither are they to you. But your winter night is near spent; it is near-hand the dawning. I will see you leap for joy. The kirk shall be delivered. This wilderness shall bud and grow up like a rose. Christ got a charter of Scotland from His Father; and who will bereave Him of His heritage, or put our Redeemer out of His mailing, until His tack be run out? I must have you praying for me: I am black shamed for evermore now with Christ's goodness; and in private, on the 17th and 18th of August, I got a full answer of my Lord to be a graced minister, and a chosen arrow hidden in His own quiver. But know this, assurance is not keeped but by watching and prayer; and, therefore, dear mistress, help me. I have gotten now (honour to my Lord!) the gate to open the slote, and shut the bar of His door; and I think it easy to get anything from the King by prayer, and to use holy violence with Him. Christ was in Carsphairne<sup>[124]</sup> kirk, and opened the people's hearts wonderfully. Jesus is looking up that water; and minting to dwell amongst them. I would we could give Him His welcome home to the moors. Now peace and grace be upon you and all yours.

[124] The village and church of Carsphairn stood not far from Kenmure Castle, and very near Earliston and Knockgray. The road from Dalmellington is bare, with steep, rocky hills on either side of the glen. The "Ken" may be meant by "that water" in the next sentence.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Aug. 20, 1633.

## **030. To Lady Kenmure.—Rank and Prosperity hinder Progress—Watchfulness—Case of Relatives**

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30.—To myLady Kenmure.

(RANK AND PROSPERITY HINDER PROGRESS—WATCHFULNESS—CASE OF RELATIVES.)

MADAM,—I determined, and was desirous also, to have seen your ladyship, but because of a pain in my arm I could not. I know ye will not impute it to any unsuitable forgetfulness of your Ladyship, from whom, at my first entry to my calling in this country (and since also), I received such comfort in my affliction as I trust in God never to forget, and shall labour by His grace to recompense in the only way possible to me; and that is, my presenting your soul, person, house, and all your necessities, in prayer to Him, whose I hope you are, and who is able to keep you till that Day of Appearance, and to present you before His face with joy.

I am confident your Ladyship is going forward in the begun journey to your Lord and Father's home and kingdom. Howbeit ye want not temptations within and without. And who among the saints hath ever taken that castle without stroke of sword? the Chief of the house, our Elder Brother, our Lord Jesus, not being excepted, who won His own house and home, due to Him by birth, with much blood and many blows. Your Ladyship hath the more need to look to yourself, because our Lord hath placed you higher than the rest, and your way to heaven lieth through a more wild and waste wilderness than the way of many of your fellow-travellers,—not only through the midst of this wood of thorns, the cumbersome world, but also through these dangerous paths, the vain-glory of it; the consideration whereof hath often moved me to pity your soul, and the soul of your worthy and noble husband. And it is more to you to win heaven, being ships of greater burden, and in the main sea, than for little vessels, that are not so much in the mercy and reverence of the storms, because they may come quietly to their port by launching alongst the coast. For the which cause ye do much, if in the midst of such a tumult of business, and crowd of temptations, ye shall give Christ Jesus His own court and His own due place in your soul. I know and am persuaded, that that lovely One, Jesus, is dearer to you than many kingdoms; and that ye esteem Him your Well-beloved, and the Standard-bearer among ten thousand (Song of Solomon 5:10). And it becometh Him full well to take the place and the board-head in your soul before all the world. I knew and saw Him with you in the furnace of affliction; for there he wooed you to Himself, and chose you to be His; and now He craveth no other hire of you but your love, and that He get no cause to be jealous of you. And, therefore, dear and worthy lady, be like to the fresh river, that keepeth its own fresh taste in the salt sea. This world is not worthy of your soul. Give it not a good-day when Christ cometh in competition with it. Be like one of another country. Home! and stay not; for the sun is fallen low, and nigh the tops of the mountains, and the shadows are stretched out in great length. Linger not by the way. The world and sin would train you on, and make you turn aside. Leave not the way for them; and the Lord Jesus be at the voyage!

Madam, many eyes are upon you, and many would be glad your Ladyship should spill a Christian, and mar a good professor. Lord Jesus, mar their godless desires, and keep the conscience whole without a crack! If there be a hole in it, so that it take in water at a leak, it will with difficulty mend again. It is a dainty, delicate creature, and a rare piece of the workmanship of your Maker; and therefore deal gently with it, and keep it entire, that amidst this world's glory your Ladyship may learn to entertain Christ. And whatsoever creature your Ladyship findeth not to smell of Him, may it have no better relish to you than the white of an egg.

Madam, it is a part of the truth of your profession to drop words in the ears of your noble husband continually of eternity, judgment, death, hell, heaven, the honourable profession, the sins of his father's house. He must reckon with God for his father's debt: forgetting of accounts payeth no debt. Nay, the interest of a forgotten bond runneth up with God to interest upon interest. I knoweth he looketh homeward, and loveth the truth; but I pity him with my soul because of his many temptations. Satan layeth upon men a burden of cares above a load,[125] and maketh a pack-horse of men's souls when they are wholly set upon this world. We owe the devil no such service. It were wisdom to throw off that load into a mire, and cast all our cares over upon God.

[125] A burden above a load, or a load above a burden, is a phrase for a very heavy weight.

Madam, think ye have no child. Subscribe a bond to your Lord that she shall be His if He take her; and thanks, and praise, and glory to His holy name shall be the interest for a year's loan of her. Look for crosses, and while it is fair weather mend the sails of the ship.

Now hoping your Ladyship will pardon my tediousness, I recommend your soul and person to the grace and mercy of our sweet Lord Jesus, in whom I am, Your Ladyship's, at all dutiful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Nov. 15, 1633.

## 031. To Lady Kenmure.—A Union for Prayer Recommended

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31.—To myLady Kenmure.

(A UNION FOR PRAYER RECOMMENDED.)

MADAM,—Having received a letter from some of the worthiest of the ministry in this kingdom, the contents whereof I am desired to communicate to such professors in these parts as I know love the beauty of Zion, and are afflicted to see the Lord's vineyard trodden under foot by the wild boars out of the wood, who lay it waste, I could not but also desire your Ladyship's help to join with the rest, desiring you to impart it to my Lord your husband, and if ye think it needful, I shall write to his Lordship, as Mr. G. G.[126] shall advertise me.

[126] Mr. George Gillespie; see Letter 144

Know, therefore, that the best affected of the ministry have thought it convenient and necessary, at such a time as this, that all who love the truth should join their prayers together, and cry to God with humiliation and fasting. The times, which are agreed upon, are the two first Sabbaths of February next, and the six days intervening betwixt these Sabbaths, as they may conveniently be had, and the first Sabbath of every quarter. And the causes, as they are written to me, are these:

1. Besides the distresses of the Reformed churches abroad, the many reigning sins of uncleanness, ungodliness, and unrighteousness in this land, the present judgments on the land, and many more hanging over us, whereof few are sensible, or yet know the right and true cause of them.
2. The lamentable and pitiful estate of a glorious church (in so short a time, against so many bonds), in doctrine, sacrament, and discipline, so sore persecuted, in the persons of faithful pastors and professors, and the door of God's house kept so straight by bastard porters, insomuch that worthy instruments, able for the work, are held at the door, the rulers having turned over religion into policy, and the multitude ready to receive any religion that shall be enjoined by authority.
3. In our humiliation, besides that we are under a necessity of deprecating God's wrath, and vowing to God sincerely new obedience, the weakness, coldness, silence, and lukewarmness of some of the best of the ministry, and the deadness of professors, who have suffered the truth both secretly to be stolen away, and openly to be plucked from us, would be confessed.
4. Atheism, idolatry, profanity, and vanity, should be confessed; our king's heart recommended to God; and God intreated, that He would stir up the nobles and the people to turn from their evil ways.

Thus, Madam, hoping that your Ladyship will join with others, that such a work be not slighted, at such a necessary time, when our kirk is at the overturning, I will promise to myself your help, as the Lord in secrecy and prudence shall enable you, that your Ladyship may rejoice with the Lord's

people, when deliverance shall come; for true and sincere humiliation come always speed with God. And when authority, king, court, and churchmen oppose the truth, what other armour have we but prayer and faith? whereby, if we wrestle with Him, there is ground to hope that those who would remove the burdensome stone (Zechariah 12:3) out of its place, shall but hurt their back, and the stone shall not be moved, at least not removed.

Grace, grace be with you, from Him who hath called you to the inheritance of the saints in light. Your Ladyship's at all submissive obedience in his sweet Lord Jesus.

S. R.

Anwoth, Jan. 23, 1634.

## 032. To Marion M'Naught.—State and Prospects of the Church—Satan

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32.—For Marion M'Naught.

(STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE CHURCH—SATAN.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I am in care and fear for this work of our Lord's, now near approaching, because of the danger of the time; and I dare not for my soul be silent, to see my Lord's house burning, and not cry "Fire, fire!" Therefore, seek from our Lord wisdom spiritual, and not black policy, to speak with liberty our Lord's truth.—I am cast down, and would fain have access and presence to The King that day, even howbeit I should break up iron doors. I believe you will not forget me; and you will desire Jean Brown, Thomas Carson, and Marion Carson, to help me. Pray for well-cooked meat and a heartsome Saviour, with joy crying, "Welcome in My Father's name."

I am confident Zion shall be well; the Bush shall burn and not consume, for the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. But the Lord is making on a fire in Jerusalem, and purposeth to blow the bellows, and to melt the tin and brass, and bring out a fair beautiful bride out of the furnace, that will be married over again upon the new Husband, and sing as in the days of her youth, when the contract of marriage is written over again. But I fear the bride be hidden for a time from the dragon that pursueth the woman with child. But what, howbeit we go and lurk in the wilderness for a time? for the Lord will take His kirk to the wilderness and speak to her heart.

Nothing casteth me down, but only I fear the Lord will cast down the shepherd's tents, and feed his own in a secret place. But let us, however matters frame, cast over the affairs of the bride upon the Bridegroom; the government is upon His shoulders, and He dow bear us all well enough. That fallen star, the prince of the bottomless pit, knoweth it is near the time when he shall be tormented; and now in his evening he has gathered his armies, to win one battle or two, in the edge of the evening, at the sun going down. And when our Lord has been watering His vineyards in France, and Germany, and Bohemia, how can we think ourselves Christ's sister, if we be not like Him, and our other great sisters? I cannot but think, seeing the ends of the earth are given to Christ (Psalms 2:8), and Scotland is the end of the earth, and so we are in Christ's charter-tailzie, but our Lord will keep His possession. We fall by promise and law to Christ. He won us with the sweat of His brow, if I may say so; His Father promised Him His liferent of Scotland. Glory, glory to our King! long may He wear His crown. O Lord, let us never see another King! O let Him come down like rain upon the new-mown grass!

I had you in remembrance on Saturday in the morning last, in a great measure, and was brought, thrice on end, in remembrance of you in my prayer to God. Grace, grace be your portion.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, March 2, 1634.

### 033. To Marion M'Naught.—In Prospect of Going to the Lord's Table

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33.—For Marion M'Naught.

(IN PROSPECT OF A COMMUNION SEASON.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. Please you understand, to my grief, our Communion is delayed till Sabbath come eight days; the laird and lady hath earnestly desired me to delay it, because the laird is sick, and he fears he be not able to travel, because he has lately taken physic. The Lord bless that work. Commend it to God as you love me, for I love not Satan's thorns cast in the Lord's way. The Lord rebuke him. I trust in God's mercy, Satan has gotten but a delay, but no free discharge that his kingdom shall not be hurt. Commend the laird to your God. I pray you advertise your people, that they be not disappointed in coming here. Show such of them as you love in Christ, from me, that Jesus Christ will be welcome, when He comes, in that He has sharpened their desires for eight days space. Your daughter is well, I hope, every way. Forget not God's kirk; they are but bastards, and not sons and daughters, that mourn not for Zion. Lord hear us! No further. Jesus Christ be with your spirit. I shall remember you and your new house. Lord Jesus go from the one house to the other.

Yours at all power in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 034. To Marion M'Naught.—Prospects of the Church—Christ's Care for the Children of Believers

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34.—For Marion M'Naught.

(PROSPECTS OF THE CHURCH—CHRIST'S CARE FOR THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My old and dearest love in Christ remembered. Know that I have been visiting my Lady Kenmure. Her child is with the Lord. I entreat you, visit her, and desire the goodwife[127] of Barcapple to visit her, and Knockbrecks (Mr. Gordon), if you see him in the town. My Lord her husband is absent, and I think she will be heavy. You know what Mr. W. Dalgleish and I desired you to deal for, at my Lord Kirkcudbright's hand. Send me word if you obtained anything at my Lord's hands, anent the giving up of our names to the High Commission; for I hear it is not for nothing that the Bishop hath taken that course. Our Lord knows best what is good for an old kirk that has fallen from her first love, and hath forgotten her Husband days without number. A trial is like to come on; but I am sure our Husbandman Christ shall lose chaff, but no corn at all. Yet there is a dry wind coming, but neither to fan nor to purge. Happy are they who are not blown away with the chaff, for we will but suffer temptation for ten days; but those who are faithful to the death shall receive the crown of life. I hear daily what hath been spoken of myself, most unjustly and falsely; and no marvel, the dragon, with the swing of his tail, hath made the third part of the stars to fall from heaven, and the fallen stars would have many to fall with them. If ever Satan was busy, now, when he knoweth his time is short, he is busy. "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." I know, ere it be long, the Lord shall come and redd all pleas betwixt us and our enemies. Now welcome, Lord Jesus, go fast.

[127] Barcapleis in the stewartry of Kirkcudbright, in the parish of Tongueland.

Send me word about Grizel, your daughter, whom I remember in Christ; and desire her to cast herself in His arms who was born of a woman, and, being the Ancient of days, was made a young weeping child. It was not for nothing that our brother Jesus was an infant. It was that He might pity infants of believers, who were to come out of the womb into the world. I believe our Lord Jesus shall be waiting on, with mercy, mercy, mercy, to the end of that battle, and bring her through with life and peace, and a sign of God's favour. I will expect advertisement from you, and especially if you fear her. Mistress, you remember that I said to you anent your love to me and my brother, begun in Christ; you know we are here but strangers, and you have not yet found us a dry well, as others have been. Be not overcome of any suspicion. I trust in God that the Lord, who knit us together, shall keep us together. It is time now that the lambs of Jesus should all run together, when the wolf is barking at them; yet I know, ere God's bairns want a cross, their love among themselves shall be a cross; but our Lord giveth love for another end. I know you will, with love, cover infirmities; and our Lord give you wisdom in all things. I think love hath broad shoulders, and will bear many things, and yet neither faint nor sweat, nor fall under the burden.

Commend me to your husband and dear Grizel. I think on her. Lord Jesus be in the furnace with her, and then she will but smoke and not burn. Desire Mr. Robert<sup>[128]</sup> to excuse my not seeing of him at his house. I have my own reasons therefor.<sup>[129]</sup> Grace, mercy, and peace be with you.

[128] Mr. Robert Glendinning, the minister.

[129] "For this;" as in our metre version, Psalms 106:40, etc.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, April 25, 1634.

## 035. To Lady Kenmure, on the death of a child.—God Measures our Days—Bereavements Ripen us fo...

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35.—To my Lady Kenmure, on the death of a child.

(GOD MEASURES OUR DAYS—BEREAVEMENTS RIPEN US FOR THE HARVEST.)

MADAM,—All submissive and dutiful obedience in our Lord Jesus remembered. I trust I need not much entreat your Ladyship to look to Him who hath stricken you at this time; but my duty, in the memory of that comfort I found in your Ladyship's kindness, when I was no less heavy (in a case not unlike that), speaketh to me to say something now. And I wish I could ease your Ladyship, at least with words. I am persuaded your Physician will not slay you, but purge you, seeing He calleth Himself the Chirurgeon, who maketh the wound and bindeth it up again; for to lance a wound is not to kill, but to cure the patient (Deuteronomy 32:39). I believe faith will teach you to kiss a striking Lord; and so acknowledge the sovereignty of God (in the death of a child) to be above the power of us mortal men, who may pluck up a flower in the bud and not be blamed for it. If our dear Lord pluck up one of His roses, and pull down sour and green fruit before harvest, who can challenge Him? For He sendeth us to His world, as men to a market, wherein some stay many hours, and eat and drink, and buy and sell, and pass through the fair, till they be weary; and such are those who live long, and get a heavy fill of this life. And others again come slipping in to the morning market, and do neither sit nor stand, nor buy nor sell, but look about them a little, and pass presently home again; and these are infants and young ones, who end their short market in the morning, and get but a short view of the Fair. Our Lord, who hath numbered man's months, and set him bounds that he cannot pass (Job 14:5), hath written the length of our market, and it is easier to complain of the decree than to change it.

I verily believe, when I write this, your Lord hath taught your Ladyship to lay your hand on your mouth. But I shall be far from desiring your Ladyship, or any others, to cast by a cross, like an old useless bill that is only for the fire; but rather would wish each cross were looked in the face seven times, and were read over and over again. It is the messenger of the Lord, and speaks something; and the man of understanding will hear the rod, and Him that hath appointed it. Try what is the taste of the Lord's cup, and drink with God's blessing, that ye may grow thereby. I trust in God, whatever speech it utter to your soul, this is one word in it,—”Behold, blessed is the man whom God correcteth” (Job 5:17); and that it saith to you, “Ye are from home while here; ye are not of this world, as your Redeemer, Christ, was not of this world.” There is something keeping for you, which is worth the having. All that is here is condemned to die, to pass away like a snowball before a summer sun; and since death took first possession of something of yours, it hath been and daily is creeping nearer and nearer to yourself, howbeit with no noise of feet. Your Husbandman and Lord hath lopped off some branches already; the tree itself is to be transplanted to the high garden. In a good time be it. Our Lord ripen your Ladyship. All these crosses (and indeed, when I remember them, they are heavy and many,—peace, peace be the end of them!) are to make you white and ripe for the Lord's harvest-hook. I have seen the Lord weaning you from the breasts of

this world. It was never His mind it should be your patrimony; and God be thanked for that. Ye look the liker one of the heirs. Let the movables go; why not? They are not yours. Fasten your grips upon the heritage; and our Lord Jesus make the charters sure, and give your Ladyship to grow as a palm-tree on God's mount Zion; howbeit shaken with winds, yet the root is fast. This is all I can do, to recommend your case to your Lord, who hath you written upon the palms of His hand. If I were able to do more, your Ladyship may believe me that gladly I would. I trust shortly to see your Ladyship. Now He who hath called you confirm and stablish your heart in grace, unto the Day of the Liberty of the Sons of God. Your Ladyship's at all submissive obedience in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, April 29, 1634.

## 036. To Marion M'Naught.—Choice of a Commissioner for Parliament

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36.—For Marion M'Naught.

(CHOICE OF A COMMISSIONER FOR PARLIAMENT.)

WELL-BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I hear this day your town is to choose a commissioner for the Parliament; and I was written to from Edinburgh, to see that good men should be chosen in your bounds. And I have heard this day that Robert Glendoning or John Ewart look to be chosen. I beseech you see this be not. The Lord's cause craveth other witnesses to speak for Him than such men; and, therefore, let it not be said that Kirkcudbright, which is spoken of in this kingdom for their religion, hath sent a man to be their mouth that will speak against Christ. Such a time as this will not fall out once in half an age. I would intreat your husband to take it upon him. It is an honourable and necessary service for Christ; and shew him that I wrote unto you for that effect. I fear William Glendoning hath not skill and authority. I am in great heaviness. Pray for me, for we must take our life in our hand in this ill time. Let us stir up ourselves, to lay our Lord's bride and her wrongs before our Husband and Lord. Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, May 20.

## 037. To Lady Kenmure.—On the Death of Lord Kenmure—Design of, and duties under, Affliction

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37.—To myLady Kenmure.

(ON THE DEATH OF LORD KENMURE—DESIGNS OF AND DUTIES OF AFFLICTION.) MY VERY NOBLE AND WORTHY LADY,—So oft as I call to mind the comforts that I myself, a poor friendless stranger, received from your Ladyship here in a strange part of the country, when my Lord took from me the delight of mine eyes (Ezekiel 24:16), as the Word speaketh (which wound is not yet fully healed and cured), I trust your Lord shall remember that, and give you comfort now at such a time as this, wherein your dearest Lord hath made you a widow, that ye may be a free woman for Christ, who is now suiting for marriage-love of you. And therefore, since you lie alone in your bed, let Christ be as a bundle of myrrh, to sleep and lie all the night betwixt your breasts (Song of Solomon 1:13), and then your bed is better filled than before. And seeing, amongst all crosses spoken of in our Lord's Word, this giveth you a particular right to make God your Husband (which was not so yours while your husband was alive), read God's mercy out of this visitation; albeit I must out of some experience say, the mourning for the husband of your youth be, by God's own mouth, the heaviest worldly sorrow (Joel 1:8). And though this be the weightiest burden that ever lay upon your back; yet ye know (when the fields are emptied and your husband now asleep in the Lord), if ye shall wait upon Him who hideth His face for a while, that it lieth upon God's honour and truth to fill the field, and to be a Husband to the widow. See and consider then what ye have lost, and how little it is. Therefore, Madam, let me intreat you, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, and by the comforts of His Spirit, and your appearance before Him, let God, and men, and angels now see what is in you. The Lord hath pierced the vessel; it will be known whether there be in it wine or water. Let your faith and patience be seen, that it may be known your only beloved first and last hath been Christ. And, therefore, now ware your whole love upon Him; He alone is a suitable object for your love and all the affections of your soul. God hath dried up one channel of your love by the removal of your husband. Let now that speat run upon Christ. Your Lord and lover hath graciously taken out your husband's name and your name out of the summonses that are raised at the instance of the terrible sin-revenging Judge of the world against the house of the Kenmures. And I dare say that God's hammering of you from your youth is only to make you a fair carved stone in the high upper temple of the New Jerusalem. Your Lord never thought this world's vain painted glory a gift worthy of you; and therefore would not bestow it on you, because He is to propine you with a better portion. Let the movables go; the inheritance is yours. Ye are a child of the house, and joy is laid up for you; it is long in coming, but not the worse for that. I am now expecting to see, and that with joy and comfort, that which I hoped of you since I knew you fully, even that ye have laid such strength upon the Holy One of Israel, that ye defy troubles, and that your soul is a castle that may be besieged, but cannot be taken. What have ye to do here? This world never looked like a friend upon you. Ye owe it little love. It looked ever sour-like upon you. Howbeit ye should woo it, it will not match with you; and therefore never seek warm fire under cold ice. This is not a field where your happiness groweth; it is up above, where there are a great

multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands (Revelation 7:9). What ye could never get here ye shall find there. And withal consider how in all these trials (and truly they have been many) your Lord hath been loosing you at the root from perishing things, and hunting after you to grip your soul. Madam, for the Son of God's sake, let Him not miss His grip, but stay and abide in the love of God, as Jude saith (Jude 1:21).

Now, Madam, I hope your Ladyship will take these lines in good part; and wherein I have fallen short and failed to your Ladyship, in not evidencing what I was obliged to your more-than-undeserved love and respect, I request for a full pardon for it. Again, my dear and noble lady, let me beseech you to lift up your head, for the day of your redemption draweth near. And remember, that star that shined in Galloway is now shining in another world. Now I pray that God may answer, in His own style, to your soul, and that He may be to you the God of all consolations. Thus I remain, Your Ladyship's at all dutiful obedience in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth, Sept. 14, 1634.

## 038. To Marion M'Naught.—Christ's Care of His Church, and His Judgments on her Enemies

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38.—To Marion M'Naught.

(CHRIST'S CARE OF HIS CHURCH, AND HIS JUDGMENTS ON HER ENEMIES.)

MISTRESS,—My dearest love in Christ remembered. I entreat you charge your soul to return to rest, and to glorify your dearest Lord in believing; and know that for the good-will of Him that dwelleth in the bush, the burning kirk shall not be consumed to ashes; but “Blessing shall come on the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separate from his brethren” (Deuteronomy 33:16). And are not the saints separate from their brethren, and sold and hated? “For the archers have sorely grieved Joseph, and shot at him and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob” (Genesis 49:23-24). From Him is the Shepherd and the Stone of Israel. The Stone of Israel shall not be broken in pieces; it is hammered upon by the children of this world, and we shall live and not die. Our Lord hath done all this, to see if we will believe, and not give over; and I am persuaded you must of necessity stick by your work. The eye of Christ hath been upon all this business; and He taketh good heed to who is for Him, and who is against Him. Let us do our part, as we would be approved of Christ. The Son of God is near to His enemies. If they were not deaf, they may hear the dinn of His feet; and He will come with a start upon His weeping bairns, and take them on His knee, and lay their head in His bosom, and dry their watery eyes. And this day is fast coming. “Yet a little time, and the vision will speak, it will not tarry” (Habakkuk 2:3). These questions betwixt us and our adversaries will all be decided in yonder day, when the Son of God shall come, and redd all pleas; and it will be seen whether we or they have been for Christ, and who have been pleading for Baal. It is not known what we are now; but when our life shall appear in glory, then we shall see who laughs fastest that day. Therefore, we must possess our souls in patience, and go into our chamber and rest, while the indignation be past. We shall not weep long when our Lord shall take us up, in the day that He gathereth His jewels. “They that feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon His name” (Malachi 3:16). I shall never be of another faith, but that our Lord is heating a furnace for the enemies of His kirk in Scotland. It is true the spouse of Christ hath played the harlot, and hath left her first Husband, and the enemies think they offend not, for we have sinned against the Lord; but they shall get the devil to their thanks. The rod shall be cast into the fire, that we may sing as in the days of our youth. My dear friend, therefore, lay down your head upon Christ's breast. Weep not; the Lion of the tribe of Judah will arise. The sun is gone down upon the prophets, and our gold is become dim, and the Lord feedeth His people with waters of gall and wormwood; yet Christ standeth but behind the wall, His bowels are moved for Scotland. He waiteth, as Isaiah saith, that He may show mercy. If we could go home, and take our brethren with us, weeping with our face towards Zion, asking the way thitherward, He would bring back our captivity. We may not think that God has no care of His

honour, while men tread it under their feet; He will clothe Himself with vengeance, as with a cloak, and appear against our enemies for our deliverance. Ye were never yet beguiled, and God will not now begin with you. Wrestle still with the angel of the covenant, and you shall get the blessing. Fight! He delighteth to be overcome by wrestling.

Commend me to Grizel. Desire her to learn to know the adversaries of the Lord, and to take them as her adversaries, and to learn to know the right gate into the Son of God. O but acquaintance with the Son of God, to say, "My Well-beloved is mine, and I am His," is a sweet and glorious course of life, that none know but those who are sealed and marked in the forehead with Christ's mark, and the new name, that Christ writeth upon His own. Grace, grace, and mercy be with you.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Sept. 25, 1634.

## 039. To Lady Kenmure.—Preparation for Death and Eternity

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39.—To myLady Kenmure.

(PREPARATION FOR DEATH AND ETERNITY.)

MADAM,—All dutiful obedience in our Lord remembered. I know ye are now near one of those straits in which ye have been before. But because your outward comforts are fewer, I pray Him whose ye are to supply what ye want another way. For howbeit we cannot win to the bottom of His wise providence, who ruleth all; yet it is certain this is not only good which the Almighty hath done, but it is best. He hath reckoned all your steps to heaven; and if your Ladyship were through this water, there are the fewer behind; and if this were the last, I hope your Ladyship hath learned by on-waiting to make your acquaintance with death, which being to the Lord, the woman's seed, Jesus, only a bloody heel and not a broken head (Genesis 3:15), cannot be ill to His friends, who get far less of death than Himself. Therefore, Madam, seeing ye know not but the journey is ended, and ye are come to the water-side, in God's wisdom look all your papers and your counts, and whether ye be ready to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, in whom there is little haughtiness and much humility. I would be far from discouraging your Ladyship; but there is an absolute necessity that, near eternity, we look ere we leap, seeing no man winneth back again to mend his leap. I am confident your Ladyship thinketh often upon it, and that your old Guide shall go before you and take your hand. His love to you will not grow sour, nor wear out of date, as the love of men, which groweth old and grey-haired often before themselves. Ye have so much the more reason to love a better life than this, because this world hath been to you a cold fire, with little heat to the body, and as little light, and much smoke to hurt the eyes. But, Madam, your Lord would have you thinking it but dry breasts, full of wind and empty of food. In this late visitation that hath befallen your Ladyship, ye have seen God's love and care, in such a measure that I thought our Lord brake the sharp point off the cross, and made us and your Ladyship see Christ take possession and infetment upon earth, of him who is now reigning and triumphing with the hundred forty and four thousand who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. I know the sweetest of it is bitter to you; but your Lord will not give you painted crosses. He pareth not all the bitterness from the cross, neither taketh He the sharp edge quite from it; then it should be of your waling and not of His, which should have as little reason in it as it should have profit for us. Only, Madam, God commandeth you now to believe and cast anchor in the dark night, and climb up the mountain. He who hath called you, establish you and confirm you to the end.

I had a purpose to have visited your Ladyship; but when I thought better upon it, the truth is, I cannot see what my company would profit you; and this hath broken off my purpose, and no other thing. I know many honourable friends and worthy professors will see your Ladyship, and that the Son of God is with you, to whose love and mercy, from my soul, I recommend your Ladyship, and remain, Your Ladyship's at all dutiful obedience, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, Nov. 29, 1634.

## 040. To Lady Kenmure.—When Mr. Rutherford had the Prospect of being Removed from Anwoth

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40.—To myLady Kenmure.

(WHEN MR. RUTHERFORD HAD THE PROSPECT OF BEING REMOVED FROM ANWOTH.)

MADAM,—My humble obedience in the Lord remembered. Know it hath pleased the Lord to let me see, by all appearance, that my labours in God's house here are at an end; and I must now learn to suffer, in the which I am a dull scholar. By a strange providence, some of my papers, anent the corruptions of this time, are come to the King's hand. I know, by the wise and well-affected I shall be censured as not wise nor circumspect enough; but it is ordinary, that that should be a part of the cross of those who suffer for Him. Yet I love and pardon the instrument; I would commit my life to him, howbeit by him this hath befallen me. But I look higher than to him. I make no question of your Ladyship's love and care to do what ye can for my help, and am persuaded that, in my adversities, your Ladyship will wish me well. I seek no other thing but that my Lord may be honoured by me in giving a testimony. I was willing to do Him more service; but seeing He will have no more of my labours, and this land will thrust me out, I pray for grace to learn to be acquaint with misery, if I may give so rough a name to such a mark of those who shall be crowned with Christ. And howbeit I will possibly prove a faint-hearted, unwise man in that, yet I dare say I intend otherwise; and I desire not to go on the lee-side or sunny side of religion, or to put truth betwixt me and a storm: my Saviour did not so for me, who in His suffering took the windy side of the hill. No farther; but the Son of God be with you. Your Ladyship's in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, Dec. 5, 1634.

## 041. To Marion M'Naught.—The Church's Trials—Comfort under Temptations—Deliverance—A Message ...

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41.—For Marion M'Naught.

(THE CHURCH'S TRIALS—COMFORT UNDER TEMPTATIONS—DELIVERANCE—A MESSAGE TO THE YOUNG.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. I hear of good news anent our kirk; but I fear that our King will not be resisted, and therefore let us not be secure and careless. I do wonder if this kirk come not through our Lord's fan, since there is so much chaff in it; howbeit I persuade myself, the Son of God's wheat will not be blown away. Let us be putting on God's armour, and be strong in the Lord. If the devil and Zion's enemies strike a hole in that armour, let our Lord see to that;—let us put it on, and stand. We have Jesus on our side; and they are not worthy such a Captain, who would not take a blow at His back. We are in sight of His colours; His banner over us is love; look up to that white banner, and stand, I persuade you, in the Lord of victory. My brother writeth to me of your heaviness, and of temptations that press you sore. I am content it be so: you bear about with you the mark of the Lord Jesus. So it was with the Lord's apostle, when he was to come with the Gospel to Macedonia (2 Corinthians 7:5): his flesh had no rest; he was troubled on every side, and knew not what side to turn him unto; without were fightings, and within were fears. In the great work of our redemption, your lovely, beautiful, and glorious Friend and Well-beloved Jesus, was brought to tears and strong cries; so as His face was wet with tears and blood, arising from a holy fear and the weight of the curse. Take a drink of the Son of God's cup, and love it the better that He drank of it before you. There is no poison in it. I wonder many times that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what their Lord is preparing for them. Is your mind troubled anent that business that we have now in hand in Edinburgh.[130] I trust in my Lord, the Lord shall in the end give to you your heart's desire; even howbeit the business frame not, the Lord shall feed your soul, and all the hungry souls in that town. Therefore I request you in the Lord, pray for a submissive will, and pray as your Lord Jesus bids you, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." And let it be that your faith be brangled with temptations, believe ye that there is a tree in our Lord's garden that is not often shaken with wind from all the four airts? Surely there is none. Rebuke your soul, as the Lord's prophet doth: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou disquieted within me?" (Psalms 42:11). That was the word of a man who was at the very over-going of the brae and mountain; but God held a grip of him. Swim through your temptations and troubles to be at that lovely, amiable person, Jesus, to whom your soul is dear. In your temptations run to the promises: they be our Lord's branches hanging over the water, that our Lord's silly, half-drowned children may take a grip of them; if you let that grip go, you will fall to the ground. Are you troubled with the case of God's kirk? Our Lord will evermore have her betwixt the sinking and the swimming. He will have her going through a thousand deaths, and through hell, as a cripple woman, halting, and wanting the power of her one side (Micah 4:6-7), that God may be her staff. That broken ship will come to land,

because Jesus is the pilot. Faint not; you shall see the salvation of God,—else say, that God never spake His word by my mouth; and I had rather never have been born, ere it were so with me. But my Lord hath sealed me. I dare not deny I have also been in heaviness since I came from you, fearing for my unthankfulness that I be deserted. But the Lord will be kind to me, whether I will or not. I repose that much in His rich grace, that He will be loath to change upon me. As you love me, pray for me in this particular.

[130] Efforts to obtain redress from grievances inflicted by the prelatie party.

After advising with Carletoun, I have written to Mr. David Dickson anent Mr. Hugh M'Kail,[131] and desired him to write his mind to Carletoun, and Carletoun to Edinburgh, that they may particularly remember Mr. Hugh to the Lord; and I happened upon a convenient trusty bearer by God's wonderful providence.

[131] See Letter 71. No further. I recommend you to the Lord's grace, and your husband and children. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Edinburgh, 1634.

P.S.—MISTRESS,—I had not time to give my advice to your daughter Grizel; you shall carry my words therefore to her. Show her now, that in respect of her tender age, she is in a manner as clean paper, ready to receive either good or ill; and that it were a sweet and glorious thing for her to give herself up to Christ, that He may write upon her His Father's name, and His own new name. And desire her to acquaint herself with the Book of God; the promises that our Lord writes upon His own, and performeth in them and for them, are contained there. I persuade you, when I think that she is in the company of such parents, and hath occasion to learn Christ, I think Christ is wooing her soul; and I pray God she may not refuse such a husband. And therefore I charge her, and beseech her by the mercies of God, by the wounds and blood of Him who died for her, by the word of truth, which she heareth, and can read, by the coming of the Son of God to judge the world, that she would fulfil your joy, and learn Christ, and walk in Christ. She shall think this the truth of God many years after this; and I will promise to myself, in respect of the beginnings that I have seen, that she shall give herself to Him that gave Himself for her. Let her begin at prayer; for if she remember her Creator in the days of her youth, He will claim kindness to her in her old age. It shall be a part of my prayers, that this may be effectual in her, by Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly, to whose grace again I recommend you, and her, and all yours.

## 042. To Lady Kenmure.—The World passeth away—Special Portions of the Word for the Afflicted—C...

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42.—To myLady Kenmure.

(THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY—SPECIAL PORTIONS OF THE WORD FOR THE AFFLICTED—CALL TO KIRKCUDBRIGHT.)

MADAM,—The cause of my not writing to your Ladyship was not my forgetfulness of you, but the want of the opportunity of a convenient bearer; for I am under more than a simple obligation to be kind (on paper, at least) to your Ladyship. I bless our Lord, through Christ, who hath brought you home again to your own country from that place,[132] where ye have seen with your eyes that which our Lord's truth taught you before, to wit, that worldly glory is nothing but a vapour, a shadow, the foam of the water, or something less and lighter, even nothing; and that our Lord hath not without cause said in His Word, "The countenance," or fashion, "of this world passeth away" (1 Corinthians 7:31)—in which place our Lord compareth it to an image in a looking-glass, for it is the looking-glass of Adam's sons. Some come to the glass, and see in it the picture of honour,—and but a picture indeed, for true honour is to be great in the sight of God; and others see in it the shadow of riches,—and but a shadow indeed, for durable riches stand as one of the maids of Wisdom upon her left hand (Proverbs 3:16); and a third sort see in it the face of painted pleasures, and the beholders will not believe but the image they see in this glass is a living man, till the Lord come and break the glass in pieces and remove the face, and then, like Pharaoh awakened, they say, "And behold it was a dream." I know your Ladyship thinketh yourself little in the common of this world, for the favourable aspect of any of these three painted faces; and blessed be our Lord that it is so. The better for you, Madam; they are not worthy to be wooers, to suit in marriage your soul, that look to no higher match than to be married upon painted clay. Know, therefore, Madam, the place whither our Lord Jesus cometh to woo a bride, it is even in the furnace: for if ye be one of Zion's daughters (which I ever put beyond all question, since I first had occasion to see in your Ladyship such pregnant evidences of the grace of God), the Lord, who hath His fire in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem (Isaiah 31:9), is purifying you in the furnace. And therefore be content to live in it, and every day to be adding and sewing-to a pasment to your wedding garment, that ye may be at last decored and trimmed as a bride for Christ, a bride of His own busking, beautified in the hidden man of the heart. "Forgetting your father's house, so shall the King greatly desire your beauty" (Psalms 45:11). If your Ladyship be not changed (as I hope ye are not), I believe ye esteem yourself to be of those whom God hath tried these many years, and refined as silver. But, Madam, I will show your Ladyship a privilege that others want, and ye have, in this case. Such as are in prosperity, and are fatted with earthly joys, and increased with children and friends, though the Word of God is indeed written to such for their instruction, yet to you, who are in trouble (spare me, Madam, to say this), from whom the Lord hath taken many children, and whom He hath exercised otherwise, there are some chapters, some particular promises in the Word of God, made in a most special manner, which should never have been yours, so as they now are, if you

had your portion in this life, as others. And, therefore, all the comforts, promises, and mercies God offereth to the afflicted, they are as so many love-letters written to you. Take them to you, Madam, and claim your right, and be not robbed. It is no small comfort, that God hath written some scriptures to you, which He hath not written to others. Ye seem rather in this to be envied than pitied; and ye are indeed in this, like people of another world, and those that are above the ordinary rank of mankind, whom our King and Lord, our Bridegroom Jesus, in His love-letter to His well-beloved spouse, hath named beside all the rest. He hath written comforts and His hearty commendations in the 54th of Isaiah , 4, 5; Psalms 147:2-3, to you. Read these and the like, and think your God is like a friend that sendeth a letter to a whole house and family, but speaketh in His letter to some by name, that are dearest to Him in the house. Ye are, then, Madam, of the dearest friends of the Bridegroom. If it were lawful, I would envy you, that God honoured you so above many of His dear children. Therefore, Madam, your part is, in this case (seeing God taketh nothing from you but that which He is to supply with His own presence), to desire your Lord to know His own room, and take it even upon Him to come in, in the room of dead children. "Jehovah, know Thy own place, and take it to Thee," is all ye have to say.

[132] Edinburgh.

Madam, I persuade myself that this world is to you an unco inn; and that ye are like a traveller, who hath his bundle upon his back, and his staff in his hand, and his feet upon the door-threshold. Go forward, honourable and elect lady, in the strength of your Lord (let the world bide at home and keep the house), with your face toward Him, who longeth more for a sight of you than ye can do for Him. Ere it be long, He will see us. I hope to see you laugh as cheerfully after noon, as ye have mourned before noon. The hand of the Lord, the hand of the Lord be with you in your journey. What have ye to do here? This is not your mountain of rest. Arise, then, and set your foot up the mountain; go up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the shoulder of your Beloved (Song of Solomon 8:5). If ye knew the welcome that abideth you when ye come home, ye would hasten your pace; for ye shall see your Lord put up His own holy hand to your face, and wipe all tears from your eyes; and I trow, then ye shall have some joy of heart.

Madam, paper willeth me to end before affection. Remember the estate of Zion; pray that Jerusalem may be as Zechariah prophesied, "a burdensome stone for all" (Zechariah 12:3), that whosoever boweth down to roll the stone out of the way, may hurt and break the joints of their back, and strain their arms, and disjoin their shoulder-blades. And pray Jehovah that the stone may lie still in its own place, and keep band with the cornerstone. I hope it shall be so; He is a skilled Master-builder who laid it.

I would, Madam, under great heaviness be refreshed with two lines from your Ladyship, which I refer to your own wisdom. Madam, I would seem undutiful not to show you, that great solicitation is made by the town of Kirkcudbright for to have the use of my poor labours amongst them. If the Lord shall call, and His people cry, who am I to resist? But without His seen calling, and till the flock whom I now oversee be planted with one to whom I dare intrust Christ's spouse, gold nor silver nor favour of men, I hope, shall not loose me. I leave your Ladyship, praying more earnestly for grace and mercy to be with you, and multiplied upon you, here and hereafter, than my pen can express. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Your Ladyship's at all obedience in the Lord.

Kirkcudbright.

### 043. To Marion M'Naught.—When Mr. Rutherford was in difficulty as to accepting a Call to Kirk...

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43.—For Marion M'Naught.

(WHEN MR. RUTHERFORD WAS IN DIFFICULTY AS TO ACCEPTING A CALL TO KIRKCUDBRIGHT, AND CRAMOND.)

MUCH HONOURED AND DEAR MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I am grieved at the heart to write anything to you to breed heaviness to you; and what I have written, I wrote with much heaviness. But I entreat you in Christ's name, when my soul is under wrestlings, and seeking direction from our Lord (to whom His vineyard belongeth) whither I shall go, give me liberty to advise, and try all airts and paths, to see whether He goeth before me and leadeth me. For if I were assured of God's call to your town, let my arm fall from my shoulder-blade and lose power, and my right eye be dried up (which is the judgment of the idol shepherd) (Zechariah 11:17), if I would not swim through the water without a boat ere I sat His bidding. But if ye knew my doubtings and fears in that, ye would suffer with me. Whether they be temptations or impediments cast in by my God, I know not. But you have now cause to thank God; for seeing the Bishop hath given you such a promise, he will give you an honest man more willingly than he will permit me to come to you. And, as I ever entreated you, put the business out of your hand in the Lord's reverence;<sup>[133]</sup> and try of Him, if ye have warrant of Him to seek no man in the world but one only, when there are choice of good men to be had. Howbeit they be too scarce, yet they are. And what God saith to me in the business, I resolve by His grace to do; for I know not what He will do with me. But God shall fill you with joy ere this business be ended; for I persuade myself our Lord Jesus hath stirred you up already to do good in the business, and ye shall not lose your reward.

[133] Referring to a promise made to the people of Kirkcudbright by the Bishop of Galloway, to give them a man according to their own mind, provided they would not choose Mr. Rutherford.

I have heard your husband and Samuel have been sick. The man who is called the Branch and God's fellow, who standeth before His Father, will be your stay and help (Zechariah 13:7). I would I were able to comfort your soul. But have patience, and stand still; he that believeth maketh not haste. This matter of Cramond, cast in at this time, is either a temptation, having fallen out at this time; or then it will clear all my doubts, and let you see the Lord's will. But I never knew my own part in the business till now. I thought I was more willing to have embraced the charge in your town, than I am, or am able to win to. I know ye pray that God would resolve me what to do; and will interpret me, as love biddeth you, which "thinketh not ill, and believeth all things, and hopeth all things." Would ye have more than the Son of God? and ye have Him already. And ye shall be fed by the carver of the meat, be he who he will; and those who are hungry look more to the meat than to the carver.

I cannot see you the next week. If my lady come home, I must visit her. The week thereafter will be a Presbytery at Girthon. God will dispose of the meeting. Grace upon you, and your seed, and

husband. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 044. To Marion M'Naught.—Troubles threatening the Church

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44.—For Marion M'Naught.

(TROUBLES THREATENING THE CHURCH.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—My love in Jesus Christ remembered. Your daughter is well, thanks be to God. I trust in Him ye shall have joy of her; the Lord bless her. I am now presently going about catechising. The bearer is in haste. Forget not poor Zion; and the Lord remember you, for we shall be shortly winnowed. Jesus, pray for us, that our faith fail not! I would wish to see you a Sabbath with us, and we shall stir up one another, God willing, to seek the Lord; for it may be He hide Himself from us ere it be long. Keep that which you have: ye will get more in heaven. The Lord send us to the shore out of all the storms, with our silly souls sound and whole with us; for if liberty of conscience come, as is rumoured, the best of us will be put to our wits to seek how to be freed. But we shall be like those who have their chamber to go in unto, spoken of in Isaiah (Isaiah 26:20). Read the place yourself, and keep you within your house while the storm be passed. If you can learn a ditty against C., try, and cause try, that ye may see the Lord's righteous judgment upon the devil's instruments. We are not much obliged to his kindness. I wish all such wicked doers were cut off.

These in haste. I bless you in God's name, and all yours. Your daughter desires a Bible and a gown. I hope she shall use the Bible well, which if she do, the gown is the better bestowed. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours for ever in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 045. To Marion M'Naught.—In the Prospect of the Lord's Supper, and of Trials to the Church

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45.—For Marion M'Naught.

(IN THE PROSPECT OF THE COMMUNION, AND OF TRIALS TO THE CHURCH.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER IN CHRIST,—You shall understand I have received a letter from Edinburgh, that it is suspected that there will be a General Assembly, or then some meeting of the bishops; and that at this synod there will be some commissioners chosen by the Bishop; which news have so taken up my mind that I am not so settled for studies as I have been before, and therefore was never in such fear for the work. But because it is written to me as a secret, I dare not reveal it to any but to yourself, whom I know. And therefore, I entreat you not for any comfort of mine, who am but one man, but for the glory and honour of Jesus Christ, the Master of the banquet, be more earnest with God; and, in general, show others of your Christian acquaintance my fears for myself. I can be content of shame in that work, if my Lord and Master be honoured; and therefore petition our Lord especially to see to His own glory, and to give bread to His hungry bairns, howbeit I go hungry away from the feast. Bequest Mr. Roberthor 134\_134" id="FNanchor 134\_134">ote 134\_134">[134] from me, if he come not, to remember us to our Lord. hor 134\_134">[134] Mr. Robert Glendinning.

I have neither time, nor a free disposed mind, to write to you anent your own case. Send me word if all your children and your husband be well. Seeing they are not yours, but your dear Lord's, esteem them but as borrowed, and lay them down at God's feet. Your Christ to you is better than they all. You will pardon my unaccustomed short letter; and remember me and that honourable feast to our Lord Jesus. He was with us before. I hope He will not change upon us; but I fear I have changed upon Him. But, Lord, let old kindness stand. Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 046. To Marion M'Naught.—Tossings of Spirit—Her Children and Husband

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46.—To Marion M'Naught.

(TOSSINGS OF SPIRIT—HER CHILDREN AND HUSBAND.)

WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My tender affection in Christ remembered. I left you in as great heaviness as I was in since I came to this country; but I know you doubt not but that (as the truth is in Christ) my soul is knit to your soul, and to the soul of all yours; and I would, if I could, send you the largest part of my heart inclosed in this letter. But by fervent calling upon my Lord, I have attained some victory over my heart, which runneth often not knowing whither, and over my beguiling hopes, which I know now better than I did. I trust in my Lord to hold aloof from the enticings of a seducing heart, by which I am daily cosened; and I mind not (by His grace who hath called me according to His eternal purpose) to come so far within the grips of my foolish mind, gripping about any folly coming its way as the woodbine or ivy goeth about the tree.

I adore and kiss the providence of my Lord, who knoweth well what is most expedient for me, and for you and your children; and I think of you as of myself, that the Lord, who in His deep wisdom turneth about all the wheels and turning of such changes, shall also dispose of that for the best to you and yours. In the presence of my Lord, I am not able, howbeit I would, to conceive amiss of you in that matter. Grace, grace for ever be upon you and your seed, and it shall be your portion, in despite of all the powers of darkness. Do not make more question of this. But the Lord saw a nail in my heart loose, and He hath now fastened it. Honour be to His Majesty.

I hear your son is entered to the school. If I had known of the day, I would have begged from our Lord that He would have put the book in his hand with His own hand. I trust in my Lord it is so; and I conceive a hope to see him a star, to give light in some room of our Lord's house; and purpose, by the Lord's grace, as I am able (if our Lord call you to rest before me), when you are at your home, to do to the uttermost of my power to help him every way in grace and learning, and his brothers, and all your children. And I hope you would expect that of me.

Further, you shall know that Mr. W. D. is come home, who saith it is a miracle that your husband, in this process before the Council, escaped both discredit and damage. Let it not be forgotten he was, in our apprehension, to our grief, cast down and humbled in the Lord's work, in that matter betwixt him and the bailie: now the Lord hath honoured him, and made him famous for virtue, honesty, and integrity, two several times, before the nobles of this kingdom. Your Lord liveth. We will go to His throne of grace again; His arm is not shortened. William Dalgleish, minister of Kirkdale and Kirkmabreck. See Letter 117. The King is certainly expected. Ill is feared; we have cause for our sins to fear that the Bridegroom shall be taken from us. By our sins we have rent His fair garments, and we have stirred up and awakened our Beloved. Pray Him to tarry, or then to take us with Him. It were good that we should knock and rap at our Lord's door. We may not tire to knock oftener

than twice or thrice. He knoweth the knock of His friends.

I am still what I was ever to your dear children, tendering their soul's happiness, and praying that grace, grace, grace, mercy, and peace from God, even God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus, may be their portion; and that now, while they are green and young, their hearts may take band with Jesus, the Cornerstone: and win once in, in our Lord and Saviour's house, and then they will not get leave to flit. Pray for me, and especially for humility and thankfulness. I have always remembrance of you, and your husband, and dear children. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours evermore in my dear Lord Jesus and yours,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 047. To Marion M'Naught.—Submission to God's Arrangements

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47.—For Marion M'Naught.

(SUBMISSION TO GOD'S ARRANGEMENTS.)

WORTHY AND BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I have sent you a letter from Mr. David Dick[136] concerning the placing of Mr. Hugh M'Kail with themselves; therefore I write to you now only to entreat you in Christ not to be discouraged thereat. Be submissive to the will of your dear Lord, who knoweth best what is good for your soul and your town both; for God can come over greater mountains than these, we believe; for He worketh His greatest works contrary to carnal reason and means. "My ways are not," saith our Lord, "as your ways; neither are my thoughts as your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8). I am no whit put from my belief for all that. Believe, pray, and use means. We shall cause Mr. John Kerr, who conveyed myself to Lochinvar,[137] to use means to seek a man, if Mr. Hugh fail us. Our Lord has a little bride among you, and I trust He will send one to woo her to our sweet Lord Jesus. He will not want His wife for the suiting, and He has means in abundance in His hand to open all the slots and bars that Satan draws over the door. He cometh to His bride leaping over the mountains, and skipping over the hills. His way to His spouse is full of stones, mountains, and waters, yet He putteth in His foot and wadeth through. He will not want her; and therefore refresh me with two words concerning your confidence and courage in our Lord, both about that, and about His own Zion; for He wooeth His wife in the Burning Bush; and for "the good-will of Him that dwelleth in the Bush," the bush is not consumed. It is better to weep with Jerusalem in the forenoon, than to weep with Babel after noon, in the end of the day. Our day of laughter and rejoicing is coming. Yet a little while, and ye shall see the salvation of God. I long to see you, and to hear how your children are, especially Samuel. Grace be their heritage and portion from the Lord, and the Lord be their lot, and then their inheritance shall please them well. Remember my love to your husband. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

[136] David Dickson.

[137] About four miles east from Earlston. It has a small loch, where are ruins of an old castle.

Yours in his sweetest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 048. To Marion M'Naught.—Troubles from False Brethren—Occurrences—Christ's Coming—Intercession

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48.—For Marion M'Naught.

(TROUBLES FROM FALSE BRETHREN—OCCURRENCES—CHRIST'S COMING—INTERCESSION.)

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—I know you have heard of the success of our business in Edinburgh. I do every Presbytery day see the faces of my brethren smiling upon me, but their tongues convey reproaches and lies of me a hundred miles off, and have made me odious to the Bishop of St. Andrews, who said to Mr. W. Dalgleish that ministers in Galloway were his informers. Whereupon no letter of favour could be procured from him for effectuating of our business; only I am brought in the mouths of men, who otherwise knew me not, and have power (if God shall permit) to harm me. Yet I entreat you, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, be not cast down. I fear your sorrow exceed because of this; and I am not so careful for myself in the matter as for you. Take courage;—your dearest Lord will light your candle, which the wicked would fain blow out; and, as sure as our Lord liveth, your soul shall find joy and comfort in this business. Howbeit you see all the hounds in hell let loose to mar it, their iron chains to our dear and mighty Lord are but straws, which He can easily break. Let not this temptation stick in your throat; swallow it, and let it go down; our Lord give you a drink of the consolations of His Spirit, that it may digest. You never knew one in God's book who put to their hand to the Lord's work for His kirk, but the world and Satan did bark against them, and bite also where they had power. You will not lay one stone on Zion's walls but they will labour to cast it down again. For myself, the Lord letteth me see now greater evidence of a calling to Kirkcudbright than ever He did before; and therefore pray, and possess your soul in patience. Those that were doers in the business have good hopes that it will yet go forward and prosper. As for the death of the King of Sweden (which is thought to be too true), we can do nothing else but reverence our Lord, who doth not ordinarily hold Zion on her rock by the sword, and arm of flesh and blood, but by His own mighty and outstretched arm. Her King that reigneth in Zion yet liveth, and they are plucking Him round about to pull Him off His throne; but His Father hath crowned him, and who dare say, "It is ill done"? The Lord's bride will be up and down, above the water swimming and under the water sinking, until her lovely and mighty Redeemer and Husband set His head through the skies, and come with His fair court to red all their pleas, and give them the hoped-for inheritance: and then we shall lay down our swords and triumph, and fight no more. But do not think, for all this, that our Lord and Chief Shepherd will want one weak sheep, or the silliest dying lamb, that He hath redeemed. He will tell His flock, and gather them all together, and make a faithful account of them to the Father who gave them to Him. Let us learn to turn our eyes off men, that our whorish hearts doat not on them, and woo our old Husband, and make Him our darling. For, "thus saith the Lord to the enemies of Zion, Drink ye, and be drunk, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword that I send amongst you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say to them, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Ye shall

certainly drink” (Jeremiah 25:27-28). You see our Lord brewing a cup of poison for His enemies, which they must drink, and because of this have sore bowels and sick stomachs, yea, burst. But when Zion’s captivity is at an end, “the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten” (Jeremiah 50:5). This is spoken to us, and for us, who with woe hearts ask, “What is the way to Zion?” It is our part who know how to go to our Lord’s door, and to knock by prayer, and how to lift Christ’s slot, and shut the bar of His chamber door, to complain and tell Him how the Lord handleth us, and how our King’s business goeth, that He may get up and lend them a blow, who are tiggung and playing with Christ and His spouse. You have also, dear Mistress, house troubles, in sickness of your husband and bairns, and in spoiling of your house by thieves; take these rods in patience from your Lord. He must still move you from vessel to vessel, and grind you as our Lord’s wheat, to be bread in His house. But when all these strokes are over your head, what will ye say to see your well-beloved Christ’s white and ruddy face, even His face who is worthy to bear the colours among ten thousand? (Song of Solomon 5:10). Hope and believe to the end. Grace for ever be multiplied upon you, your husband, and children. Your own in his dearest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Edinburgh, Dec. 1634.

## **049. To Marion M'Naught.—Spoiling of Goods—Call to Kirkcudbright—The Lord Reigneth**

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49.—To Marion M'Naught.

(SPOILING OF GOODS—CALL TO KIRKCUDBRIGHT—THE LORD REIGNETH.)

WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—My love in Christ remembered. God hath brought me home from a place where I have been exercised with great heaviness, and I have found at home new matter of great heaviness, yet dare not but in all things give thanks. In my business in Edinburgh, hor 138\_138" id="FNanchor 138\_138">ote 138\_138">[138] I have not sinned nor wronged my party,—by his own confession, and by the confession of his friends, I have given of my goods for peace and the saving of my Lord's truth from reproaches, which is dearer to me than all I have. My mother is weak, and I think shall leave me alone; but I am not alone, because Christ's Father is with me. hor 138\_138">[138] See note, Letter 12. For your business anent your town I see great evidence; but Satan and his instruments are against it, and few set their shoulders to Christ's shoulder to help Him. But He will do all His lone; and I dare not but exhort you to believe, and persuade you, that the hungry in your city shall be fed; and as for the rest that want a stomach, the parings of God's loaf will suffice them; and, therefore, believe it shall be well. I may not leave my mother to come and confer with you of all particulars. I have given such directions to our dear friend as I can; but the event is in our dear Lord's hands.

God's Zion abroad flourisheth, and His arm is not shortened with us, if we could believe. There is scarcity and a famine of the word of God in Edinburgh. Your sister Jane laboureth mightily in our business; but hath not as yet gotten an answer from I. P. Mr. A. C. hor 139\_139" id="FNanchor 139\_139">ote 139\_139">[139] will work what he can. My Lady saith she can do little, and that it suiteth not her nor her husband well to speak in such an affair. I told her my mind plainly. hor 139\_139">[139] Probably Mr. Alexander Colville, mentioned Letter 11.

I long to know of your estate. Remember me heartily to your dear husband. Grace be the portion of your bairns. I know you are mindful of the green wound of our sister kirk in Ireland. Bid our Lord lay a plaister to it (He hath good skill to do so), and set others to work. Grace, grace upon your soul, and body, and all yours.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

[The following brief note, addressed to Marion M'Naught, may be read as a sort of postscript to the foregoing, though generally printed as a separate Letter.]

DEAR MISTRESS,—I have not time this day to write to you; but God, knowing my present state and necessities of my calling, will, I hope, spare my mother's life for a time, for the which I have

cause to thank the Lord. I entreat you, be not cast down for that which I wrote before to you anent the planting of a minister in your town. Believe, and you shall see the salvation of God. I write this, because when you suffer, my heart suffereth with you. I do believe your soul shall have joy in your labours and holy desires for that work. Grace upon you, and your husband, and children.

Yours ever in Christ,

Anwoth.

## 050. To Marion M'Naught.—Christ coming as Captain of Salvation—His Church's Conflict and Cove...

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50.—For Marion M'Naught.

(CHRIST COMING AS CAPTAIN OF SALVATION—HIS CHURCH'S CONFLICT AND COVENANT—THE JEWS—LAST DAYS APOSTASY.)

WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,—I know your heart is cast down for the desolation like to come upon this kirk and the appearance that an hireling shall be thrust in upon Christ's flock in that town; but send a heavy heart up to Christ, it shall be welcome. Those who are with the beast and the dragon, must make war with the Lamb; "but the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they who are with Him are called and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:14). Our ten days shall have an end; all the former things shall be forgotten when we shall be up before the throne. Christ hath been ever thus in the world; He hath always the defender's part, and hath been still in the camp, fighting the Church's battles. The enemies of the Son of God will be fed with their own flesh, and shall drink their own blood; and therefore, their part of it shall at last be found hard enough: so that we may look forward and pity them. Until the number of the elect be fulfilled, Christ's garments must be rolled in blood. He cometh from Edom, from the slaughter of His enemies, "clothed with dyed garments, glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength." Who is this (saith he) that appears in this glorious posture? Our great He! that He who is mighty to save, whose glory shineth while He sprinkleth the blood of His adversaries, and staineth all His raiment. The glory of His righteous revenges shineth forth in these stains (Isaiah 63:1). But seeing our world is not here-away, we poor children, far from home, must steal through many waters, weeping as we go, and withal believing that we do the Lord's faithfulness no wrong, seeing He hath said, "I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou, that shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass?" (Isaiah 51:12). "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 shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2).

There is a cloud gathering and a storm coming. This land shall be turned upside down; and if ever the Lord spake to me (think on it), Christ's bride will be glad of a hole to hide her head in, and the dragon may so prevail as to chase the woman and her man-child over sea. But there shall be a gleaning, two or three berries left in the top of the olive-tree, of whom God shall say, "Destroy them not, for there is a blessing in them." Thereafter there shall be a fair sun-blink on Christ's old spouse, and a clear sky, and she shall sing as in the days of her youth. The Antichrist and the great red dragon will lop Christ's branches, and bring His vine to a low stump, under the feet of those who carry the mark of the beast; but the Plant of Renown, the Man whose name is the Branch, will bud forth again and blossom as the rose, and there shall be fair white flourishes again, with most pleasant fruits, upon that tree of life. A fair season may He have! Grace, grace be upon that blessed and beautiful tree! under whose shadow we shall sit, and His fruit shall be sweet to

our taste. But Christ shall woo His handful in the fire, and choose His own in the furnace of affliction. But be it so; He doth not, He will not slay His children. Love will not let Him make a full end. The covenant will cause Him hold His hand. Fear not, then, saith the First and the Last, He who was dead and is alive. We see not Christ sharpening and furbishing His sword for His enemies; and therefore our faithless hearts say, as Zion did, "The Lord hath forsaken me." But God reproveth her, and saith, "Well, well, Zion, is that well said? Think again on it, you are in the wrong to Me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the fruit of her womb? Yea, she may; yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have engraven thee upon the palms of My hands" (Isaiah 49:15-16). You break your heart and grow heavy, and forget that Christ hath your name engraven on the palms of His hand in great letters. In the name of the Son of God, believe that buried Scotland, dead and buried with her dear Bridegroom, shall rise the third day again, and there shall be a new growth after the old timber is cut down.

I recommend you, and your burdens and heavy heart, to the supporting of His grace and good-will who dwelt in the Bush, to Him who was separated from His brethren. Try your husband afar off, to see if he can be induced to think upon going to America.

O to see the sight, next to Christ's Coming in the clouds, the most joyful! our elder brethren the Jews and Christ fall upon one another's necks and kiss each other! They have been long asunder; they will be kind to one another when they meet. O day! O longed-for and lovely day-dawn! O sweet Jesus, let me see that sight which will be as life from the dead, Thee and Thy ancient people in mutual embraces.[140]

[140] In the Preface to his "Peaceable Plea," he expresses the same yearnings towards the Jews. And also in "Trial of Faith," sermon 13

Desire your daughter to close with Christ upon terms of suffering for Him; for the cross is an old mealing and plot of ground that lieth to Christ's house. Our dear Chief had aye that rent lying to His inheritance. But tell her the day is near the dawning, the sky is riving; our Beloved will be on us, ere ever we be aware. The Antichrist, and death and hell, and Christ's enemies and ours, will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, April 22, 1635.

## 051. To Marion M'Naught.—Public Temptations—The Security of every Saint—Occurrences in the Co...

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51.—To Marion M'Naught.

(PUBLIC TEMPTATIONS—THE SECURITY OF EVERY SAINT—OCCURRENCES IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE.)

LOVING AND DEAR SISTER,—For Zion's sake hold not your peace, neither be discouraged, for the on-going of this persecution. Jehovah is in this burning Bush. The floods may swell and roar, but our ark shall swim above the waters; it cannot sink, because a Saviour is in it. Because our Beloved was not let in by His spouse when He stood at the door, with His wet and frozen head, therefore He will have us to seek Him awhile; and while we are seeking, the watchmen who go about the walls have stricken the poor woman, and have taken away her veil from her. But yet a little while and our Lord will come again. Scotland's sky will clear again; her moment must go over. I dare in faith say and write (I am not dreaming), Christ is but seeking (what He will have and make) a clean glistening bride out of the fire. God send Him His errand, but He cannot want what He seeks. In the meantime, one way or other, He shall find, or make a nest for His mourning dove. What is this we are doing, breaking the neck of our faith? We are not come as yet to the mouth of the Red Sea; and howbeit we were, for His honour's sake, He must dry it up. It is our part to die gripping and holding fast His faithful promise. If the Beast should get leave to ride through the land, to seal such as are his, he will not get one lamb with him, for these are secured and sealed as the servants of God. In God's name, let Christ take His barn-floor, and all that is in it, to a hill, and winnow it. Let Him sift His corn, and sweep His house, and seek His lost gold. The Lord shall cog the rumbling wheels, or turn them; for the remainder of wrath doth He restrain. He can loose the belt of kings; to God, their belt, wherewith they are girt, is knit with a single draw-knot. As for a pastor to your town, your conscience can bear you witness you have done your part. Let the Master of the vineyard now see to His garden, seeing you have gone on, till He hath said, "Stand still." The will of the Lord be done. But a trial is not, to give up with God and believe no more. I thank my God in Christ, I find the force of my temptation abated, and its edge blunted, since I spoke to you last. I know not if the tempter be hovering, until he find the dam gather again, and me more secure; but it hath been my burden, and I am yet more confident the Lord will succour and deliver.

I intend, God willing, that our Communion shall be celebrated the first Sabbath after Pasch. Our Lord, that great Master of the feast, send us one hearty and heartsome supper, for I look it shall be the last. But we expect, when the shadows shall flee away, and our Lord shall come to His garden, that He shall feed us in green pastures without fear. The dogs shall not then be hounded out amongst the sheep. I earnestly desire your prayers for assistance at our work, and put others with you to do the same. Remember me to your husband, and desire your daughter to be kind to Christ, and seek to win near Him; He will give her a welcome unto His house of wine, and bring her into the King's chamber. O how will the sight of His face, and the smell of His garments, allure and

ravish the heart! Now, the love of the lovely Son of God be with you.

Yours in his sweet Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, 1635.

## 052. To Marion M'Naught.—In the Prospect of her Husband being compelled to receive the Comman...

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52.—For Marion M'Naught.

(IN THE PROSPECT OF HER HUSBAND BEING COMPELLED TO RECEIVE THE COMMAND OF THE PRELATES—SAINTS ARE YET TO JUDGE.)

WELL-BELOVED MISTRESS,—I charge you in the name of the Son of God, to rest upon your Rock, that is higher than yourself. Be not afraid of a man, who is a worm, nor of the son of man, who shall die. God be your fear. Encourage your husband. I would counsel you to write to Edinburgh to some advised lawyers, to understand what your husband, as the head magistrate, may do in opposing any intruded minister, and in his carriage toward the new prelate,[141] if he command him to imprison or lay hands upon any, and, in a word, how far he may in his office disobey a prelate, without danger of law. For if the Bishop come to your town, and find not obedience to his heart, it is like he will command the Provost to assist him against God and the truth. Ye will have more courage under the persecution. Fear not; take Christ caution,[142] who said, "There shall not one hair of your head perish" (Luke 21:18). Christ will not be in your common to have you giving out anything for Him, and not give you all incomes with advantage. It is His honour His servants should not be herried and undone in His service. You were never honoured till now. And if your husband be the first magistrate who shall suffer for Christ's name in this persecution, he may rejoice that Christ hath put the first garland on his head and upon yours. Truth will yet keep the crown of the causey in Scotland. Christ and truth are strong enough. They judge us now; we shall one day judge them, and sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes. Believe, believe; for they dare not pray; they dare not look Christ in the face. They have been false to Christ, and He will not sit with the wrong. Ye know it is not our cause; for if we would quit our Lord, we might sleep for the present in a sound skin, and keep our place, means, and honour, and be dear to them also; but let us once put all we have over in Christ's hand. Fear not for my papers; I shall despatch them, but ye will be examined for them. The Spirit of Jesus give you inward peace. Desire your husband from me to prove honest to Christ; he shall not be a loser at Christ's hand.

[141] Bishop Sydserff wished to force a minister upon the people of Kirkcudbright, in room of Mr. Glendinning, whom he ordered to be imprisoned, because he would not conform to Episcopacy. Provost Fullarton (husband of M. M'Naught), along with other magistrates, refused to imprison Mr. Glendinning. See note at Letter 67.

[142] Surety.

Yours ever in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, July 8, 1635.

## 053. To Marion M'Naught.—Encouragement under Trial by prospect of Brighter Days

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53.—For Marion M'Naught.

(ENCOURAGEMENT UNDER TRIAL BY PROSPECT OF BRIGHTER DAYS.)

MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. Having appointed a meeting with Mr. David Dickson, and knowing that B. will not keep the Presbytery, I cannot see you now. Commend my journey to God. My soul blesseth you for your last letter. Be not discouraged; Christ will not want the Isles-men. "The Isles shall wait for His law." We are His inheritance, and He will sell no part of His inheritance. For the sins of this land, and our breach of the covenant, contempt of the Gospel, and our defection from the truth, He hath set up a burning furnace in our Mount Zion; but I say it, and will bide by it, the grass shall yet grow green on our Mount Zion. There shall be dew all the night upon the lilies, amongst which Christ feedeth, until the day break, and the shadows flee away. And the moth shall eat up the enemies of Christ. Let them make a fire of their own, and walk in the light thereof, it shall not let them see to go to their bed; but they shall lie down in sorrow (Isaiah 50:11). Therefore, rejoice and believe. This in haste. Grace, grace be with you and yours.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 054. To Marion M'Naught.—Public Wrongs—Words of Comfort

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54.—For Marion M'Naught.

(PUBLIC WRONGS—WORDS OF COMFORT.)

LOVING AND DEAR SISTER,—I fear that you be moved and cast down, because of the late wrong that your husband received in your Town Council. But I pray you comfort yourself in the Lord; for a just cause bides under the water only as long as wicked men hold their hand above it; their arm will weary, and then the just cause shall swim above, and the light that is sown for the righteous shall spring and grow up. If ye were not strangers here, the dogs of the world would not bark at you. You may see all windings and turnings that are in your way to heaven out of God's Word; for He will not lead you to the kingdom at the nearest, but you must go through "honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, and yet always rejoicing" (2 Corinthians 6:8; 2 Corinthians 6:10). The world is one of the enemies that we have to fight with, but a vanquished and overcome enemy, and like a beaten and forlorn soldier; for our Jesus hath taken the armour from it. Let me then speak to you in His words: "Be of good courage," saith the Captain of our salvation, "for I have overcome the world." You shall neither be free of the scourge of the tongue, nor of disgraces (even if it were buffetings and spittings upon the face, as was our Saviour's case), if you follow Jesus Christ. I beseech you in the bowels of our Lord Jesus, keep a good conscience, as I trust you do. You live not upon men's opinion; gold may be gold, and have the king's stamp upon it, when it is trampled upon by men. Happy are you, if, when the world trampleth upon you in your credit and good name, yet you are the Lord's gold, stamped with the King of heaven's image, and sealed by the Spirit unto the day of your redemption. Pray for the spirit of love; for "love beareth all things; it believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things" (1 Corinthians 13:7). And I pray you and your husband, yea, I charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, pray for these your adversaries, and read this to your husband from me, and let both of you put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies. And, sister, remember how many thousands of talents of sins your Master hath forgiven you. Forgive ye therefore your fellow-servants one talent. Follow God's command in this, and "seek not after your own heart, and after your own eyes," in this matter, as the Spirit speaks (Numbers 15:39). Ask never the counsel of your own heart here; the world will blow up your heart now, and cause it swell, except the grace of God cause it fall. Jesus, even Jesus, the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, give you wisdom. I trust God shall be glorified in you. And a door shall be opened unto you, as to the Lord's "prisoners of hope," as Zechariah speaks. It is a benefit to you, that the wicked are God's fan to purge you. And I hope they shall blow away no corn, or spiritual graces, but only your chaff. I pray you, in your pursuit, have so recourse to the law of men, that you wander not from the law of God. Be not cast down: if you saw Him who is standing on the shore, holding out His arms to welcome you on land, you would not only wade through a sea of wrongs, but through hell itself to be at Him. And I trust in God you see Him sometimes. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit, and all yours. Your brother in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 055. To Marion M'Naught.—When he had been threatened with Persecution for Preaching the Gospel

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55.—To Marion M'Naught.

(WHEN HE HAD BEEN THREATENED WITH PERSECUTION FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL—THE SAINTS SHALL YET WIN THE DAY.)

WORTHY AND WELL-BELOVED MISTRESS,—My love in Christ remembered. I know ye have heard of the purpose of my adversaries, to try what they can do against me at this Synod for the work of God in your town when I was at your Communion. They intend to call me in question at the Synod for treasonable doctrine. Therefore help me with your prayers, and desire your acquaintance to help me also. Your ears heard how Christ was there. If He suffer His servant to get a broken head in His own kingly service, and not either help or revenge the wrong, I never saw the like of it. There is not a night drunkard, time-serving, idle, idol shepherd to be spoken against: I am the only man; and because it is so, and I know God will not help them lest they be proud, I am confident their process shall fall asunder. Only be ye earnest with God for hearing, for an open ear, and reading of the bill, that He may in heaven hear both parties, and judge accordingly. And doubt not, fear not; they shall not, who now ride highest, put Christ out of His kingly possession in Scotland. The pride of man and his rage shall turn to the praise of our Lord. It is an old feud, that the rulers of the earth, the dragon and his angels, have carried to the Lamb and His followers; but the followers of the Lamb shall overcome by the Word of God. And believe this, and wait on a little, till they have got their womb full of clay and gravel, and they shall know (howbeit stolen waters be sweet) Esau's portion is not worth his hunting. Commend me to your husband, and send me word how Grizel is. The Son of God lead her through the water. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## 056. To Lady Kenmure.—Reasons for Resignation—Security of Saints—The End of Time

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56.—To myLady Kenmure.

(REASONS FOR RESIGNATION—SECURITY OF SAINTS—THE END OF TIME.)

MADAM,—I received your Ladyship's letter from J. G.[143] I thank our Lord ye are as well at least as one may be who is not come home. It is a mercy in this stormy sea to get a second wind; for none of the saints get a first, but they must take the winds as the Lord of the seas causeth them to blow, and the inn as the Lord and Master of the inns hath ordered it. If contentment were here, heaven were not heaven. Whoever seek the world to be their bed, shall at best find it short and ill-made, and a stone under their side to hold them waking, rather than a soft pillow to sleep upon. Ye ought to bless your Lord that it is not worse. We live in a sea where many have suffered shipwreck, and have need that Christ sit at the helm of the ship. It is a mercy to win to heaven, though with much hard toil and heavy labour, and to take it by violence ill and well as it may be. Better go swimming and wet through our waters than drown by the way; especially now when truth suffereth, and great men bid Christ sit lower and contract Himself in less bounds, as if He took too much room.

[143] J. Gordon.

I expect our new prelate[144] shall try my sitting. I hang by a thread, but it is (if I may speak so) of Christ's spinning. There is no quarrel more honest or honourable than to suffer for truth. But the worst is, that this kirk is like to sink, and all her lovers and friends stand afar off; none mourn with her, and none mourn for her. But the Lord Jesus will not be put out of His conquest so soon in Scotland. It will be seen that the kirk and truth will rise again within three days, and Christ again shall ride upon His white horse; howbeit His horse seem now to stumble, yet he cannot fall. The fulness of Christ's harvest in the end of the earth is not yet come in. I speak not this because I would have it so, but upon better grounds than my naked liking. But enough of this sad subject.

[144] Sydserff.

I long to be fully assured of your Ladyship's welfare, and that your soul prospereth, especially now in your solitary life when your comforts outward are few, and when Christ hath you for the very uptaking. I know His love to you is still running over, and His love hath not so bad a memory as to forget you and your dear child, who hath two fathers in heaven, the one the Ancient of Days. I trust in His mercy He hath something laid up for him above, however it may go with him here. I know it is long since your Ladyship saw that this world had turned your stepmother and did forsake you. Madam, you have reason to take in good part a lean dinner and spare diet in this life, seeing your large supper of the Lamb's preparing will recompense all. Let it go, which was never yours but only in sight, not in property. The time of your loan will wear shorter and shorter, and time is measured to you by ounce weights; and then I know your hope shall be a full ear of corn and not blasted with

wind. It may be your joy that your anchor is up within the veil, and that the ground it is cast upon is not false but firm. God hath done His part: I hope ye will not deny to fish and fetch home all your love to Himself; and it is but too narrow and short for Him if it were more. If ye were before pouring all your love (if it had been many gallons more) in upon your Lord, if drops fell by in the in-pouring, He forgiveth you. He hath done now all that can be done to win beyond it all, and hath left little to woo your love from Himself, except one only child. What is His purpose herein He knoweth best, who hath taken your soul in tutoring. Your faith may be boldly charitable of Christ, that however matters go, the worst shall be a tired traveller, and a joyful and sweet welcome home. The back of your winter night is broken. Look to the east, the day sky is breaking. Think not that Christ loseth time, or lingereth unsuitably. O fair, fair, and sweet morning! We are but as sea passengers. If we look right, we are upon our country coast: our Redeemer is fast coming, to take this old worm-eaten world, like an old moth-eaten garment, in His two hands, and to roll it up and lay it by Him. These are the last days, and an oath is given, by God Himself, that time shall be no more (Revelation 10:6); and when time itself is old and grey-haired, it were good we were away. Thus, Madam, ye see I am, as my custom is tedious in my lines. Your Ladyship will pardon it. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Your Ladyship's at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Jan. 18, 1636.

## 057. To Marion M'Naught.—In the Prospect of Removal to Aberdeen

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57.—For Marion M'Naught.

(IN THE PROSPECT OF REMOVAL TO ABERDEEN.)

HONOURED AND DEAREST IN THE LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am well, and my soul prospereth. I find Christ with me. I burden no man; I want nothing; no face looketh on me but it laugheth on me. Sweet, sweet is the Lord's cross. I overcome my heaviness. My Bridegroom's love-blinks fatten my weary soul. I soon go to my King's palace at Aberdeen. Tongue, and pen, and wit, cannot express my joy.

Remember my love to Jean Gordon, to my sister, Jean Brown, to Grizel, to your husband. Thus in haste. Grace be with you.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Edinburgh, April 5, 1636.

P.S.—My charge is to you to believe, rejoice, sing, and triumph. Christ has said to me, Mercy, mercy, grace and peace for Marion M'Naught.

## 058. To Lady Kenmure.—On occasion of Efforts to introduce Episcopacy

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58.—To myLady Kenmure.

(ON OCCASION OF EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE EPISCOPACY.)

RIGHT HONOURABLE,—I cannot find a time for writing some things I intended on Job, I have been so taken up with the broils that we are encumbered with in our calling. For our prelate will have us either to swallow our light over, and digest it contrary to our stomachs (howbeit we should vomit our conscience and all, in this troublesome conformity), or then he will try if deprivation can convert us to the ceremonial faith.[145] [145] Conformity to episcopal forms.

I write to your Ladyship, Madam, not as distrusting your affection or willingness to help me, as your Ladyship is able by yourself or others, but to advertise you that I hang by a small thread. For our learned prelate, because we cannot see with his eyes so far in a mill-stone as his light doeth, will not follow his Master, meek Jesus, who waited upon the wearied and short-breathed in the way to heaven.[146] Where all see not alike, and some are weaker, He carrieth the lambs in His bosom, and leadeth gently those that are with young. But we must either see all the evil of ceremonies to be but as indifferent straws, or suffer no less than to be casten out of the Lord's inheritance! Madam, if I had time I would write more at length, but your Ladyship will pardon me till a fitter occasion. Grace be with you and your child, and bear you company to your best home.

[146] Alluding toGenesis 32:14, andIsaiah 40:11. Your Ladyship's in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, June 8, 1636.

## 059. To Earlston, Elder.—No Suffering for Christ unrewarded—Loss of Children—Christ in Provid...

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59.—To Earlston, Elder.

[Alexander Gordon of Earlston was descended from the house of Gordon of Lochinvar, and the residence of his family at first was Gordon of Airds (about a mile from the New Galloway Railway Station, on a wooded height, in the parish of Kells). His great-grandfather, Alexander Gordon of Airds, having married Margaret, eldest daughter of John Sinclair of Earlston, the issue of that union came to possess the lands of Earlston. (Nisbet's "Heraldry.") It is a tradition that old Gordon of Airds imbibed Wickliffite views, when he was on a sort of embassy to the English Borderers, and that he propagated the truth by bringing home an English Wickliffite to be tutor to his eldest son. Having obtained a New Testament in the vulgar tongue, he read it at meetings which were held in the woods of Airds, in a secluded spot, at the junction of the Ken and the Dee, where the loch begins.[147] The truth circulated rapidly through the whole province of Galloway.

[147] It is probably the little mound in the wood called "Low's Seat," from its being the favourite resort of a local poet of that name.

There are some interesting traditions about old Gordon of Airds. He was compelled, when a youth, to sign the sentence that doomed Patrick Hamilton to death, 1528; and this very circumstance led him to inquire more fully into the truth. He lived to the age of one hundred and one, dying in 1586. A traveller, coming to crave the hospitality of Airds one evening, was courteously received by a youth, who, however, referred him to his father. His father in turn referred him to an older man, the grandfather of the boy; and then this grey-haired grand-sire said, "Sir, you must ask my father,"—the patriarch who sat in the arm-chair and conducted worship that evening. (Agnew's "Sheriffs of Galloway.")

Earlston, or Erliston, or Earleston, is not far from Carsphairn. As you come from Dalry, in Glenkens, you see the roof of the ancient residence appearing from among the trees that grow up the sloping ridge at the foot of which it stands. In front of the grim old tower there is a fine lawn, a remnant of better days, and a linn not far off. There is another Earlston, in the parish of Borgue, a quite modern mansion, built by a descendant of this ancient family, and called after the name of the original property. The grace of God, which had early chosen this family, continued to favour it for many generations. Alexander Gordon, Rutherford's friend, was worthy of his ancestors. Livingstone, in his "Characteristics," speaks of him as "a man of great spirit, but much subdued by inward exercise. For wisdom, courage, and righteousness, he might have been a magistrate in any part of the earth." He warmly espoused the side of the Presbyterians. In the end of July 1635, he was summoned by the Bishop of Glasgow to appear before the High Commission, for preventing the intrusion of an unpopular nominee of the bishop into a vacant parish. But Lord Lorn, afterwards the martyred Marquis of Argyle, having appeared with him before that court, and affirmed that Earlston had done this by his direction as patron of the parish, the matter was

deferred to a future day. This letter of Rutherford probably refers to the vexatious proceedings instituted against him in regard to this matter. He was afterwards summoned by Sydserff, Bishop of Galloway, fined five hundred merks, and banished to Montrose. The Privy Council, however, afterwards dispensed with his banishment upon the payment of his fine. Earlston was a member of the Assembly which met at Glasgow, in 1638, as commissioner from the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright. His name appears among the members of Parliament in 1641, as member for the shire of Galloway. He was married to Elizabeth, daughter of John Gordon of Muirfad, by whom he had several children. His eldest son, William, who succeeded him, is retoured heir of his father on the 23rd of January 1655. In the avenue leading to Earlston, there is a very large old oak, still shown as that in the thick foliage of which this William Gordon hid, and so escaped his pursuers, in the days of the persecution. But in 1679, on his way to join the rising at Bothwell, he was shot by a troop of dragoons, and lies buried in Glassford Churchyard, where is a monument to his memory.] (NO SUFFERING FOR CHRIST UNREWARDED—LOSS OF CHILDREN—CHRIST IN PROVIDENCE.)

MUCH HONOURED SIR,—I have heard of the mind and malice of your adversaries against you. It is like they will extend the law they have, in length and breadth, answerable to their heat of mind. But it is a great part of your glory that the cause is not yours, but your Lord's whom you serve. And I doubt not but Christ will count it His honour to back His weak servant; and it were a shame for Him (with reverence to His holy name) that He should suffer Himself to be in the common of such a poor man as ye are, and that ye should give out for Him and not get in again. Write up your depursments for your Master Christ, and keep the account of what ye give out, whether name, credit, goods, or life, and suspend your reckoning till nigh the evening; and remember that a poor weak servant of Christ wrote it to you, that ye shall have Christ, a King, caution for your incomes and all your losses. Reckon not from the forenoon. Take the Word of God for your warrant; and for Christ's act of cautionary, howbeit body, life, and goods go for Christ your Lord, and though ye should lose the head for Him, yet "there shall not one hair of your head perish; in patience, therefore, possess your soul." [148] And because ye are the first man in Galloway called out and questioned for the name of Jesus, His eye hath been upon you, as upon one whom He designed to be among His witnesses. Christ hath said, "Alexander Gordon shall lead the ring in witnessing a good confession," and therefore He hath put the garland of suffering for Himself first upon your head. Think yourself so much the more obliged to Him, and fear not; for He layeth His right hand on your head. He who was dead and is alive will plead your cause, and will look attentively upon the process from the beginning to the end, and the Spirit of glory shall rest upon you. "Fear none of these 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" [149] (Revelation 2:10). This lovely One, Jesus, who also became the Son of man, that He might take strokes for you, write the cross-sweetening and soul-supporting sense of these words in your heart!

[148] Luke 21:18-19.

[149] Zechariah 12:2; Zechariah 12:6.

These rumbling wheels of Scotland's ten days' tribulation are under His look who hath seven eyes. Take a house on your head, and slip yourself by faith in under Christ's wings till the storm be over.

And remember, when they have drunken us down, Jerusalem will be a cup of trembling and of poison.[150] They shall be fain to vomit out the saints; for Judah “shall be a hearth of fire in a sheaf, and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left.” Woe to Zion’s enemies! they have the worst of it; for we have writ for the victory. Sir, ye were never honourable till now. This is your glory, that Christ hath put you in the roll with Himself and with the rest of the witnesses who are come out of great tribulation, and have washen their garments and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Be not cast down for what the servants of Antichrist cast in your teeth, that ye are a head to and favourer of the Puritans, and leader to that sect. If your conscience say, “Alas! here is much din and little done” (as the proverb is), because ye have not done so much service to Christ that way as ye might and should, take courage from that same temptation. For your Lord Christ looketh upon that very challenge as an hungering desire in you to have done more than ye did; and that filleth up the blank, and He will accept of what ye have done in that kind. If great men be kind to you, I pray you overlook them; if they smile on you, Christ but borroweth their face to smile through them upon His afflicted servant. Know the well-head; and for all that, learn the way to the well itself. Thank God that Christ came to your house in your absence and took with Him some of your children. He presumed that much on your love, that ye would not offend;[151] and howbeit He should take the rest, He cannot come upon your wrong side. I question not, if they were children of gold, but ye think them well bestowed upon Him.

[150] Zechariah 12:2;Zechariah 12:6.

[151] Stumble; be offended.

Expound well these two rods on you, one in your house at home, another on your own person abroad. Love thinketh no evil. If ye were not Christ’s wheat, appointed to be bread in His house, He would not grind you. But keep the middle line, neither despise nor faint (Hebrews 12:5). Ye see your Father is homely with you. Strokes of a father evidence kindness and care; take them so. I hope your Lord hath manifested Himself to you, and suggested these, or more choice thoughts about His dealing with you. We are using our weak moyen and credit for you up at our own court, as we dow. We pray the King to hear us, and the Son of Man to go side for side with you, and hand in hand in the fiery oven, and to quicken and encourage your unbelieving heart when ye droop and despond. Sir, to the honour of Christ be it said, my faith goeth with my pen now. I am presently believing Christ shall bring you out. Truth in Scotland shall keep the crown of the causeway yet. The saints shall see religion go naked at noon-day, free from shame and fear of men. We shall divide Shechem, and ride upon the high places of Jacob. Remember my obliged respects and love to Lady Kenmure and her sweet child.

Yours ever in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, July 6, 1636.

## 060. To Marion M'Naught.—When he was under Trial by the High Commission

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60.—To Marion M'Naught.

(WHEN HE WAS UNDER TRIAL BY THE HIGH COMMISSION.) MY DEAR AND WELL-BELOVED IN CHRIST,—I am yet under trial, and have appeared before Christ's forbidden lords,[152] for a testimony against them. The Chancellor and the rest tempted me with questions, nothing belonging to my summons, which I wholly declined, notwithstanding of his threats. My newly printed book against Arminians[153] was one challenge; not lording the prelates[154] was another. The most part of the bishops, when I came in, looked more astonished than I, and heard me with silence. Some spoke for me; but my Lord ruled it so as I am filled with joy in my sufferings, and I find Christ's cross sweet. What they intend against the next day I know not. Be not secure, but pray. Our Bishop of Galloway said, If the Commission should not give him his will of me (with an oath he said), he would write to the King. The Chancellor summoned me in judgment to appear that day eight days. My Lord has brought me a friend from the Highlands of Argyle, my Lord of Lorn,[155] who hath done as much as was within the compass of his power. God gave me favour in his eyes. Mr. Robert Glendinning is silenced, till he accepts a colleague. We hope to deal yet for him. Christ is worthy to be entrusted. Your husband will get an easy and good way of his business. Ye and I both shall see the salvation of God upon Joseph separate from his brethren. Grace be with you.

[152] The prelates; alluding to 1 Peter 5:3.

[153] *Exercitatio Apol. pro Divinâ Gratiâ*, published this year (1636) at Amsterdam.

[154] Calling them "Lords."

[155] Brother to Lady Kenmure, and afterwards the celebrated Marquis of Argyle. See Letter 61. also.

S. R.

Edinburgh, 1636.

## 061. To Lady Kenmure, on the evening of his banishment to Aberdeen.—His only Regrets—The Cros...

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61.—To the truly Noble and Elect Lady, my Lady Viscountess of Kenmure, on the evening of his banishment to Aberdeen.

(HIS ONLY REGRETS—THE CROSS UNSPEAKABLY SWEET—RETROSPECT OF HIS MINISTRY.)

NOBLE AND ELECT LADY,—That honour that I have prayed for these sixteen years, with submission to my Lord's will, my kind Lord hath now bestowed upon me, even to suffer for my royal and princely King Jesus, and for His kingly crown, and the freedom of His kingdom that His Father hath given Him. The forbidden lords have sentenced me with deprivation, and confinement within the town of Aberdeen. I am charged in the King's name to enter against the 20th day of August next, and there to remain during the King's pleasure, as they have given it out. Howbeit Christ's green cross, newly laid upon me, be somewhat heavy, while I call to mind the many fair days sweet and comfortable to my soul and to the souls of many others, and how young ones in Christ are plucked from the breast, and the inheritance of God laid waste; yet that sweet smelled and perfumed cross of Christ is accompanied with sweet refreshments, with the kisses of a King, with the joy of the Holy Ghost, with faith that the Lord hears the sighing of a prisoner, with undoubted hope (as sure as my Lord liveth) after this night to see daylight, and Christ's sky to clear up again upon me, and His poor kirk; and that in a strange land, among strange faces, He will give favour in the eyes of men to His poor oppressed servant, who dow not but love that lovely One, that princely One, Jesus, the Comforter of his soul. All would be well, if I were free of old challenges for guiltiness, and for neglect in my calling, and for speaking too little for my Well-beloved's crown, honour, and kingdom. O for a day in the assembly of the saints to advocate for King Jesus! If my Lord also go on now to quarrels I die, I cannot endure it. But I look for peace from Him, because He knoweth I dow bear men's feud, but I dow not bear His feud. This is my only exercise, that I fear I have done little good in my ministry; but I dare not but say, I loved the bairns of the wedding-chamber, and prayed for and desired the thriving of the marriage, and coming of His kingdom.

I apprehend no less than a judgment upon Galloway, and that the Lord shall visit this whole nation for the quarrel of the Covenant. But what can be laid upon me, or any the like of me, is too light for Christ. Christ dow bear more, and would bear death and burning quick, in His quick servants, even for this honourable cause that I now suffer for. Yet for all my complaints (and He knoweth that I dare not now dissemble), He was never sweeter and kinder than He is now. One kiss now is sweeter than ten long since; sweet, sweet is His cross; light, light and easy is His yoke. O what a sweet step were it up to my Father's house through ten deaths, for the truth and cause of that unknown, and so not half well loved, Plant of Renown, the Man called the Branch, the Chief among ten thousands, the fairest among the sons of men! O what unseen joys, how many hidden heart-burnings of love, are in the "remnants of the sufferings of Christ!" (Colossians 1:24.) My dear

worthy Lady, I give it to your Ladyship, under my own hand, my heart writing as well as my hand,—welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet and glorious cross of Christ; welcome, sweet Jesus, with Thy light cross. Thou hast now gained and gotten all my love from me; keep what Thou hast gotten! Only woe, woe is me, for my bereft flock, for the lambs of Jesus, that I fear shall be fed with dry breasts. But I spare now. Madam, I dare not promise to see your Ladyship, because of the little time I have allotted me; and I purpose to obey the King, who hath power of my body; and rebellion to kings is unbecoming Christ's ministers. Be pleased to acquaint my Lady Mar<sup>[156]</sup> with my case. I will look that your Ladyship and that good lady will be mindful to God of the Lord's prisoner, not for my cause, but for the Gospel's sake. Madam, bind me more, if more can be, to your Ladyship, and write thanks to your brother, my Lord of Lorn, for what he hath done for me, a poor unknown stranger to his Lordship. I shall pray for him and his house, while I live. It is his honour to open his mouth in the streets, for his wronged and oppressed Master Christ Jesus. Now, Madam, commending your Ladyship and the sweet child to the tender mercies of mine own Lord Jesus, and His good-will who dwelt in the Bush.

[156] See Letter 140.

I am yours in his own sweetest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Edinburgh, July 28, 1636.

## 062. To Lady Culross, on the occasion of his banishment to Aberdeen.—Challenges of Conscience...

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62.—To the Lady Culross, on occasion of his banishment to Aberdeen.

[Elizabeth Melville, wife of James Colvill, the eldest son of Alexander, Commendator of Culross, was the daughter of Sir James Melville of Halhill, in Fife. Her father was ambassador from Queen Mary to Queen Elizabeth, and a privy councillor to King James 6. He was also a man of piety, who (says Livingstone), “professed he had got assurance from the Lord, that himself, wife, and all his children, should meet in heaven.” Lady Culross held a high place among the eminent Christians of her day. Livingstone says: “She was famous for her piety, and for her dream concerning her spiritual condition, which she put in verse, which was published by others. Of all that ever I saw, she was most unwearied in religious exercises; and the more she enjoyed access to God therein she hungered the more.” She was present at the famous Communion at Shotts in June 1636, when the sermon preached by Livingstone, on the Monday after, was the means, it is believed, of the conversion of not less than five hundred individuals. The night before had been spent in prayer by a great number of Christians in a large room of the inn where she slept; and the minister who should have preached on Monday having fallen sick, it was at her suggestion that the other ministers assisting on that occasion, to whom Livingstone was a stranger, laid upon him the work of addressing the people. There is a poem written by her, entitled “Ane Godlie Dream;” and there is still preserved a sonnet of her composition, which she sent to Mr. John Welsh when he was imprisoned in Blackness, 1605:—

“My dear brother, with courage bear the cross, Joy shall be joined with all thy sorrow here.

High is thy hope, disdain this earthly dross, Once shall you see the wished day appear.

“Now it is dark, thy sky cannot be clear;

After the clouds it shall be calm anon;

Wait on His will whose blood hath bought thee dear:

Extol His name, though outward joys be gone.

“Look to the Lord, thou art not left alone, Since He is thine, what pleasure canst thou take!

He is at hand, and hears thy every groan:

End out thy fight, and suffer for His sake.

“A sight most bright thy soul shall shortly see, When store of glore thy rich reward shall be.”

—Wodrow MSS. Adv. Lib. Edin. vol. 29:] (CHALLENGES OF CONSCIENCE—THE CROSS NO BURDEN.)

MADAM,—Your letter came in due time to me, now a prisoner of Christ, and in bonds for the Gospel. I am sentenced with deprivation and confinement within the town of Aberdeen. But O my guiltiness, the follies of my youth, the neglects in my calling, and especially in not speaking more for the kingdom, crown, and sceptre of my royal and princely King Jesus, do so stare me in the face, that I apprehend anger in that which is a crown of rejoicing to the dear saints of God. This, before my compearance, which was three several days, did trouble me, and burdeneth me more now; howbeit Christ, and in Him God reconciled, met me with open arms, and trysted me precisely at the entry of the door of the Chancellor's hall, and assisted me so to answer, as that the advantage is not theirs but Christ's. Alas! that is no cause of wondering that I am thus borne down with challenges; for the world hath mistaken me, and no man knoweth what guiltiness is in me so well as these two, who keep my eyes now waking and my heart heavy, I mean (1) my heart and conscience, and (2) my Lord, who is greater than my heart.

Shew your brother that I desire him, while he is on the watch-tower, to plead with his mother, and to plead with this land, and spare not to cry for my sweet Lord Jesus His fair crown, that the interdicted and forbidden lords are plucking off His royal head. If I were free of challenges, and a High Commission within my soul, I would not give a straw to go to my Father's house through ten deaths, for the truth and cause of my lovely, lovely One, Jesus. But I walk in heaviness now. If ye love me, and Christ in me, my dear Lady, pray, pray for this only, that bygones betwixt my Lord and me may be bygones, and that He would pass from the summons of His High Commission, and seek nothing from me, but what He will do for me and work in me. If your ladyship knew me as I do myself, ye would say, "Poor soul, no marvel." It is not my apprehension that createth this cross to me; it is too real, and hath sad and certain grounds. But I will not believe that God will take this advantage of me, when my back is at the wall. He who forbiddeth to add affliction to affliction, will He do it Himself? Why should He pursue a dry leaf and stubble? Desire Him to spare me now. Also the memory of the fair feast-days, that Christ and I had in His banqueting-house of wine, and of the scattered flock once committed to me, and now taken off my hand by Himself, because I was not so faithful in the end as I was in the two first years of my entry, when sleep departed from my eyes, because my soul was taken up with a care for Christ's lambs,—even these add sorrow to my sorrow. Now my Lord hath only given me this to say, and I write it under mine own hand (be ye the Lord's servant's witness), welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet cross of Christ; welcome, fair, fair, lovely, royal King with Thine own cross. Let us all three go to heaven together. Neither care I much to go from the south of Scotland to the north, and to be Christ's prisoner amongst unco faces, in a place of this kingdom, which I have little reason to be in love with. I know Christ shall make Aberdeen my garden of delights. I am fully persuaded that Scotland shall eat Ezekiel's book, that is written within and without, "lamentation, and mourning, and woe" (Ezekiel 2:10). But the saints shall get a drink of the well that goeth through the streets of the New Jerusalem, to put it down. Thus hoping that ye will think upon the poor prisoner of Christ, I pray, grace, grace be with you. Your Ladyship's in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Edinburgh, July 30, 1636.

## 063. To Mr. Robert Cunningham, at Holywood, in Ireland.—Consolation to a Brother in Tribulati...

63.—To Mr. Robert Cunningham, Minister of the Gospel at Holywood, in Ireland.

[Mr. Robert Cunningham was for some time employed as chaplain to the Earl of Buccleuch's regiment in Holland. On the return of the troops to Scotland, he removed to the north of Ireland, where he was admitted minister of Holywood in 1615. "He was the one man to my discerning," says Livingstone, "of all that ever I saw, who resembled most the meekness of Jesus Christ in his whole carriage, and was so far revered by all, even the most wicked, that he was oft troubled with that Scripture, 'Woe to you when all men speak well of you.'" He continued to labour in his charge, and in the surrounding district, with great success, until the Presbyterian ministers began to be molested for their nonconformity. Owing to the singular gentleness of Cunningham's disposition, he was for some time less subjected to trouble than his brethren; but at length, on the 12th of August 1636, he and four other ministers (among whom was Mr. Hamilton mentioned in the close of this letter) were formally deposed for refusing to subscribe certain canons, one of which was kneeling at the Lord's Supper. Not long after, he, with some of his deposed brethren, came over to Scotland; but he did not long survive his arrival. He died at Irvine, on the 29th of March 1637, scarcely eight months after this letter was written. A little before he expired, his wife sitting on the front of his bed with her hand clasped in his, after committing to God his flock at Holywood, his friends and his children, he added, "And last of all, I recommend to Thee this gentlewoman, who is no more my wife." His affectionate wife bursting into tears, he sought by comfortable words to allay her grief; but in the act of so doing, fell asleep in Jesus.] (CONSOLATION TO A BROTHER IN TRIBULATION—HIS OWN DEPRIVATION OF MINISTRY—CHRIST WORTH SUFFERING FOR.)

WELL-BELOVED AND REVEREND BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Upon acquaintance in Christ, I thought good to take the opportunity of writing to you. Seeing it hath seemed good to the Lord of the harvest to take the hooks out of our hands for a time, and to lay upon us a more honourable service, even to suffer for His name, it were good to comfort one another in writing. I have had a desire to see you in the face; yet now being the prisoner of Christ, it is taken away. I am greatly comforted to hear of your soldier's stately<sup>[157]</sup> spirit, for your princely and royal Captain Jesus our Lord, and for the grace of God in the rest of our dear brethren with you.

[157] See Glossary.

You have heard of my trouble, I suppose. It hath pleased our sweet Lord Jesus to let loose the malice of these interdicted lords in His house to deprive me of my ministry at Anwoth, and to confine me, eight score miles from thence, to Aberdeen; and also (which was not done to any before) to inhibit me to speak at all in Jesus' name, within this kingdom, under the pain of rebellion. The cause that ripened their hatred was my book against the Arminians, whereof they accused

me, on those three days I appeared before them. But, let our crowned King in Zion reign! By His grace the loss is theirs, the advantage is Christ's and truth's. Albeit this honest cross gained some ground on me, and my heaviness and my inward challenges of conscience for a time were sharp, yet now, for the encouragement of you all, I dare say it, and write it under my hand, "Welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet cross of Christ." I verily think the chains of my Lord Jesus are all overlaid with pure gold, and that His cross is perfumed, and that it smelleth of Christ, and that the victory shall be by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of His truth, and that Christ, lying on His back, in His weak servants, and oppressed truth, shall ride over His enemies' bellies, and shall "strike through kings in the day of His wrath" (Psalms 110:4). It is time we laugh when He laugheth; and seeing He is now pleased to sit[158] with wrongs for a time, it becometh us to be silent until the Lord hath let the enemies enjoy their hungry, lean, and feckless paradise. Blessed are they who are content to take strokes with weeping Christ. Faith will trust the Lord, and is not hasty, nor headstrong; neither is faith so timorous as to flatter a temptation, or to bud and bribe the cross. It is little up or little down[159] that the Lamb and His followers can get no law-surety, nor truce with crosses; it must be so, till we be up in our Father's house. My heart is woe indeed for my mother Church, that hath played the harlot with many lovers. Her Husband hath a mind to sell her for her horrible transgressions; and heavy will the hand of the Lord be upon this backsliding nation. The ways of our Zion mourn; her gold has become dim, her white Nazarites are black like a coal. How shall not the children weep, when the Husband and the mother cannot agree! Yet I believe Scotland's sky shall clear again; that Christ shall build again the old waste places of Jacob; that our dead and dry bones shall become one army of living men, and that our Well-beloved may yet feed among the lilies, until the day break and the shadows flee away (Song of Solomon 4:5-6). My dear brother, let us help one another with our prayers. Our King shall mow down His enemies, and shall come from Bozrah with His garments all dyed in blood. And for our consolation shall He appear, and call His wife Hephzibah, and His land Beulah (Isaiah 62:4); for He will rejoice over us and marry us, and Scotland shall say, "What have I to do any more with idols?" Only let us be faithful to Him that can ride through hell and death upon a windlestrae, and His horse never stumble; and let Him make of me a bridge over a water, so that His high and holy name may be glorified in me. Strokes with the sweet Mediator's hand are very sweet. He was always sweet to my soul; but since I suffered for Him, His breath hath a sweeter smell than before. Oh that every hair of my head, and every member and every bone in my body, were a man to witness a fair confession for Him! I would think all too little for Him. When I look over beyond the line, and beyond death, to the laughing side of the world, I triumph, and ride upon the high places of Jacob; howbeit otherwise I am a faint, dead-hearted, cowardly man, oft borne down, and hungry in waiting for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Nevertheless, I think it the Lord's wise love that feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with wants and desertions.

[158] Endure.

[159] Of little moment.

I know not, my dear brother, if our worthy brethren be gone to sea or not. They are on my heart and in my prayers. If they be yet with you, salute my dear friend, John Stuart, my well-beloved brethren in the Lord, Mr. Blair, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. M'Clelland,[160] and acquaint them with my troubles, and entreat them to pray for the poor afflicted prisoner of Christ. They are dear to my soul. I seek your prayers and theirs for my flock: their remembrance breaketh my heart.

I desire to love that people, and others my dear acquaintance in Christ, with love in God, and as God loveth them. I know that He who sent me to the west and south, sends me also to the north. I will charge my soul to believe and to wait for Him, and will follow His providence, and not go before it, nor stay behind it. Now, my dear brother, taking farewell in paper, I commend you all to the word of His grace, and to the work of His Spirit, to Him who holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, that you may be kept spotless till the day of Jesus our Lord.

[160] Correspondents who, because of the oppressive measures of the prelates, intended to proceed to New England. There was a M'Lelland of Balmagachan, near Roberton, in the parish of Borgue; but this is not he. This was John M'Lelland, sometime minister of Kirkcudbright, a friend of R. Blair's.

I am your brother in affliction in our sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R. From Irvine, being on my journey to Christ's

Palace in Aberdeen, August 4, 1636.

## 064. To Alexander Gordon of Earlston.—His Feelings upon Leaving Anwoth

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64.—To Alexander Gordon of Earlston.

(HIS FEELINGS UPON LEAVING ANWOTH.)

MUCH HONOURED SIR,—I find small hopes of Q.'s business. I intend, after the council-day, to go on to Aberdeen. The Lord is with me: I care not what man can do. I burden no man, and I want nothing. No king is better provided than I am. Sweet, sweet, and easy is the cross of my Lord. All men I look in the face (of whatsoever denomination, nobles and poor, acquaintance and strangers) are friendly to me. My Well-beloved is some kinder and more warmly than ordinary, and cometh and visiteth my soul. My chains are overgilded with gold. Only the remembrance of my fair days with Christ in Anwoth, and of my dear flock (whose case is my heart's sorrow), is vinegar to my sugared wine. Yet both sweet and sour feed my soul. No pen, no words, no ingine can express to you the loveliness of my only, only Lord Jesus. Thus, in haste, making for my palace at Aberdeen, I bless you, your wife, your eldest son, and other children. Grace, grace be with you. Probably "Queensberry."

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Edinburgh, Sept. 5, 1636.

## 065. To Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, on his way to Aberdeen.—How Upheld on the Way

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65.—To Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, on his way to Aberdeen.

[Robert Gordon of Knockbren, in the parish of Borgue, which adjoins Anwoth, is, by Livingstone in his "Characteristics," described as "a single-hearted and painful Christian, much employed at parliaments and public meetings after the year 1638." He was a member of the famous Assembly which met at Glasgow in 1638, as commissioner from the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright. The precise date of his death is uncertain; but we find, in 1657, John Gordon in Garloch, five miles from Dalry, is retoured "heir of Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, his granduncle, in the lands of Knockbreck." (Inq. Retor. Abbrev. Kirkcudbright, No. 274.) This John Gordon, and Robert, his brother, were executed together at Edinburgh on the 7th of December 1666, for having been engaged in the rising at Pentland. (See Letter 217.) They inherited, and suffered for, the principles of Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, their granduncle, to whom this letter was written.

Knockbren stands near the sea-shore, amid thick woods, looking down on the opening of Wigtown Bay. But a modern mansion has taken the place of Gordon's residence.] (HOW UPHELD ON THE WAY.) MY DEAREST BROTHER,—I see Christ thinketh shame (if I may speak so) to be in such a poor man's common as mine. I burden no man; I want nothing; no face hath gloomed upon me since I left you. God's sun and fair weather conveyeth me to my time-paradise in Aberdeen. Christ hath so handsomely fitted for my shoulders this rough tree of the cross, as that it hurteth me no ways. My treasure is up in Christ's coffers; my comforts are greater than ye can believe; my pen shall lie for penury of words to write of them. God knoweth I am filled with the joy of the Holy Ghost. Only my memory of you, my dearest in the Lord, my flock and others, keepeth me under, and from being exalted above measure. Christ's sweet sauce hath this sour mixed with it; but O such a sweet and pleasant taste! I find small hopes of Q.'s matter. Thus in haste. Remember me to your wife, and to William Gordon. Grace be with you, Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Edinburgh, Sept. 5, 1636.

## 066. To Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, after arriving at Aberdeen.—Challenges of Conscience—Eas...

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66.—To Robert Gordon of Knockbreck, after arriving at Aberdeen.

(CHALLENGES OF CONSCIENCE—EASE IN ZION.)

DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am, by God's mercy, come now to Aberdeen, the place of my confinement, and settled in an honest man's house. I find the town's-men cold, general, and dry in their kindness; yet I find a lodging in the heart of many strangers. My challenges are revived again, and I find old sores bleeding of new; dangerous and painful is an under-cotted conscience; yet I have an eye to the blood that is physic for such sores. But, verily, I see Christianity is conceived to be more easy and lighter than it is; so that I sometimes think I never knew anything but the letters of that name; for our nature contenteth itself with little in godliness. Our "Lord, Lord," seemeth to us ten "Lord-Lords." Little holiness in our balance is much, because it is our own holiness; and we love to lay small burdens upon our soft natures, and to make a fair court-way to heaven. And I know it were necessary to take more pains than we do, and not to make heaven a city more easily taken than God hath made it. I persuade myself that many runners shall come short, and get a disappointment. Oh! how easy is it to deceive ourselves, and to sleep, and wish that heaven may fall down in our laps! Yet for all my Lord's glooms, I find Him sweet, gracious, loving, kind; and I want both pen and words to set forth the fairness, beauty, and sweetness of Christ's love, and the honour of this cross of Christ, which is glorious to me, though the world thinketh shame thereof. I verily think that the cross of Christ would blush and think shame of these thin-skinned worldings, who are so married to their credit that they are ashamed of the sufferings of Christ. O the honour to be scourged and stoned with Christ, and to go through a furious-faced death to life eternal! But men would have law-borrows against Christ's cross.

Now, my dear brother, forget not the prisoner of Christ, for I see very few here who kindly fear God. Grace be with you. Let my love in Christ and hearty affection be remembered to your kind wife, to your brother John, and to all friends. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 20, 1636.

## 067. To William Fullerton, Provost of Kirkcudbright.—Encouragement to Suffer for Christ

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67.-For William Fullerton, Provost of Kirkcudbright.

[William Fullerton, as has been formerly noticed, was the husband of Marion M'Naught. His religious principles were the same with those of his excellent wife, and he was a man of virtue, integrity, and piety. He proved himself the patron of the oppressed in the case of Mr. Robert Glendinning, the aged minister of Kirkcudbright; to which case there is evident allusion in this letter. Mr. Glendinning having refused to conform to Prelacy, and to receive, as his assistant and successor, a man whom Bishop Sydserff intruded upon him and the people of Kirkcudbright, the bishop suspended him from his office, and sentenced him to be imprisoned. Provost Fullerton, and the other magistrates of the burgh (one of whom was Mr. William Glendinning, son of the minister), indignant at such tyrannical proceedings, refused to incarcerate their own pastor, then nearly eighty years of age, and were determined, with the great body of the inhabitants of the town, to attend upon his ministry. Sydserff, too proud and violent to allow his authority to be thus despised, caused Bailie Glendinning to be imprisoned in Kirkcudbright, and the other magistrates to be confined within the town of Wigtown, while he sentenced the aged minister to remain within the bounds of his parish, and forbade him to exercise any part of his ministerial functions. But he found it impossible, by all the means he could employ, to reduce these refractory magistrates to obedience. The firmness which Fullerton manifested on this occasion is warmly commended by Rutherford.] (ENCOURAGEMENT TO SUFFER FOR CHRIST.)

MUCH HONOURED AND VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I am in good case, blessed be the Lord, remaining here in this unco town a prisoner for Christ and His truth. And I am not ashamed of His cross. My soul is comforted with the consolations of His sweet presence, for whom I suffer.

I earnestly entreat you to give your honour and authority to Christ, and for Christ; and be not dismayed for flesh and blood, while you are for the Lord, and for His truth and cause. And howbeit we see truth put to the worse for the time, yet Christ will be a friend to truth, and will do for those who dare hazard all that they have for Him and for His glory. Sir, our fair day is coming, and the court will change, and wicked men will weep after noon, and sorer than the sons of God, who weep in the morning. Let us believe and hope for God's salvation.

Sir, I hope I need not write to you for your kindness and love to my brother, who is now to be distressed for the truth of God as well as I am. I think myself obliged to pray for you, and your worthy and kind bed-fellow and children, for your love to him and me also. I hope your pains for us in Christ shall not be lost. Thus recommending you to the tender mercy and loving-kindness of God, I rest. His brother was a teacher in Kirkcudbright, and between him and Samuel there was a warm attachment, and strong sympathies. He, too, suffered persecution for his adherence to the cause

of Presbytery. For this, and his zealous support of Mr. Glendinning, whom the Bishop of Galloway treated with such cruelty, he was in November 1636 condemned to resign his charge, and remove from Kirkcudbright before the ensuing term of Whitsunday. Your very loving and affectionate brother,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 21, 1636.

## 068. To John Fleming, Bailie of Leith.—The Sweetness and Faithfulness of Christ's Love

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68.—To John Fleming, Bailiffe (Bailie) of Leith.

[Of Mr. Fleming nothing can be ascertained, unless it is he who is mentioned by Livingston as being a merchant in Edinburgh, a man of note among the godly.] (THE SWEETNESS AND FAITHFULNESS OF CHRIST'S LOVE.) MY VERY WORTHY FRIEND,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter. I bless the Lord through Jesus Christ, I find His word good, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah 48:10). "I will be with him in trouble" (Psalms 91:15). I never expected other at Christ's hand but much good and comfort; and I am not disappointed. I find my Lord's cross overgilded and oiled with comforts. My Lord hath now shown me the white side of His cross. I would not exchange my weeping in prison with the Fourteen Prelates'[163] laughter, amidst their hungry and lean joys. This world knoweth not the sweetness of Christ's love; it is a mystery to them.

[163] Referring probably to the number of prelates (consisting of two archbishops and twelve bishops) who were members of the High Commission by whom he was sentenced to imprisonment. At my first coming here, I found great heaviness, especially because it had pleased the prelates to add this gentle cruelty to my former sufferings (for it is gentle to them), to inhibit the ministers of the town to give me the liberty of a pulpit. I said, What aileth Christ at my service? But I was a fool; He hath chid Himself friends with me. If ye and others of God's children shall praise His great name, who maketh worthless men witnesses for Him, my silence and sufferings shall preach more than my tongue could do. If His glory be seen in me, I am satisfied; for I want for no kindness from Christ. And, sir, I dare not smother His liberality. I write it to you, that ye may praise, and desire your brother and others to join with me in this work. This land shall be made desolate. Our iniquities are full; the Lord saith, we shall drink, and spue, and fall. Remember my love to your good kind wife. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Nov. 13, 1636.

## 069. To Lady Kenmure.—His Enjoyment of Christ in Aberdeen—A Sight of Christ exceeds all Repor...

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69.—To the Noble and Christian Lady the Viscountess of Kenmure.

(HIS ENJOYMENT OF CHRIST IN ABERDEEN—A SIGHT OF CHRIST EXCEEDS ALL REPORTS—SOME ASHAMED OF HIM AND HIS.) MY VERY HONOURABLE AND DEAR LADY,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I cannot forget your Ladyship, and that sweet child. I desire to hear what the Lord is doing to you and him. To write to me were charity. I cannot but write to my friends, that Christ hath trusted me in Aberdeen; and my adversaries have sent me here to be feasted with love banquets with my royal, high, high, and princely King Jesus. Madam, why should I smother Christ's honesty? I dare not conceal His goodness to my soul; He looked fremed and unco-like upon me when I came first here; but I believe Himself better than His looks. I shall not again quarrel Christ for a gloom, now He hath taken the mask off His face, and saith, "Kiss thy fill;" and what can I have more when I get great heaven in my little arms? Oh, how sweet are the sufferings of Christ for Christ! God forgive them that raise an ill report upon the sweet cross of Christ. It is but our weak and dim eyes, and our looking only to the black side that makes us mistake. Those who can take that crabbed tree handsomely upon their back, and fasten it on cannily, shall find it such a burden as wings unto a bird, or sails to a ship. Madam, rue not of your having chosen the better part. Upon my salvation, this is Christ's truth I now suffer for. If I found but cold comfort in my sufferings, I would not beguile others; I would have told you plainly. But the truth is, Christ's crown, His sceptre, and the freedom of His kingdom, is that which is now called in question; because we will not allow that Christ should pay tribute and be a vassal to the shields of the earth, therefore the sons of our mother are angry at us. But it becometh not Christ to hold any man's stirrup. It were a sweet and honourable death to die for the honour of that royal and princely King Jesus. His love is a mystery to the world. I would not have believed that there was so much in Christ as there is. "Come and see" maketh Christ to be known in His excellency and glory. I wish all this nation knew how sweet His breath is. It is little to see Christ in a book, as men do the world in a card. They talk of Christ by the book and the tongue, and no more; but to come nigh Christ, and hause Him, and embrace Him, is another thing. Madam, I write to your honour, for your encouragement in that honourable profession Christ hath honoured you with. Ye have gotten the sunny side of the brae, and the best of Christ's good things. He hath not given you the bastard's portion; and howbeit ye get strokes and sour looks from your Lord, yet believe His love more than your own feeling, for this world can take nothing from you that is truly yours, and death can do you no wrong. Your rock doth not ebb and flow, but your sea. That which Christ hath said, He will bide by it. He will be your tutor. You shall not get you charters of heaven to play you with. It is good that ye have lost your credit with Christ, and that Lord Free-will shall not be your tutor. Christ will lippen the taking you to heaven, neither to yourself, nor any deputy, but only to Himself. Blessed be your tutor. When your Head shall appear, your Bridegroom and Lord, your day shall then dawn, and it shall never have an afternoon, nor an evening shadow. Let your child be Christ's; let him stay beside you as thy Lord's pledge that you shall willingly render again, if God will.

Madam, I find folks here kind to me; but in the night, and under their breath. My Master's cause may not come to the crown of the causeway. Others are kind according to their fashion. Many think me a strange man, and my cause not good; but I care not much for man's thoughts or approbation. I think no shame of the cross. The preachers of the town pretend great love, but the prelates have added to the rest this gentle cruelty (for so they think of it), to discharge me of the pulpits of this town. The people murmur and cry out against it; and to speak truly (howbeit Christ is most indulgent to me otherwise), my silence on the Lord's day keeps me from being exalted above measure, and from startling in the heat of my Lord's love. Some people affect me, for the which cause, I hear the preachers here purpose to have my confinement changed to another place; so cold is northern love; but Christ and I will bear it. I have wrestled long with this sad silence. I said, what aileth Christ at my service? and my soul hath been at a pleading with Christ, and at yea and nay. But I will yield to Him, providing my suffering may preach more than my tongue did; for I give not Christ an inch but for twice as good again. In a word, I am a fool, and He is God. I will hold my peace hereafter.

Let me hear from your Ladyship, and your dear child. Pray for the prisoner of Christ, who is mindful of your Ladyship. Remember my obliged obedience to my good Lady Marr. Grace, grace be with you. I write and pray blessings to your sweet child.

Yours in all dutiful obedience in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Nov. 22, 1636.

## 070. To Lady Kenmure.—Exercise under Restraint from Preaching—The Devil—Christ's Loving-kindn...

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70.—To the Right Honourable and Christian Lady, myLady Viscountess of Kenmure.

(EXERCISE UNDER RESTRAINT FROM PREACHING—THE DEVIL—CHRIST'S LOVING KINDNESS—PROGRESS.)

MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your Ladyship's letter. It refreshed me in my heaviness. The blessing and prayer of a prisoner of Christ come upon you. Since my coming hither, Galloway sent me not a line, except what my brother, Earlston, and his son, did write. I cannot get my papers transported; but, Madam, I want not kindness of one who hath the gate of it. Christ (if He had never done more for me since I was born) hath engaged my heart, and gained my blessing in this house of my pilgrimage. It pleaseth my Well-beloved to dine with a poor prisoner, and the King's spikenard casteth a fragrant smell. Nothing grieveth me, but that I eat my feasts my lone, and that I cannot edify His saints. O that this nation knew what is betwixt Him and me; none would scar at the cross of Christ! My silence eats me up, but He hath told me He thanketh me no less, than if I were preaching daily. He sees how gladly I would be at it; and therefore my wages are going to the fore, up in heaven, as if I were still preaching Christ. Captains pay duly bedfast soldiers, howbeit they do<sup>[164]</sup> nor march, nor carry armour. "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength" (Isaiah 49:5). My garland, "the banished minister" (the term of Aberdeen), ashameth me not. I have seen the white side of Christ's cross; how lovely hath He been to His oppressed servant! "The Lord executeth judgment for the oppressed, He giveth food to the hungry: the Lord looseth the prisoner; the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord preserveth the stranger" (Psalms 146:7; Psalms 146:9). If it were come to exchanging of crosses, I would not exchange my cross with any. I am well pleased with Christ, and He with me; I hope none shall hear us.<sup>[165]</sup> It is true for all this, I get my meat with many strokes, and am seven times a-day up and down, and am often anxious and cast down for the case of my oppressed brother; yet I hope the Lord will be surety for His servant. But now upon some weak, very weak experience, I am come to love a rumbling and raging devil best. Seeing we must have a devil to hold the saints waking, I wish a cumbersome devil, rather than a secure and sleeping one.<sup>[166]</sup> At my first coming hither, I took the dorts at Christ, and took up a stomach against Him; I said, He had cast me over the dike of the vineyard, like a dry tree. But it was His mercy, I see, that the fire did not burn the dry tree; and now, as if my Lord Jesus had done that fault, and not I (who belied my Lord), He hath made the first mends, and He spake not one word against me, but hath come again and quickened my soul with His presence. Nay, now I think the very annuity and casualties of the cross of Christ Jesus my Lord, and these comforts that accompany it, better than the world's set-rent. O how many rich off-fallings are in my King's house! I am persuaded, and dare pawn my salvation on it, that it is Christ's truth I now suffer for. I know His comforts are no dreams; He would not put His seal on blank paper, nor deceive His afflicted ones that trust in Him.

[164] Some editions read “dow,”—are not able.

[165] In Thomson’s edition this is explained by referring to Proverbs 14:10.

[166] “Trial of Faith,” p. 462, 1655, uses the same words. Your Ladyship wrote to me that ye are yet an ill scholar. Madam, ye must go in at heaven’s gates, and your book in your hand, still learning. You have had your own large share of troubles, and a double portion; but it saith your Father counteth you not a bastard; full-begotten bairns are nurtured (Hebrews 12:8). I long to hear of the child. I write the blessings of Christ’s prisoner and the mercies of God to him. Let him be Christ’s and yours betwixt you, but let Christ be whole play-maker. Let Him be the leader; and you the borrower, not an owner.

Madam, it is not long since I did write to your Ladyship that Christ is keeping mercy for you; and I bide by it still, and now write it under my hand. Love Him dearly. Win in to see Him; there is in Him that which you never saw. He is aye nigh; He is a tree of life, green and blossoming, both summer and winter. There is a nick in Christianity, to the which whosoever cometh, they see and feel more than others can do. I invite you of new to come to Him. “Come and see,” will speak better things of Him than I can do. “Come nearer” will say much. God never thought this world a portion worthy of you. He would not even you to a gift of dirt and clay; nay, He will not give you Esau’s portion, but reserves the inheritance of Jacob for you. Are ye not well married now? Have you not a good husband now? My heart cannot express what sad nights I have had for the virgin daughter of my people. Woe is me, for my time is coming. “Behold, the day, behold, the day is come; the morning hath gone forth, the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded, violence is risen up in a rod of wickedness, the sun is gone down upon our prophets.” A dry wind upon Scotland, but neither to fan nor to cleanse; but out of all question, when the Lord hath cut down the forest, the aftergrowth of Lebanon shall flourish; they shall plant vines in our mountains, and a cloud shall yet fill the temple. Now the blessing of our dearest Lord Jesus, and the blessing of him that is “separate from his brethren,” come upon you.

Yours, at Aberdeen, the prisoner of Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen.

## 071. To Mr. Hugh M'Kail, Minister of Irvine.—Christ to be Trusted amid Trial

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71.—To Mr. Hugh M'Kail.

[Mr. Hugh M'Kail was at this time minister of Irvine. Previous to his settlement in that parish, Rutherford was very desirous of seeing him settled assistant and successor to Mr. Robert Glendinning, the aged minister of Kirkcudbright; the people too had an eye to him, but were disappointed, having been anticipated by the parish of which he was now pastor. He and Mr. William Cockburn were appointed by the General Assembly of 1644 to visit the north of Ireland for three months, with the view of promoting the interests of the Presbyterian Church in that country. He was ultimately translated to Edinburgh. In the unhappy controversy between the Resolutioners and Protesters, M'Kail took the side of the former; but was among the more moderate of the party. Baillie often refers to him in his letters. He died in the beginning of the year 1660, and was buried in the Greyfriars' churchyard, Edinburgh. (Lamont's "Diary," p. 121.) He was the brother of Mr. Matthew M'Kail of Bothwell, who was the father of the youthful Hugh M'Kail, and young Hugh, who nobly suffered in 1666, was educated in Edinburgh, under the superintendence of this uncle.] (CHRIST TO BE TRUSTED AMID TRIAL.)

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I thank you for your letter. I cannot but show you, that as I never expected anything from Christ, but much good and kindness, so He hath made me to find it in the house of my pilgrimage. And believe me, brother, I give it to you under mine own hand-writ, that whoso looketh to the white side of Christ's cross, and can take it up handsomely with faith and courage, shall find it such a burden as sails are to a ship, or wings to a bird. I find that my Lord hath overgilded that black tree, and hath perfumed it, and oiled it with joy and consolation. Like a fool, once I would chide and plead with Christ, and slander Him to others, of unkindness. hor 167\_167" id="FNanchor 167\_167">ote 167\_167">[167] But I trust in God, not to call His glooms unkind again; for He hath taken from me my sackcloth; and I verily cannot tell you what a poor Joseph and prisoner (with whom my mother's children were angry) doth now think of kind Christ. I will chide no more, providing He will quit me all by-gones; for I am poor. I am taught in this ill weather to go on the lee-side of Christ, and to put Him in between me and the storm; and (I thank God) I walk on the sunny side of the brae. I write it that ye may speak in my behalf the praises of my Lord to others, that my bonds may preach. O if all Scotland knew the feasts, and love-blinks, and visits that the prelates have sent unto me! I will verily give my Lord Jesus a free discharge of all that I, like a fool, laid to His charge, and beg Him pardon, to the mends. God grant that in my temptations I come not on His wrong side again, and never again fall a raving against my Physician in my fever. hor 167\_167">[167] At one time I would have falsely charged Him with unkindness.

Brother, plead with your mother while ye have time. A pulpit would be a high feast to me; but I dare not say one word against Him who hath done it. I am not out of the house as yet. My sweet Master saith, I shall have house-room at His own elbow; albeit their synagogue will need force to cast me

out. A letter were a work of charity to me. Grace be with you. Pray for me. Your brother and  
Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Nov. 22, 1636.

## 072. To William Gordon of Robertson.—How Trials are Misimproved—The Infinite Value of Christ—D...

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72.—To William Gordon of Robertson.

[William Gordon of Robertson, in the parish of Borgue in Galloway, close to Knockbrev, was the father of William Gordon of Robertson, who joined with the Covenanters in the rising at Pentland in 1666, and was killed, “to the great loss of the country where he lived,” says Wodrow, “and his own family, his aged father having no more sons.” Mary, a daughter of this venerable old man, to whom this letter is addressed, suffered much for nonconformity at the hands of Claverhouse and his friends. She was married to John Gordon of Largmore (which is in Kells, near Kenmure Castle), who, in the battle at Pentland, was severely wounded, and, returning to his own house, died in the course of a few days. The old man did not long survive the death of his son and son-in-law; for, on the 8th of September 1668, Mary Gordon is retoured heir of William Gordon of Robertson, her father. In Kells churchyard, near the gate, there is a short epitaph: “Here lyes the corpse of Roger Gordon of Largmore, who dyed March 2, 1662, aged 72 years; and of John Gordon of Largmore his grandchild, who dyed January 6, 1667, of his wounds got at Pentland in defence of the Covenanted Reformation.”] (HOW TRIALS ARE MISIMPROVED—THE INFINITE VALUE of CHRIST—DESPISED WARNINGS.)

DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. So often as I think on our case, in our soldier’s night-watch, and of our fighting life in the fields, while we are here, I am forced to say, prisoners in a dungeon, condemned by a judge to want the light of the sun, and moon, and candle, till their dying day, are no more, nay, not so much, to be pitied as we are. For they are weary of their life, they hate their prison; but we fall to, in our prison, where we see little, to drink ourselves drunk with the night-pleasures of our weak dreams; and we long for no better life than this. But at the blast of the last trumpet, and the shout of the archangel, when God shall take down the shepherd’s tent of this fading world, we shall not have so much as a drink of water, of all the dreams that we now build on. Alas! that the sharp and bitter blasts on face and sides, which meet us in this life, have not learned us mortification, and made us dead to this world! We buy our own sorrow, and we pay dear for it, when we spend out our love, our joy, our desires, our confidence, upon an handful of snow and ice, that time will melt away to nothing, and go thirsty out of the drunken inn when all is done. Alas! that we inquire not for the clear fountain, but are so foolish as to drink foul, muddy, and rotten waters, even till our bed-time. And then in the Resurrection, when we shall be awakened, our yesternight’s sour drink and swinish dregs shall rift up upon us; and sick, sick, shall many a soul be then.

I know no wholesome fountain but one. I know not a thing worth the buying but heaven; and my own mind is, if comparison were made betwixt Christ and heaven, I would sell heaven with my blessing, and buy Christ. O if I could raise the market for Christ, and heighten the market a pound for a penny, and cry up Christ in men’s estimation ten thousand talents more than men think of Him! But they are cheapening Him,[168] and crying Him down, and valuing Him at their unworthy

halfpenny; or else exchanging and bartering Christ with the miserable old fallen house of this vain world. Or then they lend Him out upon interest, and play the usurers with Christ: because they profess Him, and give out before men that Christ is their treasure and stock; and in the mean time, praise of men, and a name, and ease, and the summer sun of the Gospel, is the usury they would be at. So, when the trial cometh, they quit the stock for the interest, and lose all. Happy are they who can keep Christ by Himself alone, and keep Him clean and whole till God come and count with them. I know that in your hard and heavy trials long since, ye thought well and highly of Christ; but, truly, no cross should be old to us. We should not forget them because years are come betwixt us and them, and cast them byhand as we do old clothes. We may make a cross old in time, new in use, and as fruitful as in the beginning of it. God is where and what He was seven years ago, whatever change may be in us. I speak not this as if I thought ye had forgotten what God did, to have your love long since, but that ye may awake yourself in this sleepy age, and remember fruitfully of Christ's first wooing and suiting of your love, both with fire and water, and try if He got His answer, or if ye be yet to give Him it. For I find in myself, that water runneth not faster through a sieve than our warnings slip from us; I have lost and casten byhand many summons the Lord sent to me; and therefore the Lord hath given me double charges, that I trust in God shall not rive me. I bless His great name, who is no niggard in holding-in crosses upon me, but spendeth largely His rods, that He may save me from this perishing world. How plentiful God is in means of this kind is esteemed by many one of God's unkind mercies; but Christ's cross is neither a cruel nor unkind mercy, but the love-token of a father. I am sure, a lover chasing us for our weal, and to have our love, should not be run away from, or fled from. God send me no worse mercy than the sanctified cross of Christ portendeth, and I am sure I should be happy and blessed.

Pray for me, that I may find house-room in the Lord's house to speak in His name. Remember my dearest love in Christ to your wife. Grace, grace be unto you.

[168] Bringing down the price, perhaps alluding to Zech. 11:31.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1636.

## 073. To Earlston, the Elder.—Satisfaction with Christ's Ways—Private and Public Causes of Sorrow

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73.—To Earlston, Elder.

“And they overcame the dragon by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.”—Revelation 12:11.

(CHRIST'S LIBERALITY—HIS OWN MISAPPREHENSIONS OF CHRIST.)

MUCH-HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to see you in paper, and to be refreshed by you. I cannot but desire you, and charge you to help me to praise Him who feedeth a poor prisoner with the fatness of His house. O how weighty is His love! O but there is much telling in Christ's kindness! The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, hath paid me my hundred-fold, well told, and one to the hundred. I complained of Him, but He is owing me nothing now. Sir, I charge you to help me to praise His goodness, and to proclaim to others my Bridegroom's kindness, whose love is better than wine. I took up an action against Christ, and brought a plea against His love, and libelled unkindness against Christ my Lord, and I said, “This is my death; He hath forgotten me.” But my meek Lord held His peace, and beheld me, and would not contend for the last word of flyting. And now He hath chided Himself friends with me. And now I see He must be God, and I must be flesh. I pass from my summons; I acknowledge He might have given me my fill of it, and never troubled Himself. But now He hath taken away the mask; I have been comforted; He could not smother His love any longer to a prisoner and a stranger. God grant that I may never buy a plea against Christ again, but may keep good quarters with Him. I want here no kindness,[169] no love-tokens; but O wise is His love! for, notwithstanding of this hot summer-blink, I am kept low with the grief of my silence. For His word is in me as a fire in my bowels; and I see the Lord's vineyard laid waste, and the heathen entered into the sanctuary: and my belly is pained, and my soul in heaviness, because the Lord's people are gone into captivity, and because of the fury of the Lord, and that wind (but neither to fan nor purge) which is coming upon apostate Scotland. Also I am kept awake with the late wrong done to my brother; but I trust you will counsel and comfort him. Yet, in this mist, I see and believe the Lord will heal this halting kirk, “and will lay her stones with fair colours, and her foundations with sapphires, and will make her windows of agates, and her gates carbuncles” (Isaiah 54:11-12). “And for brass He will bring gold.” He hath created the smith that formed the sword: no weapon in war shall prosper against us. Let us be glad and rejoice in the Lord, for His salvation is near to come. Remember me to your wife and your son John. And I entreat you to write to me. Grace, grace be with you.

[169] I have no want of.

Yours in his only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Dec. 30, 1636.

## 074. To Lady Culross.—Suspicious of God's Ways—God's Ways always Right—Grace Grows under Trial

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74.—To the Lady Culross.

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”—Revelation 7:14.

(HIS OWN MISCONCEPTION OF CHRIST’S WAYS—CHRIST’S KINDNESS.)

MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you. I greatly long to be refreshed with your letter. I am now (all honour and glory to the King eternal, immortal, and invisible!) in better terms with Christ than I was. I, like a fool, summoned my Husband and Lord, and libelled unkindness against Him; but now I pass from that foolish pursuit; I give over the plea. He is God, and I am man. I was loosing a fast stone, and digging at the ground-stone, the love of my Lord, to shake and unsettle it. But, God be thanked, it is fast; all is sure. In my prison He hath shown me daylight; He dought not hide His love any longer. Christ was disguised and masked, and I apprehended it was not He; but He hath said, “It is I, be not afraid;” and now His love is better than wine. O that all the virgins had part of the Bridegroom’s love whereupon He maketh me to feed. Help me to praise. I charge you, Madam, help me to pay praises; and tell others, the daughters of Jerusalem, how kind Christ is to a poor prisoner. He hath paid me my hundred-fold; it is well told me, and one to the hundred. I am nothing behind with Christ. Let not fools, because of their lazy and soft flesh, raise a slander and an ill report upon the cross of Christ. It is sweeter than fair.

I see grace groweth best in winter. This poor persecuted kirk, this lily amongst the thorns, shall blossom, and laugh upon the gardener; the husbandman’s blessing shall light upon it. O if I could be free of jealousies of Christ, after this, and believe, and keep good quarters with my dearest Husband! for He hath been kind to the stranger. And yet in all this fair hot summer weather, I am kept from saying, “It is good to be here,”<sup>[170]</sup> with my silence, and with grief to see my mother wounded and her veil taken from her, and the fair temple casten down. My belly is pained, my soul is heavy for the captivity of the daughter of my people, and because of the fury of the Lord, and His fierce indignation against apostate Scotland. I pray you, Madam, let me have that which is my prayer here, that my sufferings may preach to the four quarters of this land; and, therefore, tell others how open-handed Christ had been to the prisoner and the oppressed stranger. Why should I conceal it? I know no other way how to glorify Christ, but to make an open proclamation of His love, and of His soft and sweet kisses to me in the furnace, and of His fidelity to such as suffer for Him. Give it me under your hand, that ye will help me to pray and praise; but rather to praise and rejoice in the salvation of God. Grace, grace be with you.

[170] My being silenced as to preaching, and my grief, keep me from saying.

Yours in his dearest and only, only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Dec. 30, 1636.

AYR.

## 075. To John Kennedy, Bailie of Ayr.—Longing after Discoveries of Christ—His Long-suffering—T...

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75.—To John Kennedy, Bailiffe (i.e. Bailie) of Ayr.

[John Kennedy was the son of Hugh Kennedy, Provost of Ayr. Hugh was an eminent Christian, and did much to promote the cause of religion in the place where he lived. John Welsh, minister of Ayr, bore this high testimony to him in a letter written to him in France: "Happy is that city, yea, happy is that nation that has a Hugh Kennedy in it. I have myself certainly found the answer of his prayers from the Lord in my behalf." On his death-bed, he was filled "with inexpressible joy in the Holy Ghost, beyond what it was possible to comprehend." (Wodrow, in his life of Boyd of Trochrig.) John, his son, possessed much of the spirit and character of his father. "He was," says Fleming ("Fulfilling of the Scriptures"), "as choice a Christian as was at that time." The same writer records a remarkable escape from imminent peril at sea which Kennedy experienced; which may be the deliverance to which Rutherford refers in a subsequent letter. It happened thus: John Stewart, Provost of Ayr, another of Rutherford's correspondents, who had gone to France, having loaded a ship at Rochelle with various commodities for Scotland, proceeded to England by the nearest way, and thence to Ayr. After waiting a considerable time for the arrival of his vessel, he was told that it was captured by the Turks. This information, however, proved to be incorrect, for it at length arrived in the roads; upon hearing of which, Kennedy, an intimate friend of Stewart, was so overjoyed, that he went out to it in a small boat. But a storm suddenly arising, he was driven past the vessel, and the general belief of the onlookers from the shore was that he and his boat were swallowed up; indeed, the storm increased to such a degree of violence as to threaten even the shipwreck of the vessel. Deeply affected at the apprehended loss of his friend, Stewart shut himself up in entire seclusion for three days; but at the very time he had gone to visit Kennedy's wife under her supposed bereavement, Kennedy, who had been driven to another part of the coast, but had reached the land in safety, made his appearance, to the great joy of all. Kennedy was a member of the Scottish Parliament in the years 1644-5-6, for the burgh of Ayr, and is styled in the roll, "John Kennedy, Provost of Ayr." He was also a member of the General Assemblies of 1642-3-4-6 and 7, and his name appears among the ruling elders in the commission for the public affairs of the kirk in all these years. His brother Hugh (also an elder of the Church) was frequently a member of the General Assembly, and, as we learn from "Baillie's Letters," had an active share in the proceedings of the Covenanters during the reign of Charles I. There are lineal descendants of this family in Ayr at this day; one of them, like his ancestor, was lately Provost of the town.] (LONGING AFTER CLEARER VIEWS OF CHRIST—HIS LONG-SUFFERING—TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES.)

WORTHY AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to see you in this northern world on paper; I know it is not forgetfulness that ye write not. I am every way in good ease, both in soul and body; all honour and glory be to my Lord. I want nothing but a further revelation of the beauty of the unknown Son of God. Either I know not what Christianity is, or we

have stinted a measure of so many ounce weights, and no more, upon holiness; and there we are at a stand, drawing our breath all our life. A moderation in God's way is now much in request. I profess that I have never taken pains to find out Him whom my soul loveth; there is a gate yet of finding out Christ that I have never lighted upon. Oh, if I could find it out! Alas, how soon are we pleased with our own shadow in a glass! It were good to be beginning in sad earnest to find out God, and to seek the right tread of Christ. Time, custom, and a good opinion of ourselves, our good meaning, and our lazy desires, our fair shows, and the world's glistening lustres, and these broad passments and buskings of religion, that bear bulk in the kirk, is that wherewith most satisfy themselves. But a bed watered with tears, a throat dry with praying, eyes as a fountain of tears for the sins of the land, are rare to be found among us. Oh if we could know the power of godliness! This is one part of my case; and another is, that I, like a fool, once summoned Christ for unkindness, and complained of His fickleness and inconstancy, because He would have no more of my service nor preaching, and had casten me out of the inheritance of the Lord. And now I confess that this was but a bought plea, and I was a fool. Yet He hath borne with me. I gave Him a fair advantage against me, but love and mercy would not let Him take it; and the truth is, now He hath chided Himself friends with me, and hath taken away the mask, and hath renewed His wonted favour in such a manner that He hath paid me my hundred-fold in this life, and one to the hundred. This prison is my banqueting-house; I am handled as softly and delicately as a dawted child. I am nothing behind (I see) with Christ; He can, in a month, make up a year's losses. And I write this to you, that I may entreat, nay, adjure and charge you, by the love of our Well-beloved, to help me to praise; and to tell all your Christian acquaintance to help me, for I am as deeply drowned in His debt as any dyvour can be. And yet in this fair sun-blink I have something to keep me from startling, or being exalted above measure; His word is as fire shut up in my bowels, and I am weary with forbearing. The ministers in this town are saying that they will have my prison changed into less bounds, because they see God with me. My mother hath borne me a man of contention, one that striveth with the whole earth. The late wrongs and oppressions done to my brother keep my sails low; yet I defy crosses to embark me in such a plea against Christ as I was troubled with of late. I hope to over-hope and over-believe my troubles. I have cause now to trust Christ's promise more than His gloom.

Remember my hearty affection to your wife. My soul is grieved for the success of our brethren's journey to New England; but God hath somewhat to reveal that we see not. Grace be with you. Pray for the prisoner.

Yours, in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 1, 1637.

## 076. To Robert Gordon of Knockbreck.—Benefit of Affliction

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76.—To Robert Gordon of Knockbrex.

(BENEFIT OF AFFLICTION.) MY DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you.—I am almost wearying, yea, wondering, that ye write not to me: though I know it is not forgetfulness. As for myself, I am every way well, all glory to God. I was before at a plea with Christ (but it was bought by me, and unlawful), because His whole providence was not yea and nay to my yea and nay, and because I believed Christ's outward look better than His faithful promise. Yet He hath in patience waited on, whill I be come to myself, and hath not taken advantage of my weak apprehensions of His goodness. Great and holy is His name! He looketh to what I desire to be, and not to what I am. One thing I have learned. If I had been in Christ, by way of adhesion only, as many branches are, I should have been burnt to ashes, and this world would have seen a suffering minister of Christ (of something once in show) turned into unsavoury salt. But my Lord Jesus had a good eye that the tempter should not play foul play, and blow out Christ's candle. He took no thought of my stomach, and fretting and grudging humour, but of His own grace. When He burnt the house, He saved His own goods. And I believe that the devil and the persecuting world shall reap no fruit of me, but burnt ashes: for He will see to His own gold, and save that from being consumed with the fire.

Oh, what owe I to the file, to the hammer, to the furnace of my Lord Jesus! who hath now let me see how good the wheat of Christ is, that goeth through His mill, and His oven, to be made bread for His own table. Grace tried is better than grace, and it is more than grace; it is glory in its infancy. I now see that godliness is more than the outside, and this world's passments and their buskings. Who knoweth the truth of grace without a trial? Oh, how little getteth Christ of us, but that which He winneth (to speak so) with much toil and pains! And how soon would faith freeze without a cross! How many dumb crosses have been laid upon my back, that had never a tongue to speak the sweetness of Christ, as this hath! When Christ blesseth His own crosses with a tongue, they breathe out Christ's love, wisdom, kindness, and care of us. Why should I start at the plough of my Lord, that maketh deep furrows on my soul? I know that He is no idle Husbandman, He purposeth a crop. O that this white, withered lea-ground were made fertile to bear a crop for Him, by whom it is so painfully dressed; and that this fallow-ground were broken up! Why was I (a fool!) grieved that He put His garland and His rose upon my head—the glory and honour of His faithful witnesses? I desire now to make no more pleas with Christ. Verily He hath not put me to a loss by what I suffer; He oweth me nothing; for in my bonds how sweet and comfortable have the thoughts of Him been to me, wherein I find a sufficient recompense of reward!

How blind are my adversaries, who sent me to a banqueting-house, to a house of wine, to the lovely feasts of my lovely Lord Jesus, and not to a prison, or place of exile! Why should I smother my Husband's honesty, or sin against His love, or be a niggard in giving out to others what I get for nothing? Brother, eat with me, and give thanks. I charge you before God, that ye speak to others, and invite them to help me to praise! Oh, my debt of praise, how weighty it is, and how far run up!

O that others would lend me to pay, and learn me to praise! Oh, I am a drowned dyvour! Lord Jesus, take my thoughts for payments. Yet I am in this hot summer-blink with the tear in my eye; for (by reason of my silence) sorrow, sorrow hath filled me; my harp is hanged upon the willow-trees, because I am in a strange land. I am still kept in exercise with envious brethren; my mother hath borne me a man of contention.

Write to me your mind anent Y. C.: I cannot forget him; I know not what God hath to do with him:—and your mind anent my parishioners' behaviour, and how they are served in preaching; or if there be a minister as yet thrust in upon them, which I desire greatly to know, and which I much fear.

Dear brother, ye are in my heart, to live and to die with you. Visit me with a letter. Pray for me. Remember my love to your wife. Grace, grace be with you; and God, who heareth prayer, visit you, and let it be unto you according to the prayers of Your own brother, and Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 1, 1637.

## 077. To Lady Boyd.—Aberdeen—Experience of himself Sad—Taking Pains to win Grace

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77.—To myLady Boyd.

[Lady Boyd, whose maiden name was Christian Hamilton, was the eldest daughter of Thomas, first Earl of Haddington. She was first married to Robert, ninth Lord Lindsay of Byres, who died in 1616. She married for her second husband, Robert, sixth Lord Boyd, who died in August 1628. Lady Boyd was distinguished for piety, and a zealous Presbyterian. Livingstone gives her a place among “some of the professors in the Church of Scotland of his acquaintance, who were eminent for grace and gifts;” eulogizes her as “a rare pattern of Christianity, grave, diligent, and prudent;” and adds, “She used every night to write what had been the case of her soul all the day, and what she had observed of the Lord’s dealing.” He speaks of residing for some time, during the course of his ministry, in the house of Kilmarnock, with “the worthy Lady Boyd.” Some of her letters are given by Wodrow in his life of Boyd of Trochrig (pp. 166, 272.) She used to reside much at Badenheath, in the parish of Chryston, near Glasgow, and there John Livingston visited her.] (ABERDEEN—EXPERIENCE OF HIMSELF SAD—PRESSING FORWARDS.)

MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. The Lord hath brought me to Aberdeen, where I see God in few. This town hath been advised upon of purpose for me; it consisteth either of Papists, or men of Gallio’s naughty faith. It is counted wisdom, in the most, not to countenance a confined minister; but I find Christ neither strange nor unkind; for I have found many faces smile upon me since I came hither. I am heavy and sad, considering what is betwixt the Lord and my soul, which none seeth but He. I find men have mistaken me; it would be no art (as I now see) to spin small,hor 171\_171" id="FNanchor 171\_171">ote 171\_171">[171] and make hypocrisy a goodly web, and to go through the market as a saint among men, and yet steal quietly to hell, without observation: so easy is it to deceive men. I have disputed whether or no I ever knew anything of Christianity, save the letters of that name. Men see but as men, and they call ten twenty, and twenty an hundred; but O! to be approved of God in the heart and in sincerity is not an ordinary mercy. My neglects while I had a pulpit, and other things whereof I am ashamed to speak, meet me now, so as God maketh an honest cross my daily sorrow. And, for fear of scandal and stumbling, I must bide this day of the law’s pleading: I know not if this court kept within my soul be fenced in Christ’s name. If certainty of salvation were to be bought, God knoweth, if I had ten earths, I would not prig with God. Like a fool, I believed, under suffering for Christ, that I myself should keep the key of Christ’s treasures, and take out comforts when I listed, and eat and be fat: but I see now a sufferer for Christ will be made to know himself, and will be holden at the door as well as another poor sinner, and will be fain to eat with the bairns, and to take the by-board, and glad to do so. My blessing on the cross of Christ that hath made me see this! Oh! if we could take pains for the kingdom of heaven! But we sit down upon some ordinary marks of God’s children, thinking we have as much as will separate us from a reprobate; and thereupon we take the play and cry, “Holiday!” and thus the devil casteth water on our fire, and blunteth our zeal and care. But

I see heaven is not at the door; and I see, howbeit my challenges be many, I suffer for Christ, and dare hazard my salvation upon it; for sometimes my Lord cometh with a fair hour, and O! but His love be sweet, delightful, and comfortable. Half a kiss is sweet; but our dotting love will not be content with a right to Christ, unless we get possession; like the man who will not be content with rights to bought land, except he get also the ridges and acres laid upon his back to carry home with him! However it be, Christ is wise; and we are fools, to be browden and fond of a pawn in the loof of our hand. Living on trust by faith may well content us. Madam, I know your Ladyship knoweth this, and that made me bold to write of it, that others might reap somewhat by my bonds for the truth; for I should desire, and I aim at this, to have my Lord well spoken of and honoured, howbeit He should make nothing of me but a bridge over a water. Thus, recommending your Ladyship, your son, and children to His grace, who hath honoured you with a name and room among the living in Jerusalem, and wishing grace to be with your Ladyship, I rest. hor 171\_171">[171] Spin fine. Your Ladyship's in his sweetest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen.

## 078. To Lord Boyd.—Encouragement to Exertion for Christ's Cause

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78.—To my Lord Boyd.

[Robert, seventh Lord Boyd, was the only son of Robert, sixth Lord Boyd, by Lady Christian Hamilton, mentioned in the preceding letter. His father (who was cousin of the famous Robert Boyd of Trochrig, two miles from Girvan, and under whom he studied at Saumur) died in August 1628, at the early age of 33. Young Robert was served heir to his father the 9th of May 1629. His earthly course was, however, brief; for he died of a fever on the 17th of November 1640, aged about 24. He was married to Lady Anne Fleming, second daughter of John, second Earl of Wigtown. Lord Boyd warmly espoused the side of the Covenanters; and though not a member of the General Assembly held at Glasgow in 1638, he attended its meetings and took a deep interest in its proceedings.] (ENCOURAGEMENT TO EXERTION FOR CHRIST'S CAUSE.) MY VERY HONOURABLE AND GOOD LORD,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to your Lordship. Out of the worthy report that I hear of your Lordship's zeal for this borne-down and oppressed Gospel, I am bold to write to your Lordship, beseeching you by the mercies of God, by the honour of our royal and princely King Jesus, by the sorrows, tears, and desolation of your afflicted mother-Church, and by the peace of your conscience, and your joy in the day of Christ, that your Lordship would go on, in the strength of your Lord, and in the power of His might, to bestir yourself, for the vindicating of the fallen honour of your Lord Jesus. Oh, blessed hands for evermore, that shall help to put the crown upon the head of Christ again in Scotland! I dare promise, in the name of our Lord, that this will fasten and fix the pillars and the stakes of your honourable house upon earth, if you lend and lay in pledge in Christ's hand, upon spiritual hazard, life, estate, house, honour, credit, moyen, friends, the favour of men (suppose kings with three crowns), so being that ye may bear witness, and acquit yourself as a man of valour and courage to the Prince of your salvation, for the purging of His temple, and sweeping out the lordly Diotrepheuses, time-courting Demases, corrupt Hymenæuses and Philetuses, and other such oxen, that with their dung defile the temple of the Lord. Is not Christ now crying, "Who will help Me? who will come out with Me, to take part with Me, and share in the honour of My victory over these Mine enemies, who have said, We will not have this man to rule over us?" My very honourable and dear Lord, join, join (as ye do) with Christ. He is more worth to you and your posterity than this world's May-flowers, and withering riches and honour, that shall go away as smoke, and vanish in a night vision, and shall, in one half-hour after the blast of the archangel's trumpet, lie in white ashes. Let me beseech your Lordship to draw by the lap of time's curtain, and to look in through the window to great and endless eternity, and consider if a worldly price (suppose this little round clay globe of this ashy and dirty earth, the dying idol of the fools of this world, were all your own) can be given for one smile of Christ's God-like and soul-ravishing countenance. In that day when so many joints and knees of thousand thousands wailing shall stand before Christ, trembling, shouting, and making their prayers to hills and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of the Lamb, oh, how many would sell lordships and kingdoms that day, and buy Christ! But, oh, the market shall be closed and ended ere then! Your Lordship hath now a blessed venture of winning court with the

Prince of the kings of the earth. He Himself weeping; truth borne down and fallen in the streets, and an oppressed Gospel; Christ's bride with watery eyes and spoiled of her veil, her hair hanging about her eyes, forced to go in ragged apparel; the banished, alienated, and imprisoned prophets of God, who have not the favour of liberty to prophesy in sackcloth, all these, I say, call for your help. Fear not worms of clay; the moth shall eat them as a garment. Let the Lord be your fear; He is with you, and shall fight for you; and ye shall make the heart of this your mother-Church to sing for joy. The Lamb and His armies are with you, and the kingdoms of the earth are the Lord's. I am persuaded that there is not another gospel, nor another saving truth, than that which ye now contend for. I dare hazard my heaven and salvation upon it, that this is the only saving way to glory.

Grace, grace, be with your Lordship.

Your Lordship's at all respectful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 079. To Margaret Ballantine.—Value of the Soul, and Urgency of Salvation

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79.—To Margaret Ballantine.

[This name is not found among the people of the parish of Anwoth. Like John Laurie, Letter 175., she may have been some one at a distance.] (VALUE OF THE SOUL AND URGENCY OF SALVATION.)

MISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you.—It is more than time that I should have written to you; but it is yet good time, if I could help your soul to mend your pace, and to go more swiftly to your heavenly country. For truly ye have need to make all haste, because the inch of your day that remaineth will quickly slip away; for whether we sleep or wake, our glass runneth. The tide bideth no man. Beware of a beguile in the matter of your salvation. Woe, woe for evermore, to them that lose that prize. For what is behind, when the soul is once lost, but that sinners warm their bits of clay houses at a fire of their own kindling, for a day or two (which doth rather suffocate with its smoke than warm them); and at length they lie down in sorrow, and are clothed with everlasting shame! I would seek no further measure of faith to begin withal than to believe really and stedfastly the doctrine of God's justice, His all-devouring wrath, and everlasting burning, where sinners are burnt, soul and body, in a river and great lake of fire and brimstone. Then they would wish no more goods than the thousandth part of a cold fountain-well to cool their tongues. They would then buy death with enduring of pain and torment for as many years as God hath created drops of rain since the creation. But there is no market of buying or selling life or death there. O, alas! the greatest part of this world run to the place of that torment rejoicing and dancing, eating, drinking, and sleeping. My counsel to you is, that ye start in time to be after Christ; for if ye go quickly, Christ is not far before you; ye shall overtake Him. O Lord God, what is so needful as this, "Salvation, salvation!" Fy upon this condemned and foolish world, that would give so little for salvation! Oh, if there were a free market for salvation proclaimed in that day when the trumpet of God shall awake the dead, how many buyers would be then! God send me no more happiness than that salvation which the blind world, to their eternal woe, letteth slip through their fingers. Therefore, look if ye can give out your money (as Isaiah speaketh) (55: 2) for bread, and lay Christ and His blood in wadset for heaven. It is a dry and hungry bairn's part of goods that Esaus are hunting for here. I see thousands following the chase, and in the pursuit of such things, while in the meantime they lose the blessing; and, when all is done, they have caught nothing to roast for supper, but lie down hungry. And, besides, they go to bed, when they die, without a candle; for God saith to them, "This ye shall have at My hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow" (Isaiah 50:11). And truly this is as ill-made a bed to lie upon as one could wish; for he cannot sleep soundly, nor rest sweetly, who hath sorrow for his pillow. Rouse, rouse up, therefore, your soul, and ask how Christ and your soul met together. I am sure that they never got Christ, who were not once sick at the yolk of the heart for Him. Too, too many whole souls think that they have met with Christ, who had never a wearied night for the want of Him: but, alas! what richer are men, that they

dreamed the last night they had much gold, and, when they awoke in the morning, they found it was but a dream? What are all the sinners in the world, in that day when heaven and earth shall go up in a flame of fire, but a number of beguiled dreamers? Every one shall say of his hunting and his conquest, "Behold, it was a dream!" Every man in that day will tell his dream. I beseech you, in the Lord Jesus, beware, beware of unsound work in the matter of your salvation: ye may not, ye cannot, ye do not want Christ. Then after this day, convene all your lovers before your soul, and give them their leave; and strike hands with Christ, that thereafter there may be no happiness to you but Christ, no hunting for anything but Christ, no bed at night, when death cometh, but Christ. Christ, Christ, who but Christ! I know this much of Christ, that He is not ill to be found, nor lordly of His love. Woe had been my part of it for evermore, if Christ had made a dainty of Himself to me. But, God be thanked, I gave nothing for Christ. And now I protest before men and angels that Christ cannot be exchanged, that Christ cannot be sold, that Christ cannot be weighed. Where would angels, or all the world, find a balance to weigh Him in? All lovers blush when ye stand beside Christ! Woe upon all love but the love of Christ! Hunger, hunger for evermore be upon all heaven but Christ! Shame, shame for evermore be upon all glory but Christ's glory. I cry death, death upon all lives but the life of Christ. Oh, what is it that holdeth us asunder? O that once we could have a fair meeting!

Thus recommending Christ to you and you to Him, for evermore, I rest. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 080. To Marion M'Naught.—His Comfort under Tribulations, and the Prison a Palace

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80.—For Marion M'Naught.

(HIS COMFORT UNDER TRIBULATION, AND THE PRISON A PALACE.) MY DEARLY BELOVED SISTER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I complain that Galloway is not kind to me in paper. I have received no letters these sixteen weeks but two. I am well. My prison is a palace to me, and Christ's banqueting-house. My Lord Jesus is as kind as they call Him. O that all Scotland knew my case, and had part of my feast! I charge you in the name of God, I charge you to believe. Fear not the sons of men; the worms shall eat them. To pray and believe now, when Christ seems to give you a nay-say, is more than it was before. Die believing; die, and Christ's promise in your hand. I desire, I request, I charge your husband and that town, <sup>hor 173\_173" id="FNanchor 173\_173">ote 173\_173"></sup>[173] to stand for the truth of the Gospel. Contend with Christ's enemies; and I pray you show all professors whom you know my case. Help me to praise. The ministers here envy me; they will have my prison changed. My mother hath borne me a man of contention, and one that striveth with the whole earth. Remember my love to your husband. Grace be with you. <sup>hor 173\_173"></sup>[173] Kirkcudbright.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 3, 1637.

## 081. To Mr. John Meine (jun.).—Experience—Patient Waiting—Sanctification

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81.—To Mr. John Meine (Jun.).

[Mr. John Meine was the son of John Meine, merchant in Edinburgh, “a solid and stedfast professor of the truth of God.” His mother was Barbara Hamilton, a notice of whom see Letter 313. He was now, it would appear from an allusion in the close of this letter, a student of theology, with a view to the holy ministry. Halyburton on his deathbed spake of this letter as one in which was to be found “More practical religion than in a large volume.”] (EXPERIENCE—PATIENT WAITING—SANCTIFICATION.)

WORTHY AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I have been too long in answering your letter, but other business took me up. I am here waiting, if the fair wind will turn upon Christ’s sails in Scotland, and if deliverance be breaking out to this over-clouded and benighted kirk. O that we could contend, by prayers and supplications, with our Lord for that effect! I know that He hath not given out His last doom against this land. I have little of Christ, in this prison, but groanings, and longings, and desires. All my stock of Christ is some hunger for Him, and yet I cannot say but I am rich in that. My faith, and hope, and holy practice of new obedience, are scarce worth the speaking of. But blessed be my Lord, who taketh me, light, and clipped, and naughty, and feckless as I am. I see that Christ will not prig with me, nor stand upon stepping-stones; but cometh in at the broadside without ceremonies, or making it nice, to make a poor, ransomed one His own. O that I could feed upon His breathing, and kissing, and embracing, and upon the hopes of my meeting and His! when love-letters shall not go betwixt us, but He will be messenger Himself! But there is required patience on our part, till the summer-fruit in heaven be ripe for us. It is in the bud; but there be many things to do before our harvest come. And we take ill with it, and can hardly endure to set our paper-face to one of Christ’s storms and to go to heaven with wet feet, and pain, and sorrow. We love to carry a heaven to heaven with us, and would have two summers in one year, and no less than two heavens. But this will not do for us: one (and such a one!) may suffice us well enough. The man, Christ, got but one only, and shall we have two?

Remember my love in Christ to your father; and help me with your prayers. If ye would be a deep divine, I recommend to you sanctification. Fear Him, and He will reveal His covenant to you. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 5, 1637.

CARDONESS CASTLE.

## 082. To John Gordon of Cardoness, Elder.—Win Christ at all Hazards—Christ's Beauty—A Word to ...

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82.—To John Gordon of Cardoness, Elder.

[John Gordon of Cardoness, in the parish of Anwoth, was descended from Gordon of Lochinvar; but little is known concerning him. His name appears the first of 188 signatures attached to an unsuccessful petition of the elders and parishioners of Anwoth, presented to the Commission of the General Assembly 1638, for Rutherford being continued minister of that parish, when counter applications were made by the city of Edinburgh and the University of St. Andrews for the transference of his services. From Rutherford's letters to him, we learn that he was at this time far advanced in life. He was naturally a man of strong passions, by which it would appear he had, in the previous part of his life, been led astray. The old castle of Cardoness stands on a tongue of land, at the mouth of the river Fleet, about a mile from Gatehouse. It is built on a rocky height, overhanging the public road, and looking toward the bay. You see an old square-built tower, or fortalice, raising its grey head from among the tall trees that now surround it. Tradition tells of an old proprietor, that he was in league with Græme, the Border outlaw; and how, in consequence of his daring and God-defying deeds, the chief and his whole family perished in the Black Loch, a small loch in the parish of Anwoth, at Woodend, 26 ft. deep. Though not a descendant, John Gordon seems to have been a man of like strong passions with that old chieftain, till subdued by grace.] (WIN CHRIST AT ALL HAZARDS—CHRIST'S BEAUTY—A WORD TO CHILDREN.)

MUCH HONOURED SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I have longed to hear from you, and to know the estate of your soul, and the estate of that people with you.

I beseech you, Sir, by the salvation of your precious soul, and the mercies of God, to make good and sure work of your salvation, and try upon what ground-stone ye have builded. Worthy and dear Sir, if ye be upon sinking sand, a storm of death, and a blast, will lose Christ and you, and wash you close off the rock. Oh, for the Lord's sake, look narrowly to the work!

Read over your life, with the light of God's day-light and sun; for salvation is not casten down at every man's door. It is good to look to your compass, and all ye have need of, ere you take shipping; for no wind can blow you back again. Remember, when the race is ended, and the play either won or lost, and ye are in the utmost circle and border of time, and shall put your foot within the march of eternity, and all your good things of this short night-dream shall seem to you like the ashes of a bleeze of thorns or straw, and your poor soul shall be crying, "Lodging, lodging, for God's sake!" then shall your soul be more glad at one of your Lord's lovely and homely smiles, than if ye had the charters of three worlds for all eternity. Let pleasures and gain, will and desires of this world, be put over into God's hands, as arrested and fenced goods that ye cannot intromit with. Now, when ye are drinking the grounds of your cup, and ye are upon the utmost end of the last link of time, and old age, like death's long shadow, is casting a covering upon your days, it is no time to court this vain life, and to set love and heart upon it. It is near after-supper; seek rest

and ease for your soul in God through Christ.

Believe me, that I find it to be hard wrestling to play fair with Christ, and to keep good quarters with Him, and to love Him in integrity and life, and to keep a constant course of sound and solid daily communion with Christ. Temptations are daily breaking the thread of that course, and it is not easy to cast a knot again; and many knots make evil work. Oh, how fair have many ships been plying before the wind, that, in an hour's space, have been lying in the sea-bottom! How many professors cast a golden lustre, as if they were pure gold, and yet are, under that skin and cover, but base and reprobate metal! And how many keep breath in their race many miles, and yet come short of the prize and the garland! Dear sir, my soul would mourn in secret for you, if I knew your case with God to be but false work. Love to have you anchored upon Christ maketh me fear your tottering and slips. False under-water, not seen in the ground of an enlightened conscience, is dangerous; so is often falling, and sinning against light. Know this, that those who never had sick nights or days in conscience for sin, cannot have but such a peace with God as will undercoat and break the flesh again, and end in a sad war at death. Oh, how fearfully are thousands beguiled with false hide, grown over old sins, as if the soul were cured and healed!

Dear Sir, I always saw nature mighty, lofty, heady, and strong in you; and that it was more for you to be mortified and dead to the world, than for another common man. Ye will take a low ebb, and a deep cut, and a long lance, to go to the bottom of your wounds in saving humiliation, to make you a won prey for Christ. Be humbled; walk softly. Down, down, for God's sake, my dear and worthy brother, with your topsail. Stoop, stoop! it is a low entry to go in at heaven's gate. There is infinite justice in the party ye have to do with; it is His nature not to acquit the guilty and the sinner. The law of God will not want one farthing of the sinner. God forgetteth not both the cautioner and the sinner; and every man must pay, either in his own person (oh, Lord save you from that payment!), or in his cautioner, Christ. It is violence to corrupt nature for a man to be holy, to lie down under Christ's feet, to quit will, pleasure, worldly love, earthly hope, and an itching of heart after this farded and over-gilded world, and to be content that Christ trample upon all. Come in, come in to Christ, and see what ye want, and find it in Him. He is the short cut (as we used to say), and the nearest way to an outgate of all your burdens. I dare avouch that ye shall be dearly welcome to Him; my soul would be glad to take part of the joy ye should have in Him. I dare say that angels' pens, angels' tongues, nay, as many worlds of angels as there are drops of water in all the seas, and fountains, and rivers of the earth, cannot paint Him out to you. I think His sweetness, since I was a prisoner, hath swelled upon me to the greatness of two heavens. Oh for a soul as wide as the utmost circle of the highest heaven that containeth all, to contain His love! And yet I could hold little of it. O world's wonder! Oh, if my soul might but lie within the smell of His love, suppose I could get no more but the smell of it! Oh, but it is long to that day when I shall have a free world of Christ's love! Oh, what a sight to be up in heaven, in that fair orchard of the new paradise; and to see, and smell, and touch, and kiss that fair field-flower, that ever-green Tree of life! His bare shadow were enough for me; a sight of Him would be the earnest of heaven to me. Fy, fy upon us! that we have love lying rusting beside us, or, which is worse, wasting upon some loathsome objects, and that Christ should lie His lone. Wo, wo is me! that sin hath made so many madmen, seeking the fool's paradise, fire under ice, and some good and desirable things, without and apart from Christ. Christ, Christ, nothing but Christ, can cool our love's burning languor. O thirsty love! wilt thou set Christ, the well of life, to thy head, and drink thy fill? Drink, and spare not; drink love,

and be drunken with Christ! Nay, alas! the distance betwixt us and Christ is a death. Oh, if we were clasped in other's arms! We should never twin again, except heaven twinned and sundered us; and that cannot be.

I desire your children to seek this Lord. Desire them from me, to be requested, for Christ's sake, to be blessed and happy, and to come and take Christ, and all things with Him. Let them beware of glassy and slippery youth, of foolish young notions, of worldly lusts, of deceivable gain, of wicked company, of cursing, lying, blaspheming, and foolish talking. Let them be filled with the Spirit; acquaint themselves with daily praying; and with the storehouse of wisdom and comfort, the good word of God. Help the souls of the poor people. O that my Lord would bring me again among them, that I might tell unco and great tales of Christ to them! Receive not a stranger to preach any other doctrine to them.

Pray for me, His prisoner of hope. I pray for you without ceasing. I write my blessing, earnest prayers, the love of God, and the sweet presence of Christ to you, and yours, and them. Grace, grace, grace be with you. Your lawful and loving pastor,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 083. To the Earl of Lothian.—Advice as to Public Conduct—Everything to be endured for Christ

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83.—To the Earl of Lothian.

[William, third Earl of Lothian, to whom this letter is addressed, was the eldest son of Robert, first Earl of Ancrum; and he acquired the title of Earl of Lothian by his marriage with Anne Ker, Countess of Lothian, by whom he succeeded to the estate and titles of Lothian in 1624. In 1638 he manifested great zeal for the Covenant. He was a member of the General Assembly which met at Glasgow that year, as elder for the Presbytery of Dalkeith. Hostilities having again commenced in 1640, his Lordship was in the Scottish army that invaded England, and defeated the Royalists at Newburn. In 1643 he was sent from Scotland by the Privy Council, with the approbation of Charles I. In 1644 he commanded, with the Marquis of Argyle, the forces sent against the Marquis of Montrose, whom he obliged to retreat, and then delivered up his commission to the Committee of Estates, who passed an act in approbation of his services. He was president of the Committee despatched by the Parliament to the King in December 1646, with their final propositions. He protested against the raising of an army in 1648 to rescue the King from the hands of the English, without receiving from His Majesty assurance that he would secure the religious liberties of his Scottish subjects,—an attempt which was called the “Engagement.” But while resisting the arbitrary measures of his prince, he was of sincere and ardent loyalty. No sooner was it known that the Parliament of England intended to proceed against Charles I. before the High Court of Justice, than he and other commissioners were sent, in name of the kingdom of Scotland, to remonstrate against their proceedings in regard to the sacred person of the king. He took a solemn protest against their proceedings, for which he was put under arrest, sent with a guard to Gravesend, and thence to Scotland. On his return he received the thanks of Parliament for his conduct on this occasion; and, along with the Earl of Cassillis, was despatched to Breda in 1650 to invite King Charles to Scotland. His Lordship died in the year 1675. By Anne, Countess of Lothian, he had five sons and nine daughters.] (ADVICE AS TO PUBLIC CONDUCT—EVERYTHING TO BE ENDURED FOR CHRIST.)

RIGHT HONOURABLE, AND MY VERY WORTHY AND NOBLE LORD,—Out of the honourable and good report that I hear of your Lordship’s good-will and kindness, in taking to heart the honourable cause of Christ, and His afflicted Church and wronged truth in this land, I make bold to speak a word on paper, to your Lordship, at this distance, which I trust your Lordship will take in good part. It is to your Lordship’s honour and credit, to put to your hand, as ye do (all honour to God!), to the falling and tottering tabernacle of Christ, in this your mother-Church, and to own Christ’s wrongs as your own wrongs. O blessed hand, which shall wipe and dry the watery eyes of our weeping Lord Jesus, now going mourning in sackcloth in His members, in His spouse in His truth, and in the prerogative royal of His kingly power! He needeth not service and help from men; but it pleaseth His wisdom to make the wants and losses, the sores and wounds of His spouse, a field and an office-house for the zeal of His servants to exercise themselves in. Therefore, my

noble and dear Lord, go on, go on in the strength of the Lord against all opposition, to side with wronged Christ. The defending, and warding of strokes off Christ's bride, the King's daughter, is like a piece of the rest of the way to heaven, knotty, rough, stormy, and full of thorns. Many would follow Christ, but with a reservation that, by open proclamation, Christ would cry down crosses, and cry up fair weather, and a summer sky and sun, till we were all fairly landed at heaven. I know that your Lordship hath not so learned Christ; but that ye intend to fetch heaven, suppose that your father were standing in your way, and to take it with the wind on your face; for so both storm and wind were on the fair face of your lovely Forerunner, Christ, all His way. It is possible that the success answer not your desire in this worthy cause. What then? duties are ours, but events are the Lord's; and I hope, if your Lordship, and others with you, will go on to dive to the lowest ground and bottom of the knavery and perfidious treachery to Christ of the accursed and wretched prelates, the Antichrist's first-born, and the first-fruit of his foul womb, and shall deal with our Sovereign (law going before you) for the reasonable and impartial hearing of Christ's bill of complaints, and set yourselves singly to seek the Lord and His face, that your righteousness shall break through the clouds which prejudice hath drawn over it, and that ye shall, in the strength of the Lord, bring our banished and departing Lord Jesus home again to His sanctuary. Neither must your Lordship advise with flesh and blood in this; but wink, and in the dark, reach your hand to Christ, and follow Him. Let not men's fainting discourage you; neither be afraid of men's canny wisdom, who, in this storm, take the nearest shore, and go to the lee and calm side of the Gospel, and hide Christ (if ever they had Him) in their cabinets, as if they were ashamed of Him, or as if Christ were stolen wares, and would blush before the sun. My very dear and noble Lord, ye have rejoiced the hearts of many, that ye have made choice of Christ and His Gospel, whereas such great temptations do stand in your way. But I love your profession the better that it endureth winds. If we knew ourselves well, to want temptations is the greatest temptation of all. Neither is father, nor mother, nor court, nor honour, in this over-lustred world with all its paintry and farding, anything else, when they are laid in the balance with Christ, but feathers, shadows, night-dreams, and straws. Oh, if this world knew the excellency, sweetness, and beauty of that high and lofty One, the Fairest among the sons of men, verily they would see, that if their love were bigger than ten heavens, all in circles beyond each other, it were all too little for Christ our Lord! I hope that your choice will not repent you, when life shall come to that twilight betwixt time and eternity, and ye shall see the utmost border of time, and shall draw the curtain, and look into eternity, and shall one day see God take the heavens in His hands, and fold them together, like an old holely garment, and set on fire this clay part of the creation of God, and consume away into smoke and ashes the idol-hope of poor fools, who think that there is not a better country than this low country of dying clay. Children cannot make comparison aright betwixt this life and that which is to come; and, therefore, the babes of this world, who see no better, mould, in their own brain, a heaven of their own coining, because they see no farther than the nearest side of time.

I dare lay in pawn my hope of heaven, that this reproached way is the only way of peace. I find it is the way that the Lord hath sealed with His comforts now, in my bonds for Christ; and I verily esteem and find chains and fetters for that lovely One, Christ, to be watered over with sweet consolations, and the love-smiles of that lovely Bridegroom, for whose coming we wait. And when He cometh, then shall the blacks and whites of all men come before the sun; then shall the Lord put a final decision upon the pleas that Zion hath with her adversaries. And as fast as time passeth away (which neither sitteth, nor standeth, nor sleepeth), as fast is our hand-breadth of this short

winter-night flying away, and the sky of our long-lasting day drawing near its breaking.

Except your Lordship be pleased to plead for me against the tyranny of prelates, I shall be forgotten in this prison; for they did shape my doom according to their new, lawless canons, which is, that a deprived minister shall be utterly silenced, and not preach at all; which is a cruelty, contrary to their own former practices.

Now, the only wise God, the very God of peace, confirm, strengthen, and establish your Lordship upon the stone laid in Zion, and be with you for ever. Your Lordship's at all respectful obedience in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 084. To Jean Brown.—The Joys of this Life embittered by Sin—Heaven an Object of Desire—Trial ...

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84.—To Jean Brown.

[Jean Brown was the mother of the well-known Mr. John Brown, minister of Wamphray in Annandale, who, after the restoration of Charles II., was ejected from his charge and banished from the King's dominions for his opposition to Prelacy. She was a woman of intelligence and piety.] (THE JOYS OF THIS LIFE EMBITTERED BY SIN—HEAVEN AN OBJECT OF DESIRE—TRIAL A BLESSED THING.)

MISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I long to hear how your soul prospereth. I earnestly desire your on-going toward your country. I know that ye see your day melteth away by little and little, and that in a short time ye shall be put beyond time's bounds; for life is a post that standeth not still, and our joys here are born weeping, rather than laughing, and they die weeping. Sin, sin, this body of sin and corruption embittereth and poisoneth all our enjoyments. O that I were where I shall sin no more! O to be freed of these chains and iron fetters, which we carry about with us! Lord, loose the sad prisoners! Who of the children of God have not cause to say, that they have their fill of this vain life? and, like a full and sick stomach, to wish at mid-supper that the supper were ended, and the table drawn, that the sick man might win to bed, and enjoy rest? We have cause to tire at mid-supper of the best messes that this world can dress up for us; and to cry to God, that He would remove the table and put the sin-sick souls to rest with Himself. O for a long play-day with Christ, and our long-lasting vacance of rest! Glad may their souls be that are safe over the frith, Christ having paid the fraught. Happy are they who have passed their hard and wearisome time of apprenticeship, and are now freemen and citizens in that joyful, high city, the New Jerusalem.

Alas! that we should be glad of and rejoice in our fetters, and our prison-house, and this dear inn, a life of sin, where we are absent from our Lord, and so far from our home. O that we could get bonds and law-suretyship of our love, that it fasten not itself on these clay-dreams, these clay-shadows, and worldly vanities! We might be oftener seeing what they are doing in heaven, and our hearts more frequently upon our sweet treasure above. We smell of the smoke of this lower house of the earth, because our hearts and our thoughts are here. If we could haunt up with God, we should smell of heaven and of our country above; and we should look like our country, and like strangers, or people not born or brought up hereaway. Our crosses would not bitehor 174\_174" id="FNanchor 174\_174">ote 174\_174">[174] upon us if we were heavenly-minded. I know of no obligation which the saints have to this world, seeing we fare but upon the smoke of it; and, if there be any smoke in the house, it bloweth upon our eyes. All our part of the table is scarce worth a drink of water; and when we are stricken, we dare not weep, but steal our grief away betwixt our Lord and us, and content ourselves with stolen sorrow behind backs. God be thanked that we have many things that so stroke us against the hair that we may pray, "God keep our better home, God bless our Father's house; and not this smoke, that bloweth us to seek our

best lodging." I am sure that this is the best fruit of the cross, when we, from the hard fare of the dear inn, cry the more that God would send a fair wind, to land us, hungered and oppressed strangers, at the door of our Father's house, which now is made, in Christ, our kindly heritage. Oh! then, let us pull up the stakes and stoups of our tent, and take our tent on our back, and go with our flitting to our best home; for here we have no continuing city. hor 174\_174">[174] Leave the mark of their teeth.

I am waiting in hope here, to see what my Lord will do with me. Let Him make of me what He pleaseth; providing He make glory to Himself out of me, I care not. I hope, yea, I am now sure, that I am for Christ, and all that I can or may make is for Him. I am His everlasting dyvour, and still shall be; for, alas, I have nothing for Him, and He getteth but little service of me! Pray for me, that our Lord would be pleased to give me houseroom, that I may serve Him in the calling which He hath called me unto. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 085. To John Kennedy, Bailie of Ayr.—The Reasonableness of Believing under all Affliction—Obl...

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85.—To John Kennedy, Bailie of Ayr.

(THE REASONABLENESS OF BELIEVING UNDER ALL AFFLICTION—OBLIGATIONS TO FREE GRACE.)

WORTHY AND WELL-BELOVED BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you.—I am yet waiting what our Lord will do for His afflicted Church, and for my re-entry to my Lord's house. O that I could hear the forfeiture of Christ (now casten out of His inheritance) recalled and taken off by open proclamation; and that Christ were restored to be a freeholder and a landed heritor in Scotland; and that the courts fenced in the name of the bastard prelates (their godfather, the Pope's, bailiffs and sheriffs) were cried down! Oh, how sweet a sight were it to see all the tribes of the Lord in this land fetching home again our banished King, Christ, to His own palace, His sanctuary, and His throne! I shall think it mercy to my soul, if my faith will out-watch all this winter-night, and not nod nor slumber till my Lord's summer-day dawn upon me. It is much if faith and hope, in the sad nights of our heavy trial, escape with a whole skin, and without crack or crook. I confess that unbelief hath not reason to be either father or mother to it,hor 175\_175" id="FNanchor 175\_175">ote 175\_175">[175] for unbelief is always an irrational thing; but how can it be, but that such weak eyes as ours must cast water in a great smoke, or that a weak head should not turn giddy when the water runneth deep and strong? But God be thanked that Christ in His children can endure a stress and a storm, howbeit soft nature would fall down in pieces. O that I had that confidence as to rest on this, though He should grind me into small powder, and bray me into dust, and scatter the dust to the four winds of heaven, that my Lord would gather up the powder, and make me up a new vessel again, to bear Christ's name to the world! I am sure that love, bottomed and seated upon the faith of His love to me, would desire and endure this, and would even claim and threep kindness upon Christ's strokes, and kiss His love-glooms, and both spell and read salvation upon the wounds made by Christ's sweet hands. O that I had but a promise made from the mouth of Christ, of His love to me! and then, howbeit my faith were as tender as paper, I think longing, and dwining, and greening of sick desires would cause it to bide out the siege till the Lord came to fill the soul with His love. And I know also, that in that case faith would bide green and sappy at the root, even at mid-winter, and stand out against all storms. However it be, I know that Christ winneth heaven in despite of hell. hor 175\_175">[175] Unbelief has not its origin inreason. But I owe as many praises and thanks to free grace as would lie betwixt me and the utmost border of the highest heaven, suppose ten thousand heavens were all laid above other. But oh! I have nothing that can hire or bud grace; for if grace would take hire, it were no more grace. But all our stability, and the strength of our salvation, is anchored and fastened upon free grace; and I am sure that Christ hath by His death and blood casten the knot so fast, that the fingers of the devils and hell-fulls of sins cannot loose it. And that bond of Christ (that never yet was, nor ever shall, nor can be registrated) standeth surer than heaven, or the days of

heaven, as that sweet pillar of the covenant whereon we all hang. Christ, with all His little ones under His two wings and in the compass or circle of His arms, is so sure, that, cast Him and them into the ground of the sea, He shall come up again and not lose one. An odd one cannot, nor shall, be lost in the telling. This was always God's aim, since Christ came into the play betwixt Him and us, to make men dependent creatures; and, in the work of our salvation, to put created strength, and arms and legs of clay, quite out of place, and out of office and court. And now God hath substituted in our room, and accepted His Son, the Mediator, for us and all that we can make. If this had not been, I would have skinked over and foregone my part of paradise and salvation, for a breakfast of dead, moth-eaten earth; but now I would not give it, nor let it go for more than I can tell. And truly they are silly fools, and ignorant of Christ's worth, and so full ill-trained and tutored, who tell Christ and heaven over the board for two feathers or two straws of the devil's painted pleasures, only lusted on the outer side. This is our happiness now, that our reckonings at night, when eternity shall come upon us, cannot be told. We shall be so far gainers, and so far from being super-expended (as the poor fools of this world are, who give out their money, and get in but black hunger), that angels cannot lay our counts, nor sum our advantage and incomes. Who knoweth how far it is to the bottom of our Christ's fulness, and to the ground of our heaven? Who ever weighed Christ in a pair of balances? Who hath seen the foldings and plies, and the heights and depths of that glory which is in Him, and kept for us? O for such a heaven as to stand afar off, and see, and love, and long for Him, whill time's thread be cut, and this great work of creation dissolved, at the coming of our Lord!

Now to His grace I recommend you. I beseech you also to pray for a re-entry to me into the Lord's house, if it be His good will.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 6, 1637.

## 086. To Lord Craighall.—Episcopalian Ceremonies—How to Abide in the Truth—Desire for Liberty ...

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86.—To my Lord Craighall.

[Sir John Hope, Lord Craighall, was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Hope (Lord Advocate of Scotland in the time of James VI. and Charles I.) His property, Craighall, is in the parish of Inveresk, near Edinburgh. Sir Thomas was the most eminent lawyer of his day, and was first brought into notice by the ability with which he defended the cause of John Forbes, John Welsh, and the other ministers who were tried for high treason at Linlithgow, on account of their holding a General Assembly at Aberdeen in 1605. Craighall is in the parish of Ceres, in Fife,[176] a fine old castellated ruin. John, second baronet, was admitted a Lord of Session 27th July 1632, and became President of the Court, and in 1645 was appointed one of the Privy Council. His name appears on the roll of members of the General Assemblies 1645-1649, and of the commissions which these Assemblies appointed. In Lamont's "Diary" we read (1659), "The Laird of Craighall, in Fyfe, departed out of this lyfe on Sabbath at nyght, and was interred at Ceres."]

[176] There is a village of Craighall near Inveresk, in the barony of Pinkie, which got its name from this family, just as there is an Earlston in Borgue parish, called from the old Earlston.

(EPISCOPALIAN CEREMONIES—HOW TO ABIDE IN THE TRUTH—DESIRE FOR LIBERTY TO PREACH CHRIST.) MY LORD,—I received Mr. L.'s[177] letter with your Lordship's and his learned thoughts in the matter of ceremonies. I owe respect to the man's learning, for that I hear him to be opposed to Arminian heresies. But, with reverence of that worthy man, I wonder to hear such popish-like expressions as he hath in his letter, as, "Your Lordship may spare doubtings, when the King and Church have agreed in the settling of such orders; and the Church's direction in things indifferent and circumstantial (as if indifferent and circumstantial were all one!) should be the rule of every private Christian." I only viewed the papers two hours' space, the bearer hastening me to write. I find the worthy man not so seen in this controversy as some turbulent men of our country, whom he calleth "refusers of conformity;" and let me say it, I am more confirmed in nonconformity, when I see such a great wit play the agent so slenderly. But I will lay the blame on the weakness of the cause, not on the meanness of Mr. L.'s learning. I have been, and still am confident, that Britain[178] cannot answer one argument, a scandal: and I longed much to hear Mr. L. speak to the cause; and I would say, if some ordinary divine had answered as Mr. L. doth, that he understood not the nature of a scandal; but I dare not vilify that worthy man so. I am now upon the heat of some other employment. I shall (but God willing) answer this, to the satisfying of any not prejudiced.

[177] Who is here meant cannot now be well ascertained. It may have been Mr. Loudian, of whom Baillie says, "He was an excellent philosophe, sound and orthodox, opposite to Canterbury's way, albeit too conform. I counselled oft Glasgow to have him for their Divinity Lecturer" ("Letters and Journals," i. 77).

[178] All the divines in Britain.

I will not say that every one is acquainted with the reason in my letter, from God's presence and bright shining face in suffering for this cause. Aristotle never knew the medium of the conclusion: and Christ saith few know it (Revelation 2:17). I am sure that conscience standing in awe of the Almighty, and fearing to make a little hole in the bottom for fear of under-water, is a strong medium to hold off an erroneous conclusion in the least wing, or lith, of sweet, sweet truth, that concerneth the royal prerogative of our kingly and highest Lord Jesus. And my witness is in heaven, that I saw neither pleasure, nor profit, nor honour, to hook me, or catch me, in entering into prison for Christ, but the wind on my face for the present. And if I had loved to sleep in a whole skin, with the ease and present delight that I saw on this side of sun and moon, I should have lived at ease, and in good hopes to fare as well as others. The Lord knoweth that I preferred preaching of Christ, and still do, to anything, next to Christ Himself. And their new canons took my one, my only joy, from me, which was to me as the poor man's one ewe, that had no more! And, alas! there is little lodging in their hearts for pity or mercy, to pluck out a poor man's one eye for a thing indifferent; i.e. for knots of straw, and things (as they mean) off the way to heaven. I desire not that my name take journey, and go a pilgrim to Cambridge, for fear I come into the ears of authority. I am sufficiently burnt already. In the mean time, be pleased to try if the Bishop of St. Andrews,[179] and Glasgow (Galloway's ordinary),[180] will be pleased to abate from the heat of their wrath, and let me go to my charge. Few know the heart of a prisoner; yet I hope that the Lord will hew His own glory out of as knotty timber as I am. Keep Christ, my dear and worthy Lord. Pretended paper-arguments from[181] angering the mother-Church (that can reel, and nod, and stagger), are not of such weight as peace with the Father, and Husband. Let the wife gloom, I care not, if the Husband laugh.

[179] John Spottiswoode.

[180] James Law, Bishop of Glasgow, was the deputy of Sydserff, the Bishop of Galloway.

[181] Arguments drawn from the risk of provoking.

Remember my service to my Lord your father, and mother, and lady. Grace be with you.

Yours at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 24, 1637.

## 087. To Elizabeth Kennedy.—Danger of Formality—Christ wholly to be Loved—Other Objects of Love

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87.—To Elizabeth Kennedy.

[Elizabeth Kennedy was the sister of Hugh Kennedy, Provost of Ayr, and a woman as eminent for piety and prayer as her brother. Wodrow records of her that, being much afflicted with the stone, she was advised to submit to a surgical operation. Several meetings for prayer took place among the godly at Ayr in reference to her case. When the surgeon came to perform the operation, one of these meetings was going on in the house, and they continued so long in prayer as nearly to exhaust his patience; but before they had concluded, the stone dissolved, and without surgical aid she obtained immediate relief. (Wodrow's "Analecta," vol. 2:)] (DANGER OF FORMALITY—CHRIST WHOLLY TO BE LOVED—OTHER OBJECTS OF LOVE.)

MISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—I have long had a purpose of writing unto you, but I have been hindered. I heartily desire that ye would mind your country, and consider to what airt your soul setteth its face; for all come not home at night who suppose that they have set their face heavenward. It is a woful thing to die, and miss heaven, and to lose house-room with Christ at night: it is an evil journey where travellers are benighted in the fields. I persuade myself that thousands shall be deceived and ashamed of their hope. Because they cast their anchor in sinking sands, they must lose it. Till now I knew not the pain, labour, nor difficulty that there is to win at home: nor did I understand so well, before this, what that meaneth, "The righteous shall scarcely be saved." Oh, how many a poor professor's candle is blown out, and never lighted again! I see that ordinary profession, and to be ranked amongst the children of God, and to have a name among men, is now thought good enough to carry professors to heaven. But certainly a name is but a name, and will never bide a blast of God's storm. I counsel you not to give your soul or Christ rest, nor your eyes sleep, till ye have gotten something that will bide the fire, and stand out the storm. I am sure, that if my one foot were in heaven, and if then He should say, "Fend thyself, I will hold my grips of thee no longer," I should go no farther, but presently fall down in as many pieces of dead nature.

They are happy for evermore who are over head and ears in the love of Christ, and know no sickness but love-sickness for Christ, and feel no pain but the pain of an absent and hidden Well-beloved. We run our souls out of breath and tire them, in coursing and galloping after our night-dreams (such are the rovings of our miscarrying hearts), to get some created good thing in this life, and on this side of death. We would fain stay and spin out a heaven to ourselves, on this side of the water; but sorrow, want, changes, crosses, and sin, are both woof and warp in that ill-spun web. Oh, how sweet and dear are those thoughts that are still upon the things which are above! and how happy are they who are longing to have little sand in their glass, and to have time's thread cut, and can cry to Christ, "Lord Jesus, have over; come and fetch the drearyhor 182\_182" id="FNanchor 182\_182">ote 182\_182">[182] passenger!" I wish that our thoughts were more frequently than they are upon our country. Oh, but heaven casteth a sweet smell afar off to

those who have spiritual smelling! God hath made many fair flowers; but the fairest of them all is heaven, and the Flower of all flowers is Christ. Oh! why do we not fly up to that lovely One? Alas that there is such a scarcity of love, and of lovers, to Christ amongst us all! Fie, fie, upon us, who love fair things, as fair gold, fair houses, fair lands, fair pleasures, fair honours, and fair persons, and do not pine and melt away with love to Christ! Oh! would to God I had more love for His sake! O for as much as would lie betwixt me and heaven, for His sake! O for as much as would go round about the earth, and over the heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens, and ten thousand worlds, that I might let all out upon fair, fair, only fair Christ! But, alas! I have nothing for Him, yet He hath much for me. It is no gain to Christ that He getteth my little, feckless span-length and hand-breadth of love. hor 182\_182">[182] Sorrowful.

If men would have something to do with their hearts and their thoughts, that are always rolling up and down (like men with oars in a boat), after sinful vanities, they might find great and sweet employment to their thoughts upon Christ. If those frothy, fluctuating, and restless hearts of ours would come all about Christ, and look into His love, to bottomless love, to the depth of mercy, to the unsearchable riches of His grace, to inquire after and search into the beauty of God in Christ, they would be swallowed up in the depth and height, length and breadth of His goodness. Oh, if men would draw the curtains, and look into the inner side of the ark, and behold how the fullness of the Godhead dwelleth in Him bodily! Oh! who would not say, "Let me die, let me die ten times, to see a sight of Him?" Ten thousand deaths were no great price to give for Him. I am sure that sick, fainting love would heighten the market, and raise the price to the double for Him. But, alas! if men and angels were roused, and sold at the dearest price, they would not all buy a night's love, or a four-and-twenty-hours' sight of Christ! Oh, how happy are they who get Christ for nothing! God send me no more, for my part of paradise, but Christ: and surely I were rich enough, and as well heavened as the best of them, if Christ were my heaven.

I can write no better thing to you, than to desire you, if ever ye laid Christ in a count, to take Him up and count over again: and weigh Him again and again: and after this have no other to court your love, and to woo your soul's delight, but Christ. He will be found worthy of all your love, howbeit it should swell upon you from the earth to the uppermost circle of the heaven of heavens. To our Lord Jesus and His love I commend you.

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 088. To Janet Kennedy.—Christ to be kept at every sacrifice—His incomparable Loveliness

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88.—To Janet Kennedy.

[This seems to be the wife of Mr. John Fergushill; see Letter 112.] (CHRIST TO BE KEPT AT EVERY SACRIFICE—HIS INCOMPARABLE LOVELINESS.)

MISTRESS,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. Ye are not a little obliged to His rich grace, who hath separated you for Himself, and for the promised inheritance with the saints in light, from this condemned and guilty world. Hold fast Christ, contend for Him; it is a lawful plea to go to holding and drawing for Christ; and it is not possible to keep Christ peaceably, having once gotten Him, except the devil were dead. It must be your resolution to set your face against Satan's northern tempests and storms, for salvation. Nature would have heaven to come to us while sleeping in our beds. We would all buy Christ, so being we might make price ourselves. But Christ is worth more blood and lives than either ye or I have to give Him. When we shall come home, and enter to the possession of our Brother's fair kingdom, and when our heads shall find the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back to pains and sufferings, then shall we see life and sorrow to be less than one step or stride from a prison to glory; and that our little inch of time-suffering is not worthy of our first night's welcome-home to heaven. Oh, what then shall be the weight of every one of Christ's kisses! Oh, how weighty, and of what worth shall every one of Christ's love-smiles be! Oh, when once He shall thrust a wearied traveller's head betwixt His blessed breasts, the poor soul will think one kiss of Christ hath fully paid home forty or fifty years' wet feet, and all its sore hearts, and light (2 Corinthians 4:17) sufferings it had in following after Christ! Oh, thrice-blinded souls, whose hearts are charmed and bewitched with dreams, shadows, feckless things, night-vanities, and night-fancies of a miserable life of sin! Shame on us who sit still, fettered with the love and liking of the loan of a piece of dead clay! Oh, poor fools, who are beguiled with painted things, and this world's fair weather, and smooth promises, and rotten, worm-eaten hopes! May not the devil laugh to see us give out our souls, and get in but corrupt and counterfeit pleasures of sin? O for a sight of eternity's glory, and a little tasting of the Lamb's marriage-supper! Half a draught, or a drop of the wine of consolation, that is up at our banqueting-house, out of Christ's own hand, would make our stomachs loathe the brown bread and the sour drink of a miserable life. Oh, how far are we bereaved of wit, to chafe, and hunt, and run, till our souls be out of breath, after a condemned happiness of our own making! And do we not sit far in our own light to make it a matter of bairn's play, to skink and drink over[183] paradise, and the heaven that Christ did sweat for, even for a blast of smoke, and for Esau's morning breakfast? O that we were out of ourselves, and dead to this world, and this world dead and crucified to us! And, when we should be close out of love and conceit of any masked and farded lover whatsoever, then Christ would win and conquer to Himself a lodging in the inmost yolk of our heart. Then Christ should be our night-song and morning-song; then the very noise and din of our Well-beloved's feet, when He cometh, and His first knock or rap at the door, should be as news of

two heavens to us. O that our eyes and our soul's smelling should go after a blasted and sun-burnt flower, even this plastered, fair-outsided world: and then we have neither eye nor smell for the Flower of Jesse, for that Plant of renown, for Christ, the choicest, the fairest, the sweetest rose that ever God planted! Oh, let some of us die to smell the fragrance of Him; and let my part of this rotten world be forfeited and sold for evermore, providing I may anchor my tottering soul upon Christ! I know that it is sometimes at this, "Lord, what wilt Thou have for Christ?" But, O Lord, canst Thou be budded, and propined with any gift for Christ? O Lord, can Christ be sold? or rather, may not a poor needy sinner have Him for nothing? If I can get no more, oh, let me be pained to all eternity, with longing for Him! The joy of hungering for Christ should be my heaven for evermore. Alas, that I cannot draw souls and Christ together! But I desire the coming of His kingdom, and that Christ, as I assuredly hope He will, would come upon withered Scotland, as rain upon the new-mown grass. Oh, let the King come! Oh, let His kingdom come! Oh, let their eyes rot in their eyeholes (Zechariah 14:12), who will not receive Him home again to reign and rule in Scotland. Grace, grace be with you.

[183] Drink the health of the buyer over the concluded bargain.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 089. To the Rev. Robert Blair.—God's Arrangements sometimes Mysterious

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89.—To my Well-beloved and Reverend Brother, Mr. Robert Blair.

[Mr. Robert Blair was born at Irvine in 1593. After completing his education at the College of Glasgow, he there held for several years the office of regent, during which time he was licensed as a probationer for the holy ministry. Having a strong desire to go to France, he was encouraged to this by M. Basnage, a French Protestant minister who visited Scotland in 1622. But Providence ordered his lot otherwise. He was induced to accept of the charge of Bangor, in Ireland, and was admitted in the year 1623. Here he laboured with great diligence and success; and there being in the same part of the country several other devout ministers, by mutual co-operation, they were instrumental in producing in the north of Ireland a change upon an ignorant and irreligious people, much resembling the effects of the preaching of the Gospel in the apostolic age. But this good work was not allowed to go on unopposed. In the autumn of 1631 he was suspended from his ministry by the Bishop of Down; in May 1632 he was deposed; and in November 1634 solemnly excommunicated; and all this simply for nonconformity. In these circumstances, he and some other ministers similarly situated, together with a considerable number of people, formed the purpose of going to New England, and actually embarked in 1636; but the tempestuous state of the weather forced them to return. He then came over to Scotland, and in 1638 became minister of Ayr, from which by a sentence of the General Assembly he was soon translated to St. Andrews, where he and Rutherford lived in the warmest friendship until the rise of the controversy between the Resolutioners and Protesters, which in some degree disturbed their mutual good understanding. Rutherford was a strong Protester: Blair regretted the extremes, as he conceived, to which both parties went; and, with Mr. James Durham of Glasgow, endeavoured to restore harmony between them, but without success. In 1661 he was summoned before the Privy Council for a sermon he had preached, in which he bore testimony to the covenanted Reformation, as well as against the defections of the times. He was sentenced to be confined to his own house, but afterwards permitted to retire to Musselburgh. He next removed to Kirkcaldy, and from thence to Meikle Couston, in the parish of Aberdour, where he died on the 27th of April 1666. (See Life of Robert Blair, issued by the Wodrow Society, 1848.)] (GOD'S ARRANGEMENTS SOMETIMES MYSTERIOUS.)

REVEREND AND DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, be unto you.

It is no great wonder, my dear brother, that ye be in heaviness for a season, and that God's will (in crossing your design and desires to dwell amongst a people whose God is the Lord) should move you. I deny not but ye have cause to inquire what His providence speaketh in this to you; but God's directing and commanding Will can by no good logic be concluded from events of providence. The Lord sent Paul on many errands for the spreading of His Gospel, where he found lions in his way. A promise was made to His people of the Holy Land, and yet many nations were in the way,

fighting against, and ready to kill them that had the promise, or to keep them from possessing that good land which the Lord their God had given them. I know that ye have most to do with submission of spirit; but I persuade myself that ye have learned, in every condition wherein ye are cast, therein to be content, and to say, "Good is the will of the Lord, let it be done." I believe that the Lord tacketh His ship often to fetch the wind, and that He purposeth to bring mercy out of your sufferings and silence, which (I know from mine own experience) is grievous to you. Seeing that He knoweth our willing mind to serve Him, our wages and stipend is running to the fore with our God, even as some sick soldiers get pay, when they are bedfast and not able to go to the field with others. "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength" (Isaiah 49:5). And we are to believe it shall be thus ere all the play be played. "The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon" (and the great whore's lovers), "shall the inhabitants of Zion say; and my blood be upon Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say." [184] And, "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: they that burden themselves with it shall be broken in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." [185] When they have eaten and swallowed us up, they shall be sick and vomit us out living men again; the devil's stomach cannot digest the Church of God. Suffering is the other half of our ministry, howbeit the hardest; for we would be content that our King Jesus should make an open proclamation, and cry down crosses, and cry up joy, gladness, ease, honour, and peace. But it must not be so; through many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of God. Not only by them, but through them, must we go; and wiles will not take us past the cross. It is folly to think to steal to heaven with a whole skin.

[184] Jeremiah 51:35.

[185] Zechariah 12:2-3. For myself, I am here a prisoner confined in Aberdeen, threatened to be removed to Caithness, because I desire to edify in this town; and am openly preached against in the pulpits in my hearing, and tempted with disputations by the doctors, especially by D. B. [186] Yet I am not ashamed of the Lord Jesus, His garland, and His crown. I would not exchange my weeping with the painted laughter of the fourteen prelates. At my first coming here I took the dorts at Christ, and would, forsooth, summon Him for unkindness. I sought a plea of my Lord, and was tossed with challenges whether He loved me or not; and disputed over again all that He had done to me, because His word was a fire shut up in my bowels, and I was weary with forbearing, because I said I was cast out of the Lord's inheritance. But now I see that I was a fool. My Lord miskent all, and did bear with my foolish jealousies; and miskent that ever I wronged His love. And now He has come again with mercy under His wings. I pass from my (oh witless!) summons: He is God, I see, and I am man. Now it hath pleased Him to renew His love to my soul, and to dawt His poor prisoner. Therefore, dear brother, help me to praise and show the Lord's people with you what He hath done to my soul, that they may pray and praise. And I charge you in the name of Christ, not to omit it. For this cause I write to you, that my sufferings may glorify my royal King, and edify His Church in Ireland. He knoweth how one of Christ's love coals hath burnt my soul with a desire to have my bonds to preach His glory, whose cross I now bear. God forgive you if you do it not; but I hope the Lord will move your heart, to proclaim in my behalf the sweetness, excellency, and glory of my royal King. It is but our soft flesh that hath raised a slander on the Cross of Christ: I see now the white side of it; my Lord's chains are all over-gilded. Oh, if Scotland and Ireland had

part of my feast! And yet I get not my meat but with many strokes. There are none here to whom I can speak; I dwell in Kedar's tents. Refresh me with a letter from you. Few know what is betwixt Christ and me.

[186] Dr Robert Baron, Professor of Divinity in the Marischal College of Aberdeen, one of the learned doctors of that city, whose dispute, in 1638, with Alexander Henderson, David Dickson, and Andrew Cant, on the subject of the Covenant, excited at the time so much attention.

Dear brother, upon my salvation, this is His truth that we suffer for. Christ would not seal a blank charter to souls. Courage, courage! joy, joy for evermore! Oh, joy unspeakable and glorious! O for help to set my crowned King on high! O for love to Him who is altogether lovely,—that love which many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown!

I remember you, and bear your name on my breast to Christ. I beseech you, forget not His afflicted prisoner. Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. Salute in the Lord, from me, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Livingstone, Mr. Ridge,[187] Mr. Colwart,[188] &c.

[187] Mr. John Ridge was an English minister, whom opposition to ceremonial impositions on conscience led to leave his native country for Ireland. He was admitted to the vicarage of Antrim on the 7th of July 1619, in which he laboured with success for many years; but being deposed by Henry Leslie, the Bishop of Down, for nonconformity, he came over to Irvine, where he died.

[188] Mr. Henry Colwart was also a native of England; and, like Mr. Ridge, left the land of his birth, and went to Ireland. He was admitted to the pastoral charge of Oldstone in 1630; but, being deposed by Bishop Leslie for refusing to submit to the innovations of Prelacy, he came over to Scotland, and was admitted minister of Paisley, where he died. Your brother, and fellow-prisoner,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 7, 1637.

## 090. To the Rev. John Livingstone.—Resignation—Enjoyment—State of the Church

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90.—To his Reverend and Dear Brother, Mr. John Livingstone.

[John Livingstone (the son of Alexander Livingstone, minister first at Monyabroch or Kilsyth, and afterwards at Lanark) was born at Monyabroch on the 21st of January 1603. At the College of Glasgow, he enjoyed the advantage of having as his regent for two years the famous Robert Blair, for whom he continued ever after to retain the highest veneration. He was first settled minister at Killinchie, in Ireland, towards the close of the year 1630, but had not laboured above twelve months in that charge when he was suspended by the Bishop of Down, for nonconformity. To enjoy religious liberty, he set out with Mr. Blair and others in their intended emigration to America; but, with the rest, was forced by the adverse state of the weather to return. Shortly after, he received calls from two parishes, Stranraer and Stewarton, but preferred the call from the former, and his induction took place on the 5th of July 1638. Here he continued in the assiduous discharge of his pastoral functions until 1648, when, by the sentence of the General Assembly, he was translated to the parish of Ancrum, in the Presbytery of Jedburgh. Upon the death of Charles I., he was sent to the Hague, and afterwards to Breda, as one of the commissioners from the Church of Scotland to treat with his son Charles II., whose character he had the penetration to discover. In the controversy between the Resolutioners and Protesters, Livingstone took the side of the latter, but was dissatisfied with the violence manifested by his party. After the restoration of Charles II., being summoned to appear before the Privy Council in 1662, he appeared; but, declining to engage to observe the anniversary of the death of Charles I., and to take the oath of allegiance in the precise way in which it was dictated to him, he was sentenced to quit his native land within two months. Having repaired to Rotterdam, he preached occasionally to the Scottish congregation there, and devoted the remainder of his life to the cultivation of Biblical literature. He died in that city on the 9th of August 1672, in the seventieth year of his age.

It was this same Livingstone that was so blessed in awakenings. By a sermon which he preached in 1630 at the Kirk-of-Shotts, on the Monday after the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, five hundred souls, it is believed, were converted. On a similar occasion, at Holywood, in the north of Ireland, in one day, he was the instrument of awakening double that number to inquiry after salvation. (See Brief Historical Relation of the Life of John Livingston in "Select Biographies," vol. 1.; Wodrow Society, 1845.)] (RESIGNATION—ENJOYMENT—STATE OF THE CHURCH.) MY REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to hear from you, and to be refreshed with the comforts of The Bride of our Lord Jesus in Ireland. I suffer with you in grief, for the dash that your desires to be at New England have received of late; but if our Lord, who hath skill to bring up His children, had not seen it your best, it would not have befallen you. Hold your peace, and stay yourselves upon the Holy One of Israel. Harken to what He hath said in crossing of your desires; He will speak peace to His people.

I am here removed from my flock, and silenced, and confined in Aberdeen, for the testimony of Jesus. And I have been confined in spirit also with desertions and challenges. I gave in a bill of quarrels, and complaints of unkindness against Christ, who seemed to have cast me over the dyke of the vineyard as a dry tree, and separated me from the Lord's inheritance; but high, high and loud praises be to our royal crowned King in Zion, that He hath not burnt the dry branch. I shall yet live, and see His glory. Your mother-Church, for her whoredom, is like to be cast off. The bairns may break their hearts to see such chiding betwixt the husband and the wife. Our clergy is upon a reconciliation with the Lutherans; and the Doctors are writing books, and drawing up a common confession, at the Council's command. Our Service Book is proclaimed with sound of trumpet. The night is fallen down upon the prophets! Scotland's day of visitation is come. It is time for the bride to weep, while Christ is a-saying that He will choose another wife. But our sky will clear again; the dry branch of cut-down Lebanon will bud again and be glorious, and they shall yet plant vines upon our mountains.

Now, my dear brother, I write to you for this end, that ye may help me to praise; and seek help of others with you, that God may be glorified in my bonds. My Lord Jesus hath taken the withered, dry stranger, and His prisoner broken in heart, into His house of wine. Oh, oh, if ye, and all Scotland, and all our brethren with you, knew how I am feasted! Christ's honey-combs drop comforts. He dineth with His prisoner, and the King's spikenard casteth a smell. The devil cannot get it denied that we suffer for the apple of Christ's eye, His royal prerogatives, as King and Lawgiver. Let us not fear or faint. He will have His Gospel once again rouped in Scotland, and have the matter going to voices, to see who will say, "Let Christ be crowned King in Scotland." It is true that Antichrist stirreth his tail; but I love a rumbling and raging devil in the kirk (since the Church militant cannot or may not want a devil to trouble her), rather than a subtle or sleeping devil. Christ never yet got a bride without stroke of sword. It is now nigh the Bridegroom's entering into His chamber; let us awake and go in with Him.

I bear your name to Christ's door; I pray you, dear brother, forget me not. Let me hear from you by a letter; and I charge you, smother not Christ's bounty towards me. I write what I have found of Him in the house of my pilgrimage. Remember my love to all our brethren and sisters there. The Keeper of the vineyard watch for His besieged city, and for you. Your brother, and fellow-sufferer,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 7, 1637.

## 091. To Mr. Ephraim Melvin.—Kneeling at the Lord's Supper a species of Idolatry

91.—To Mr. Ephraim Melvin.

[Ephraim Melvin, or Melville, was first ordained minister of Queensferry, and afterwards translated to Linlithgow, where he died. His ministry was signally blessed of God for bringing many to the saving knowledge of the truth, among whom were some who afterwards became eminent ministers of the Gospel in their day. One of these was the famous Mr. James Durham of Glasgow. Happening, with his pious wife, a daughter of the laird of Duntervie, to pay a visit to her mother, also a religious woman, in Queensferry, when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be observed in that place, his mother-in-law, upon the Saturday, desired him to go with her to hear sermon. Being then a stranger to true religion, he was disinclined to go, and said, with a tone of indifference, "that he had not come there to hear sermon;" but upon being pressed, to gratify his pious relative, he went. The discourse which he heard, though plain and ordinary, was delivered with an affection and earnestness that arrested the attention of Durham, and so impressed him, that on coming home he said to his mother-in-law, "Your minister preached very seriously, and I shall not need to be pressed to go to hear to-morrow." Accordingly he went, and Mr. Melvin, choosing for his text these words, "To you which believe, He is precious," 1 Peter 2:7, opened up the preciousness of Christ with such unction and seriousness, that it proved, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the means of his conversion. In that sermon he closed with Christ, and then took his seat at the Lord's Table, though to that day he had been an absolute stranger to believing. He was accustomed afterwards to call Mr. Melvin his father, when he spoke of him or to him. On another occasion, Mr. Melvin, by a sermon which he preached at Stewarton, when a probationer and chaplain to the excellent Lady Boyd, was the instrument of converting Mr. John Stirling in the fourteenth or sixteenth year of his age—one who proved a useful minister in his day, "Some say also," remarks Wodrow, "that he was a spiritual father to Mr. John Dury of Dalmeny, a man much esteemed of in his time, as having a taking and soaring gift of preaching, much like Mr. William Guthrie's gift." When Rutherford heard of Melvin's death, he is represented to have said, "And is Ephraim dead? He was an interpreter among a thousand." (Wodrow's "Anal.," vol. 3:)] (THE IDOLATRY OF KNEELING AT THE COMMUNION.)

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—I received your letter, and am contented, with all my heart, that our acquaintance in our Lord continue.

I am wrestling as I dōw, up the mount with Christ's cross: my Second is kind and able to help. As for your questions, because of my manifold distractions, and letters to multitudes, I have not time to answer them. What shall be said in common for that shall be imparted to you; for I am upon these questions. Therefore spare me a little, for the Service Book would take a great time. But I think; "Sicut deosculatio religiosa imaginis, aut etiam elementorum, est in se idololatria externa, etsi intentio deosculandi, tota, quanta in actu est, feratur in Deum πρωτοτυπ■v; ita, geniculatio coram pane, quando, nempe, ex instituto, totus homo externus et internus versari debeat circa

elementaria signa, est adoratio relativa, et adoratio ipsius panis. Ratio: Intentio adorandi objectum materiale, non est de essentiâ externæ adorationis, ut patet in deoscultatione religiosâ. Sic geniculatio coram imagine Babylonicâ est externa adoratio imaginis, etsi tres pueri mente intendissent adorare Jehovam. Sic, qui ex metu solo, aut spe pretii, aut inanis gloriæ, geniculatur coram aureo vitulo Jeroboami (quod ab ipso rege, qui nullâ religione inductus, sed libidine dominandi tantum, vitulum erexit, factitatum esse, textus satis luculenter clamat), adorat vitulum externâ adoratione. Esto quod putaret vitulum esse meram creaturam, et honore nullo dignum: quia geniculatio, sive nos nolumus, sive volumus, ex instituto Dei et naturæ, in actu religioso, est symbolum religiosæ adorationis. Ergo, sicut panis significat corpus Christi, etsi absit actus omnis nostræ intentionis; sic religiosa geniculatio, sublatâ omni intentione humanâ, est externa adoratio panis, coram quo adoramus, ut coram signo vicario et repræsentativo Dei." [As the religious homage done to an image, or even to elements, is in itself an external act of idolatry, in so far as the act is concerned, although the intention of such homage may be directed to God the Great First Cause,—so the act of kneeling to a piece of bread, seeing that, according to the ordinance, the whole man, internal and external, ought to be engaged in the elementary signs, is a relative act of worship and an adoration of the bread itself. The reason is: an intention to worship a material object is not of the essence of external adoration, as appears in a religious act of homage. Thus, the bending of the knee before the Babylonish image is an external act of worship, even though the three youths had no intention to worship any but the true God; and in like manner, those who, from fear or the hope of reward or vain-glory, bend the knee to Jeroboam's golden calf (which the text clearly enough proclaims to have been done by the king himself, from no religious motive but the mere desire to rule), do pay adoration to the calf by the external act, although, no doubt, they may suppose the calf a mere created object and unworthy of honour,—because the act of homage, whether we mean it or not, is, from the ordinance of God and nature, a symbol of worship. Therefore, as the bread denotes the body of Christ (even though that idea be not present to the mind), so in like manner, kneeling, when used as a religious service, is the external adoration of that bread, in presence of which we bow as before the delegated representative of God, be our intention what it may.][189]

[189] The Latin is to be accounted for as being an extract from some learned treatise. It is in substance what we find in Calderwood's "Altare Damascenum," p. 595.

Thus recommending you to God's tender mercy, I desire that you would remember me to God. Sanctification will settle you most in the truth.

Grace be with you, Brother in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 092. To Mr. Robert Gordon of Knockbreck.—Visits of Christ—The Things which Affliction Teaches

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92.—To Robert Gordon of Knockbreck.

(VISITS OF CHRIST—THE THINGS WHICH AFFLICTION TEACHES.) MY VERY WORTHY AND DEAR FRIEND,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. Though all Galloway should have forgotten me, I would have expected a letter from you ere now; but I will not expound it to be forgetfulness of me.

Now, my dear brother, I cannot show you how matters go betwixt Christ and me. I find my Lord going and coming seven times a day. His visits are short; but they are both frequent and sweet. I dare not for my life think of a challenge of my Lord. I hear ill tales, and hard reports of Christ, from The Tempter and my flesh; but love believeth no evil. I may swear that they are liars, and that apprehensions make lies of Christ's honest and unalterable love to me. I dare not say that I am a dry tree, or that I have no room at all in the vineyard; but yet I often think that the sparrows are blessed, who may resort to the house of God in Anwoth, from which I am banished.

Temptations, that I supposed to be stricken dead and laid upon their back, rise again and revive upon me; yea, I see that while I live, temptations will not die. The devil seemeth to brag and boast as much as if he had more court with Christ than I have; and as if he had charmed and blasted my ministry, that I shall do no more good in public. But his wind shaketh no corn. hor 190\_190" id="FNanchor 190\_190">ote 190\_190">[190] I will not believe that Christ would have made such a mint to have me to Himself, and have taken so much pains upon me as He hath done, and then slip so easily from possession, and lose the glory of what He hath done. Nay, since I came to Aberdeen, I have been taken up to see the new land, the fair palace of the Lamb; and will Christ let me see heaven, to break my heart, and never give it to me? I shall not think my Lord Jesus giveth a dumb earnest, or putteth His seals to blank paper, or intendeth to put me off with fair and false promises. I see that now which I never saw well before. (1.) I see faith's necessity in a fair day is never known aright; but now I miss nothing so much as faith. Hunger in me runneth to fair and sweet promises; but when I come, I am like a hungry man that wanteth teeth, or a weak stomach having a sharp appetite that is filled with the very sight of meat, or like one stupefied with cold under the water, that would fain come to land, but cannot grip anything casten to him. I can let Christ grip me, but I cannot grip Him. I love to be kissed, and to sit on Christ's knee; but I cannot set my feet to the ground, for afflictions bring the cramp upon my faith. All that I dow do is to hold out a lame faith to Christ, like a beggar holding out a stump, instead of an arm or leg, and cry, "Lord Jesus, work a miracle!" Oh, what would I give to have hands and arms to grip strongly, and fold heartsomely about Christ's neck, and to have my claim made good with real possession! I think that my love to Christ hath feet in abundance, and runneth swiftly to be at Him, but it wanteth hands and fingers to apprehend Him. I think that I would give Christ every morning my blessing, to have as much faith as I have love and hunger; at least, I miss faith more than love or hunger. hor 190\_190">[190] Does no harm.

(2.) I see that mortification, and to be crucified to the world, is not so highly accounted of by us as it should be. Oh, how heavenly a thing it is to be dead, and dumb, and deaf to this world's sweet music! I confess it hath pleased His Majesty to make me laugh at the children, who are wooing this world for their match. I see men lying about the world, as nobles about a king's court; and I wonder what they are all doing there. As I am at this present, I would scorn to court such a feckless and petty princess, or buy this world's kindness with a bow of my knee. I scarce now either hear or see what it is that this world offereth me; I know that it is little which it can take from me, and as little that it can give me. I recommend mortification to you above anything; for, alas! we but chase feathers flying in the air, and tire our own spirits for the froth and over-gilded clay of a dying life. One sight of what my Lord hath let me see within this short time is worth a world of worlds.

(3.) I thought courage, in the time of trouble for Christ's sake, a thing that I might take up at my foot. I thought that the very remembrance of the honesty of the cause would be enough. But I was a fool in so thinking. I have much ado now to win to one smile. But I see that joy groweth up in heaven, and it is above our short arm. Christ will be steward and dispenser Himself, and none else but He; therefore, now, I count much of one dramweight of spiritual joy. One smile of Christ's face is now to me as a kingdom; and yet He is no niggard to me of comforts. Truly I have no cause to say that I am pinched with penury, or that the consolations of Christ are dried up: for He hath poured down rivers upon a dry wilderness the like of me, hor 191\_191" id="FNAnchor 191\_191">ote 191\_191">[191] to my admiration; and in my very swoonings, He holdeth up my head, and stayeth me with flagons of wine, and comforteth me with apples. My house and bed are strewed with kisses of love. Praise, praise with me. Oh, if ye and I betwixt us could lift up Christ upon His throne, howbeit all Scotland should cast Him down to the ground! hor 191\_191">[191] Such as I am! My brother's case toucheth me near. I hope that ye will be kind to him, and give him your best counsel.

Remember my love to your brother, to your wife, and G. M. hor 192\_192" id="FNAnchor 192\_192">ote 192\_192">[192] Desire him to be faithful, and to repent of his hypocrisy; and say that I wrote it to you. I wish him salvation. Write to me your mind anent C. E. and C. Y., and their wives, and I. G., or any others in my parish. I fear that I am forgotten amongst them; but I cannot forget them. hor 192\_192">[192] All those whose initials are given are understood to have been parishioners of his at Anwoth. The prisoner's prayers and blessings come upon you. Grace, grace be with you. Your brother, in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 9, 1637.

## 093. To Lady Kenmure.—God's Dealings with Scotland—The Eye to be directed Heavenward

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93.—To the Honourable and truly Noble Lady, the Viscountess of Kenmure.

(GOD'S DEALINGS WITH SCOTLAND—THE EYE TO BE DIRECTED HEAVENWARD.)  
MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to your Ladyship.—I long to hear from you.

I am here waiting, if a good wind, long looked for, will at length blow into Christ's sails, in this land. But I wonder if Jesus be not content to suffer more yet in His members and cause, and in the beauty of His house, rather than He should not be avenged upon this land. I hear that many worthy men, who see more in the Lord's dealings than I can take up with my dim sight, are of a contrary mind, and do believe that the Lord is coming home again to His house in Scotland. I hope He is on His journey that way; yet I look not but that He will feed this land with their own blood, before He establish His throne amongst us.

I know that your honour is not looking after things here-away. Ye have no great cause to think that your stock and principal is under the roof of these visible heavens; and I hope that ye would think yourself a beguiled and cozened soul if it were so. I should be sorry to counsel your Ladyship to make a covenant with time, and this life; but rather desire you to hold in fair generals, and afar off from this ill-founded heaven that is on this side of the water. It speaketh somewhat when our Lord bloweth the bloom off our daft hopes in this life, and loppeth the branches off our worldly joys, well nigh the root, on purpose that they should not thrive. Lord, spill my fool's heaven in this life, that I may be saved for ever. A forfeiture of the saint's part of the yolk and marrow of short-laughing worldly happiness, is not such a real evil as our blinded eyes conceive.

I am thinking long now for some deliverance more than before. But I know I am in an error. It is possible I am not come to that measure of trial which the Lord is seeking in His work. If my friends in Galloway would effectually do for my deliverance, I should exceedingly rejoice; but I know not but the Lord hath a way whereof He will be the only reaper of praises.

Let me know with the bearer how the child is. The Lord be his father and tutor, and your only comforter. There is nothing here, where I am, but profanity and atheism. Grace, grace, be with your Ladyship. Your Ladyship's, at all obliged obedience, in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 13, 1637.

## 094. To Lady Kenmure.—The Times—Christ's Sweetness in Trouble—Longing after Him

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94.—To the Noble and Christian Lady, the Viscountess of Kenmure.

(THE TIMES—CHRIST'S SWEETNESS IN TROUBLE—LONGING AFTER HIM.)

MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I would not omit the occasion to write to your Ladyship with the bearer. I am glad that the child is well. God's favour, even in the eyes of men, be seen upon him!

I hope that your Ladyship is thinking upon these sad and woful days wherein we now live, when our Lord, in His righteous judgment, is sending the kirk the gate she is going to Rome's brothel-house to seek a lover of her own, seeing that she hath given up with Christ her Husband. Oh, what sweet comfort, what rich salvation, is laid up for those who had rather wash and roll their garments in their own blood, than break out 193\_193" id="FNanchor 193\_193">ote 193\_193">[193] from Christ by apostacy! Keep yourself in the love of Christ, and stand far aback from the pollutions of the world. Side not with these times; and hold off from coming nigh the signs of a conspiracy with those that are now come out against Christ, that ye may be one kept for Christ only. I know that your Ladyship thinketh upon this, and how you may be humbled for yourself and this backsliding land; for I avouch, that wrath from the Lord is gone out against Scotland. I think aye the longer the better of my royal and worthy Master. He is become a new Well-beloved to me now, in renewed consolations, by the presence of the Spirit of grace and glory. Christ's garments smell of the powder of the merchant, when He cometh out of His ivory chambers. Oh, His perfumed face, His fair face, His lovely and kindly kisses, have made me, a poor prisoner, see that there is more to be had of Christ in this life than I believed! We think all is but a little earnest, a four-hours, a small tasting, that we have, or that is to be had, in this life (which is true compared with the inheritance); but yet I know it is more: it is the kingdom of God within us. Wo, wo is me, that I have not ten loves for that one Lord Jesus; and that love faileth, and drieth up in loving Him; and that I find no way to spend my love desires, and the yolk of my heart upon that fairest and dearest One. I am far behind with my narrow heart. Oh, how ebb a soul have I to take in Christ's love! for let worlds be multiplied, according to angels' understanding, in millions, whill they weary themselves, these worlds would not contain the thousandth part of His love. Oh, if I could yoke in amongst the thick of angels, and seraphims, and now glorified saints, and could raise a new love-song of Christ, before all the world! I am pained with wondering at new-opened treasures in Christ. If every finger, member, bone, and joint, were a torch burning in the hottest fire in hell, I would that they could all send out love praises, high songs of praise for evermore, to that Plant of Renown, to that royal and high Prince, Jesus my Lord. But alas! His love swelleth in me, and findeth no vent. Alas! what can a dumb prisoner do or say for Him! O for an ingine to write a book of Christ and His love! Nay, I am left of Him bound and chained with His love. I cannot find a loosed soul to lift up His praises, and give them out to others. But oh! my day-light hath thick clouds; I cannot shine in His praises. I am often like a ship plying about to seek the wind; I sail at

great leisure, and cannot be blown upon that loveliest Lord. Oh, if I could turn my sails to Christ's right airth, and that I had my heart's wishes of His love! But I but mar His praises: nay, I know no comparison of what Christ is, and what His worth is. All the angels, and all the glorified, praise Him not so much as in halves. Who can advance Him, or utter all His praises? I want nothing; unknown faces favour me; enemies must speak good of the truth; my Master's cause purchaseth commendations. hor 193\_193">[193] Off, probably. The hopes of my enlargement, from appearances, are cold. My faith hath no bed to sleep upon but omnipotency. The good-will of the Lord, and His sweetest presence, be with you and that child. Grace and peace be yours. Your Ladyship's, in all duty in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 095. To Lady Kenmure.—Christ's Cross Sweet—His Coming to be Desired—Jealous of any Rival

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95.—To the Right Honourable and Christian Lady, the Viscountess of Kenmure.

(CHRIST'S CROSS SWEET—HIS COMING TO BE DESIRED—JEALOUS OF ANY RIVAL.)

MADAM,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to your Ladyship. I would not omit to write a line with this Christian bearer; one in your Ladyship's own case, driven near to Christ, in and by her affliction. I wish that my friends in Galloway forget me not. However it be, Christ is so good, I will have no other tutor, suppose I could have wale and choice of ten thousand beside. I think now five hundred heavy hearts for Him too little. I wish that Christ, now weeping, suffering, and contemned of men, were more dear and desirable to many souls than He is. I am sure that if the saints wanted Christ's cross, so profitable, and so sweet, they might, for the gain and glory of it, wish it were lawful either to buy or borrow His cross. But it is a mercy that the saints have it laid to their hand for nothing; for I know no sweeter way to heaven than through free grace and hard trials together; and one of these cannot well want another.

O that time would post faster, and hasten our looked-for communion with that fairest, fairest among the sons of men! O that the day would favour us and come, and put Christ and us into each other's arms! I am sure that a few years will do our turn, and the soldier's hour-glass will soon run out. Madam, look to your lamp, and look for your Lord's Coming, and let your heart dwell aloof from that sweet child. Christ's jealousy will not admit of two equal loves in your Ladyship's heart. He must have one, and that the greatest; a little one to a creature may and must suffice a soul married to Him. "Thy Maker is thine Husband" (Isaiah 54:5). I would wish you well, and my obligations these many years bygone speak no less to me; but more I can neither wish, nor pray, nor desire for your Ladyship, than Christ singled and waled out from all created good things, or Christ howbeit wet in His own blood, and wearing a crown of thorns. I am sure that the saints, at their best, are but strangers to the weight and worth of the incomparable sweetness of Christ. He is so new, so fresh in excellency every day of new, to those that search more and more in Him, as if heaven could furnish us as many new Christs (if I may so speak) as there are days betwixt Him and us; and yet He one and the same. Oh, we love an unknown lover when we love Christ!

Let me hear how the child is every way. The prayers of a prisoner of Christ be upon him. Grace for evermore, even whill glory perfect it, be with your Ladyship.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## 096. To Lady Kenmure.—Christ all Worthy—AnwothXCVI.—To the Noble and Christian Lady, the Visc...

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(CHRIST ALL WORTHY—ANWOTH.)

MADAM,—Notwithstanding the great haste of the bearer, I would bless your Ladyship on paper, desiring, that since Christ hath ever envied that the world should have your love by Him,hor 194\_194" id="FNanchor 194\_194">ote 194\_194">[194] that ye give yourself out for Christ, and that ye may be for no other. I know none worthy of you but Christ. hor 194\_194">[194] More than He; setting Him aside.

Madam, I am either suffering for Christ, and this is the sure and good way; or, I have done with heaven, and shall never see God's face, which, I bless Him, cannot be.

I write my blessing to that sweet child, that ye have borrowed from God. He is no heritage to you, but a loan; love him as folks do borrowed things. My heart is heavy for you.

They say that the kirk of Christ hath neither son nor heir, and therefore that her enemies shall possess her. But I know that she is not that ill-friended; her Husband is her heir, and she His heritage.

If my Lord would be pleased, I should desire that some be dealt with, for my return to Anwoth. But if that never be, I thank God Anwoth is not heaven; preaching is not Christ. I hope to wait on.

Let me hear how your child is, and your Ladyship's mind and hopes of him; for it would ease my heart to know that he is well.

I am in good terms with Christ; but oh, my guiltiness! Yet He bringeth not pleas betwixt Him and me to the streets, and before the sun.

Grace, grace for ever more be with your Ladyship. Your Ladyship's, at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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