

LETTER XV.

TO THE SAME.

London, February 28, 1809.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I LOVE you in the bowels of Christ Jesus, as you do me. You must shew it, by excusing the shortness of this note. I have not time for a long letter. I leave London, April 3, for Kent, where I expect to spend two weeks; then I return to Brixton, and pass over two Lord's-days; then I set off for Chard, and, if the Lord please, shall be there on the first Lord's-day in May. I send you the Sermons, and two dozen of new ones; they are two shillings each. If you can sell them, so much the better. I will give up the letter to your brother. If he cannot, I will do my utmost to get Hussey; only let us be at a point not to get two, when one will do. But you must not offer any such price for it. I doubt not but I may, by one means or another, gain it for you; but you must not be in a hurry about it. So it may be, with respect to Dr. Goodwin; but you must give me breathing time. I do not say I can, but I will try. But then let us understand each other. If Mr. Peck does, so let it be; if he does not, then let him drop it until I get into the country; for there is my seat of action.

My best respects, and most christian regard to the Doctor. Should I come to see you, I suppose it will not be till July. My love to all the friends.

Your's, most affectionately in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XVI.

 TO THE SAME.

London, April 28, 1809.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

WHY you are so kind to me I cannot say. Last night I received both your letters and notes, and will send off the books immediately. As to the Bible, I will do my best to get one for you. As to your friends, I hope to send or deliver your message to them. But I am just going off, therefore, I am all bustle, and have not one single moment to spare. I have preached this week already four times, and am to preach this evening, and twice to-morrow, and the following evening, and am to set off next Monday, so as to be at Chard the first Lord's-day in May; when there I will write to you. Therefore, you must expect nothing on this paper about our most precious Lord.

I will most assuredly pay you a visit. My present design is to stay at Chard until August, and then go to Exeter, Mary Church, Ashburton, and Plymouth; then go to Truro, and return back to you; and from thence set off for London.

Will you be pleased to send the book for Mr. Hodge, at Truro, by Mr. Clemo, if opportunity serve. Please to give one of the books on the Proverbs, to Mrs. Blamy, and one to friend Curtis; then you will have twenty-eight to account for, and two of the 'Spirit's Testimony.'

My best remembrance to the Doctor, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Butters, and her sister and all friends. The Lord himself bless you. I must close, although there seems to be something.

Jesus bless you. Amen.

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XVII.

 TO THE SAME.

Brixton, April 29, 1809.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your's, and the notes, and all is well. All that were received are sold, to the value of £6; so that you sent £4 too much. You gave me orders to send you some on the Proverbs; I have; so that when you have received and sold them, and paid the carriage, there will then remain about two pounds; so that then I have more than belongs to me. I have also bought you a Bible for the pocket, price ten shillings and sixpence; yet even all this does not bring the whole to equality. Well, keep this, and when I see you I will very readily settle with you. I sent off the books this week by Russell's waggon.

I am to set off on Monday for Reading, where I expect to preach on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings, and be at Chard by Saturday, to preach there on the first Lord's-day in May. I should be very greatly obliged, if you would enquire out that young man, the baker, whose name is Pomeroy, as, should I live to come to Plymouth, I have something to say unto him, which I doubt not will be pleasing. If you can give me any account of him in your next, and if his sisters are living, and where and what their circumstances are, do so; as I have my reasons for making these enquiries.

My very dear friend, I love you in the bowels of Jesus; and you are by all I can perceive to love most. Well, I believe you may as well have your way; it may be you think old men are growing into a want of affection; it may be so; yet I do esteem you, not so much as you do me, no indeed. Nor do I mean so to do; for I think you over-estimate such an old worthless worm. Well, our Jesus loves us both, and

he will to eternity. He cannot increase in love ; but he does increase in the realization of his love to my mind, and your's also. It seems to me he delights in it. I remember he spoke so long back as Jeremiah's time, and said concerning his church and people then, yea, "I will rejoice over them to do them good, with my whole heart and with my whole soul." You and I live, for Christ to prove the truth in us, and unto us.

I am well pleased with what you have written. I see great reason to bless the Lord on your behalf. We have lost nothing by the removal of our friend ; nor has she lost any thing by being removed from us. It suits on both sides ; for you and I to look more unto and esteem our Lord Jesus Christ the more ; and for her to enjoy Christ in a way she could not, so long as she was with us in the wilderness. I do long for the same change ; but good is the will of the word of the Lord, either to depart hence and be with Christ, or to remain in the body. It becomes us to submit to our Lord's will, to hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. Time runs on very swiftly ; we need not be impatient. The clock will now very soon strike for my dismissal. I am an independent man. I will tell you also my independence constitutes my blessedness. I will also tell you as a friend, what my independence consists in. It is in being wholly dependent on Christ, and in being perfectly well-pleased that in him should all fulness dwell. And surely I may well rest my everlasting all with him, he being the Saviour of my body and soul. He hath saved me in himself from all evil. I am under the protection of his most precious blood. I am wrapt up in his righteousness. He is my life. My life is in him. Sin and death cannot put any stop to it. As soon as I cease to breathe in air at my nostrils, I shall be ever with the Lord, to behold him face to face ; to see him as he is : so will you. Therefore, all is well with you, let things go as they will. Be exercised as you may, or with what you may, all is well ; because the Lord will not turn away from you from doing you good. Every thing you are in yourself fits you for Christ ; and when the Holy Spirit teaches you the blessed art to live wholly out of yourself upon the fulness of Christ, then you say, "All my springs, O Jesus, are in thee." To live in views of Christ is blessed ;

to have what we know of Christ realized in our minds by the Holy Ghost, is true blessedness. To live in communion with Jesus is the very essence of blessedness. Whilst, and when we thus live, we are truly happy; therefore we should guard against every thing which has the least tendency to lead us to look off Christ. It is only in Jesus real happiness is to be found; it is not even in ordinances, except we have communion with Christ in them; therefore, we should above all things value Christ's presence in them. May the Lord give you to live Christ more fully than you have ever yet done.

Do not you be afraid to trust Christ with the whole of your concerns; do not you be afraid to trust in him wholly for your everlasting salvation of body and soul; do not you fail of viewing and reviewing the life and death of Jesus. You are saved wholly upon the footing thereof. You are now in Christ what you will be in heaven to all eternity; you will never be more completely the object of the Father's everlasting love and complacency than you are this moment; he will never behold you more holy, righteous, and pure, than he does this instant in Christ Jesus; you will never be more perfectly united to Christ than you are now. May you live in the constant belief of this, then you will live Christ.

To live Christ, is to live in the full belief that God hath made Christ to be unto us, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; you will, as far as you thus live, triumph in Christ indeed. And it is your birthright so to do; for Christ, and all his salvation, and all the blessings of it belong to you, as much and as truly as any saint in glory. Therefore be not slack to praise him, and in praising him your faith will be strengthened, and you will increase in the knowledge of him, and this will endear him more and more unto you, and he will be increasingly precious unto you.

It is good for us to be always looking to, believing in, and living by the faith of the Son of God. It is well with us when Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. For whilst our minds are spiritually, properly, distinctly and truly exercised on him, he is then most truly our all: we cannot be more blessed, happy, and holy than at such seasons. We are at all seasons what our minds are; if Jesus is the subject of our thoughts, then they are spiritually influenced accord-

ing to the subject. I should be glad to have it to be as natural to think on Christ, as it is natural to be sinful ; and I think indeed it is as natural to the renewed mind, where Christ has been revealed from the word and by the Holy Spirit to it, to be exercised on him, as for the natural mind to be exercised on natural things. It is generally objected to this, that we have all in our fallen natures, which is opposite to all this ; we have, but the body of grace is as complete as the body of sin, and the Holy Ghost dwells in us to quicken every grace ; to put the whole into spiritual act ; to draw it all forth, to exercise it all on Christ Jesus. It is the very element of the new creature to live on Christ ; the new creature does not live on itself, or its own acts ; no, nor on any comforts neither. The whole being and the well-being of the new creature is in Christ.

When we live on Christ, we live out of ourselves, without thinking anything about ourselves. Neither interest in Christ, nor comforts flowing from Christ, are what faith is exercised on. The person of Jesus, the love of Jesus, the undertakings of Jesus, the incarnation of Jesus, the life of Jesus, the obedience of Jesus, the sacrifice, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, his love to us, and life in heaven for us, are what faith, true faith, gospel faith, that faith which is of the operation of the Spirit, is exercised on. Think on this ; if it be so, then all creature acts and affections towards Christ are nothing worth ; indeed they are not. We must be dead to self, and all which belongs to it, or we cannot live to Christ. We must know more of Christ than we do of sin and self, or we shall never renounce self and live above sin ; we must know the value and virtue of Christ's blood, or we shall never get above the guilt of sin ; we must get above the guilt of sin, or we shall never live above the love and power of sin. Say you to me, why I know all this ; well, then, I say, put it all into practice.

I have not seen your friends, and it may be shall not. I say it is too much money for the books, do not buy them so dearly. When you have them, you must not make them your Bible ; you may place them next, but you must not put them before ; if so, you will act wrong. I will write to a person in the country, and if the person will part with them, I think they will be less. Should you write to your

brother-in-law in London, you can defer it till you hear from me.

Now you know I shall not be in London when you receive this, but on my road to Chard. I think, if I can, to remain there until the end of July, then get to Mary Church the first Lord's-day in August, and so be with you on the second, and go from you to Truro, and return to you, and so go to London. I expect a gentleman and his wife will come down into Cornwall after me, and take me back to London with them.

My best love and remembrance to the Doctor, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Butters and her sister and all friends.

Your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Comb, St. Nicholas, June, 12, 1809.

MY VERY DEAR AND WELL-BELOVED FRIEND,

I AM sure I cannot tell wherein I have shewn so much love and regard for you, as you express gratitude. In my own view I am ten thousand talents in your debt, though I do think it will be best to quit scores and say nothing about it; as I am sure I shall never be able to get out of your debt. Does it not seem like putting me in remembrance of my bankruptcy, by giving me such an account of what you style your obligation to me, and my love to you? Well, poor people are constrained in many cases to be humble, and so let it be.

I have lately been in company, and had conversation with

a very particular friend of yours; and was admitted to know his mind concerning you, what his thoughts are of you. This was by giving me leave to peruse several letters which he had received from you, and of many more which he had immediately directed, and sent expressly to you. I first looked at the letters the friend had sent you, in which I find everything very kind and respectful; not one single reflection on you; all was really grace. He opened his very heart, and I never heard or read of any such friendship and love as this friend expressed. The delight he took in repeating your name, in mentioning every particular concerning you, as where you lived, how you lived, your family, your estate, your apparel, it was all so correctly stated, nothing could exceed it. Well, then I looked over some of the letters you had sent your friend, and many of them were truly excellent, insomuch that I found your friend was peculiarly pleased with them. Others wore a resemblance of some of yours to me; you dwelt too much upon compliment, was too humble where you could not have been too bold; so that I found these were not so acceptable to your friend, as the others were. Your friend's letters were all very accurately written, in the best writing and ink I ever saw; so I read them with a great deal of ease, and they are the sweetest I ever did read in my life. I began to think I should not wonder if you were high-minded; I thought if you read them over often, they would almost put you out of conceit with every body and thing, and that you would be riding abroad in a chariot every day; for I learnt from your friend that you are immensely rich, that you have an inheritance in reversion, which hangs but upon one single life, and that life is very precarious, and then you will enter and take possession of it, and all the world cannot keep you from it. Well, I was very well pleased with all this. Your friend also informed me, he had ordered servants to wait on you; that he most dearly loved you, that your company was always very acceptable to him; that he was so well acquainted with your voice, that he knew it in distinction from all others; that though he had a variety of friends, none of them had a greater place in his heart than you. And himself had but one fault to find in you, and what this was he gave me his mind freely concerning it; he said, you had

not an heart to live up to your income ; that your fortune was beyond what any one conceived ; he would be pleased if you were only disposed to make use of the income, if you did not choose the principal. Well, I was very well pleased with all your friend said both for you and against you.

I suppose you are beforehand with me. The friend is our Lord Jesus Christ ; your letters to him are your prayers ; his letters to you are the declarations of his grace and mercy ; and all the rest, having given you the key, I leave you to open and make use of.

I hope to set off on Monday, July 31 ; then get to Exeter, and be at Mary Church on the first Lord's day in August, and stay there a few days, and then get to Ashburton, and get to Plymouth, Saturday, August 13 ; then preach on the Lord's-day, and as often in the week as you please. Then stay all over the next Lord's day, and all that week until Saturday, August 27, and then set off for Truro, preach there four Lord's-days, and then return to you, and so proceed to London. I cannot do more for you ; I would if I could, therefore be content.

My very affectionate and christian regards to the Doctor. Mr. Brown feels himself much pleased the Doctor should remember him, and begs me to present his best respects to him. Mr. Hill's mother, of Chard, whose name was Pine when she lived at Exeter, and the Doctor was a child, was the means of preserving his life. Mrs. Brind, I feel for her ; tell her Jesus saith, "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." I feel for Mrs. Blamey ; I should be very glad if you would copy the following recipe for lunacy, and give it her.

For Lunacy.—Take three handfuls of fresh gathered ground ivy, do not wash, but rub it clean ; then put it into a piece of holland rag, and pound in a marble mortar. This should produce three table-spoonfuls of juice. Let the patient take it nine mornings, fasting, with an assafoetida pill every night to strengthen the nerves ; then drop it for nine mornings, and then take it again. Some pains must be used to bruise it, so as to get the juice out of it. Lady Huntingdon gave it in fifty-nine cases, and it was never known to fail, if strictly attended to. I knew one two years

past very bad, entirely recovered by it, through the blessing of God.

I have tried my friend about Goodwin and Hussey, but cannot get them. My respects to Mrs. Brind, Mr. and Mrs. Butters, and her sister and all friends.

I most sincerely thank you for the enquiry you have made, and will aim to see these persons when I am with you. If I could have a high stool placed in the Tabernacle pulpit to sit on, it would be very acceptable, as I have been forced to sit ever since I broke my arm; the higher the better, as the voice will be heard by the people the more easily. My time is so much occupied, that I cannot write more. We shall want Mr. Taylor's place for the sake of our Dock friends, therefore I will write a few lines to him, and you will be pleased to deliver it. My kind remembrance to all your family. I am very greatly obliged to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, and shall most gladly accept their very great kindness; my very best respects to him.

I am, your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XIX.

TO THE SAME.

Chard, July 16, 1809.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

I HOPE you will excuse my giving you the trouble of another letter. It is not to set anything aside. No; by the Lord's will I am to set off on the last day of July, and expect to be at Exeter on the first day of August, and with you on Saturday the 12th of August. But I write to inform

you, I have been with my friend, and can get Goodwin and Hussey for you. Remember this, it is for you, or your brother I get them, and the money will be £6 1s. Then there must be the expense of a box to pack them in, and you will after this have to pay the carriage. I mention all this, that the whole may be very clear to you. Now I cannot tell if you have them, as I wrote you before I could not get them; so you will be pleased to let me know immediately how I shall proceed. Would you also like Dr. Gill on the Canticles, or the whole of him on the Old and New Testaments, folio, £29 10s.? However, this is only to fill up the paper.

I shall be at Mary Church on the first Lord's-day in August; there I mean to remain until the Thursday following, and then go to Ashburton, and stay there the Friday, and set off for you on the next morning. Now it should be fixed where I am to be when I get to Plymouth; I suppose at Miss Lake's. There or any where else in Plymouth, as it will be most convenient, as there will be preaching all the day. I would have you observe it will be necessary to provide a stool for me to sit on in the pulpit, as I always sit to preach. It should be in the meeting on the Saturday evening, then I can get in and make trial how it suits me. I am not able to fill up the paper concerning our most precious Lord Jesus, because time will not admit, therefore you must excuse it. Let it be observed, I shall not be able to be with you more than the second and third Lord's-days in August, because I have been called off to Yeovil the past Lord's-day, and have promised to make it up here when I return. My love to all the friends.

The Lord himself bless you.

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XX.

 TO THE SAME.

London, Nov. 4, 1809.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

SINCE I came to London I sent you half a dozen of books of Sermons. The Lord is very good to me, I desire to express my gratitude to him; I therefore entreat you to gratify me in the following way. I dare say you have not sold them. I would wish you to send two of them to Mr. Tapley's, at Tor, directed for Mrs. Harvey, and her sister Mary Hinkson, as a token of gratitude for many civilities received. Be particular to know they have received them; then if you can sell the other four, send the money of them to Mary Hinkson, the same person before mentioned; she is lately a widow; her husband died in a French prison, and she has some children, three, I believe. Yet let this be done as secretly as possible. When I can spare anything, I like to give it in my own way. As soon as I can I will write to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson. But I am vastly busy. I have to request you will make my best respects to them, and all our friends, with Mrs. Brind, who is not the least in my estimation. There is a new edition of the Growth of Grace, price five shillings. My book, entitled, A Companion to the Lord's Table, in sheets, five shillings and sixpence; in boards, six shillings; a second volume of Letters, price three shillings; these are out of the press. You shall have a Companion to the Lord's Table, bound and sent you, as a keepsake, for I really love you. Well, if you can get me some customers, do, as it will be very acceptable; especially for the Lord's Supper book, and the Letters. Should you have sold the former Sermons, I would then send a volume to each of the persons before mentioned. My dear friend, I have plenty of employment. I have preached every week

since I came to London, six, and sometimes seven times. When you consider my time of life, it is wonderful. As it is all Christ, about and concerning him, I hope you will not think that he is out of my mind, although I have not as yet mentioned his most precious and adorable name. I live only for him; to write, to preach, to speak, to live, to glorify him. Yet, some things on this paper I wanted to mention, because I am getting into years. No one feels for me. I do not much want they should, as my constitution is very good, and I am well cared for, as the eye of my Christ is continually on me. He is my keeper, my blessing, my salvation, my God, my all. I do really intend to live more happy than I ever did all my days. I do not mean I can be happier in Christ, than I have already been a thousand, and a thousand, yea, ten thousand times over; but what I mean is, to improve upon it; as my time is so fast approaching. I mean to give myself no kind of uneasiness about anything which may possibly befall me, as the day or hour of death is fast approaching, when by means of the dissolution of the mortal body, the soul will be in a state in which it never yet was, and will be disencumbered from all mortality, and be with Christ, and see him face to face. It appears very often to me, no one out of heaven has more to bless Christ for than I have. I would say, I would to God, my friend, and all I love in the bowels of Jesus Christ, were almost, and altogether such as I am, except my corruptions, and being influenced by them at particular times, and being carried away with them, as I am. The Lord bless you for your love to me, for his name's sake. I hope the Bible suited you. To avoid mistakes, when I say, the Lord's Supper book is five shillings and sixpence in sheets, they are not stitched; therefore, should any like them so, it would be best to give orders for them to be bound, which will be an addition to the expense. I would the particulars of this letter may remain between us.

It has not been as yet in my power to hear the Doctor, but I hear well of him.

I remain, your's most sincerely,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXI.

 TO THE SAME.

London, Dec. 14, 1809.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

You are particularly so in my view and esteem. I received yours, dated Nov. 30, and am very greatly obliged to you for your attention to my request. As it respects the parcel of Sermons from Exeter, if you can sell them, do so; they are one shilling each. As to the parcel for Truro, send it as soon as you can, by the barge-man. The letter I left with you for Truro hath been safely received. I am very greatly obliged for the trouble you took about the certificate; there we will end it. I cannot tell what to make of it. Mr. Leek gave me three one pound notes, as from you. I received them, but cannot understand what is meant, as you do not at present owe me any thing. As to the Sermons he sent you, I had nothing to do with them. I am very greatly obliged by your order, and shall in a day or two send off a box directed for you, containing three dozen of the Companion for the Lord's Table; they are each six shillings. Three dozen of Letters; they are each three shillings. The former is £10 16s.; the Letters are £5 8s. I have sent five Growths of Grace; they are five shillings each. The other Sermons are seven shillings each. Now, my good friend, it is not that I want to put upon you. No, indeed; God forbid. But if you can sell any of them, or all of them, so much the better. Only do not trouble yourself about the matter. I am going down the hill. I wish I could retire before I close life. I have most certainly too much fatigue at my time of life; yet I see no great prospect, unless I pursue some violent measure. Well, I am in my Lord's hand; I have no cause to complain of him,

but great cause to complain of myself; and when I do, I am no gainer thereby. So there I will end that business; what is between us, is between us. As you say, it is with the Lord, so there we will leave that.

I never can make out why you should respect me so. Indeed, I am more deeply indebted to you, than you ever were to me. But no matter, it is all of the Lord. I have neither had the pleasure of hearing or seeing the Doctor all the season of his being here. I really love him; but I can only shew it by praying for him, and you will say that is the best way. I hope you are daily getting out of yourself, and getting more into Christ, so as to be rooted, and settled, and grounded in him. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to keep us settled on Christ the foundation. Although there is so much preaching, they must have better eyes than I have, who see much fruit produced by it. People, with all they hear, still rest and centre in something of their own. Very few are favoured with any spiritual and supernatural views of the Lord Jesus, which fully proves they have never had a true gospel sight and view of Christ. If they had, they would be lifted off themselves, as well as lifted up above and beyond themselves. There is too much dwelling on creature acts. The longer I live, the more fully I am convinced salvation is all of grace. I am sure I should sink this very moment into everlasting despair, if I looked for any good in myself. I must live as a sinner believing on Jesus for salvation, and I must die as a sinner trusting wholly in Christ Jesus for everlasting life, or I can have no hope. The Lord be praised, I would not wish or pray to have any hope in myself. I am sure I shall never be pleased with myself, no, not in heaven. It is Christ in whom God is well-pleased; I am well-pleased now, and shall be well-pleased to all eternity. The Lord the Spirit help me to be looking out after more and fresh views of the glories of Christ, until I see him in his full glories in the heaven of heavens. It is a sight of the Lamb in the midst of the throne, will constitute my everlasting bliss and blessedness for ever and ever. Creature acts, comforts, and importance fade away and die, and will evermore expire, under these views of the subject. Here in our world, we

are so immersed and drenched in creature frames and feelings, that we scarcely get above them in any one thing. Oh, what a heaven it will be, to be delivered from self to eternity! We do find a little of this in real communion with our dear Lord now, and we shall find a real and continued heaven in this, when we behold our dear Lord, and enjoy communion with him in his glory. Oh, what will it be to be out of the body! I long for it. What will it be to be eternally delivered from the very inbeing of sin? I am sure in my view of it, this will be salvation indeed. Well, all I can say, I drag on, longing for the hour of my departure from this vale of tears. It is very comfortable that every day makes one the less. I am sure it will be everlasting life to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Well, the shadows of the evening are stretching out more and more with me, and I am truly glad of it. I would not have my time to go over again for ten thousand worlds. Not that I suspect Christ, as though I were to be continued by him for ever in a time-state he is not all-sufficient for me. No; that I do not mean. But the body, as a body, begins to be a clog. The exceeding sinfulness of my own nature is more and more seen, and I have such daily apprehensions thereof, as fill me with shame and confusion of face. The entire emptiness and vanity of the creature, and all creature enjoyments, are continually opening to my eyes. I see there is nothing but vanity in what is styled creature good—that I am sick at heart. Well, the Lord be magnified, time is ever on the wing. The moment must come when I shall die in my body, when I shall be separated from it, and lay it down, with all the sin and corruption in it, never more to be in it as a sinful body. Sure, when in faith we take a view of the evils we shall be delivered from by death, and at the article of dissolution, it is quite animating. The Lord be praised for interest in Christ, and salvation by him from every evil, and for the promise of being where he is, and for the going on fast with time towards the eternal inheritance. May all grace abound towards you. May great grace rest upon you. The Lord himself bless you in all things; and in blessing, may he bless you in giving you a sight and sense of his blessings, that you may have a real sense and relish of them.

I am, with the most sincere regard, your well-wisher in our common Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

P. S. The books were sent off yesterday, by Russell's waggon. My christian regards to all friends. Your book is bound; it is your's as a keepsake. I have also sent a book on the 'Lord's Supper' to Mr. Weeks; you will send it with my love; and also one to Mr. Peterbridge; please to send it him, with my respects to him, as his. The Lord be with you. Amen.

LETTER XXII.

TO THE SAME.

London, April 7, 1811.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

You are very high in my esteem; therefore all your kindness makes a real impression on my mind. I am sorry things remain yet unsettled; yet as you know and believe me to be your friend, I must say, do not enter into the married state before your matters are settled. Press it as much as possible. With respect to you and the people, surely I do not need any pressing to oblige you. No, indeed I do not. Yet I cannot do as I could wish. I must stay at Chard for one quarter of a year; yet I mean, if our Lord will, to visit you. I will leave my whole plan with you, but let it not reach London, at least not till I am out of it. I leave, by the Lord's permission, this place on Midsummer-day. I am to be at Yeovil on the last Lord's-day in June; at Chard, on the first Lord's-day in July. I mean to continue there until September; then, off for Truro. On the road thither, I shall,

by the Lord's will, call on you. All the time I am absent from Chard, I am to make up to them after my return. If I could spend one Lord's-day at Mary Church, and come from thence to you, and then set off on the Saturday, and return from Truro to you, I think this would be to save time. Then I hope to spend one Lord's-day with you on my return. So then I should oblige you all. I cannot promise more than this; yet may you be assured my heart is with you. It appeared to me it would be best for you to understand this, as you may also order your matters accordingly.

You have sent me £5; you owed me out of it for one half dozen of 'Growths of Grace'; they come to £1 10s., so that I am in your debt £3 10s. If you owe Mr. Castelden, say so, and I will pay him. I have nothing to do with him about the books; what is mine is one thing, what are his is another. I do not know what is between you both. I am very greatly obliged for sending the one pound note to Ann Smith, and if she is alive, if you would send her another I will very gladly repay it, and if you would send me £5 as lent, I will very honestly repay you when I see you. But if not convenient, do not you do it, as I am not distressed.

The book on the 'Last Week of our Lord's Life in his Incarnate State,' is in the press; it will be, I conceive, thicker than the last volume of Sermons; I cannot say what the price will be; I have taken in several one pound subscriptions, promising them only one book, yet if it will admit of two, they shall have them.

I am sorry I am not called upon to write you on your intended new state, as entered upon. Yet I must say I am glad you are not in it, as things are not settled, for I conceive if matters are not settled before, they never will after. Well, the Lord's time will most certainly be the best time. It is good therefore to be very easy in your own minds, to hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. All blessings, with every enjoyment, they are all best in the Lord's own time and way. I cannot but conceive our present times big with most awful events. I think our nation is positively ruined; therefore, lend none except where you have reason to expect it to be returned. Neither give to any, except there is a necessity for it. If you do, expect to smart; the Lord help you to live on the real belief of the truths of

the everlasting gospel, and the Lord realize them more in your mind than ever. I cannot but conceive the 18th chapter of the Revelation belongs to the city of London. If so, the destruction from the Almighty will come upon it. I give you the watchword. Christ says, "I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." When our Lord speaks thus, he is not speaking to saints; he is speaking of a church state. He speaks concerning unhinging a church from its outward form and order; he is speaking of, and to the people under a profession, in the present times in which we live; it is the Sardisian church which the Lord Christ thus addresses. May you keep very close to our Lord, then all will be well with you. Yet remember his word, for it will receive its accomplishment: "And seekest thou great things for thyself? I say unto thee, seek them not, for behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh." As you have trusted your whole salvation with the Lord Jesus Christ, and trusted on his person, righteousness, and sacrifice for your everlasting discharge from all your sin, guilt, pollution, and demerit for ever, it is very easy for you to trust all your time-concerns in his hand, and commit yourself and friend to him. And so far as you live in a simple dependence on him, and in a real belief of his truth, you will go on happily and successfully all the way to heaven. The worst times will then be as good and also as acceptable unto you as the best; because the more you are divinely constrained to live on Christ for all, the more you will be a gainer. All we want to make us perfectly happy in a time-state, is to live wholly independent of ourselves, and each other, and every creature, and to live entirely dependent on our Lord, who careth for us.

It appears to me all things in our nation are so many evidences of the ruin and fall thereof. I know it is an evil time, and the prudent will keep silence. Yet whilst I would keep my tongue, I would exercise my mind, that by comparing prophecies with providences, and providences with prophecies, I may, by looking to the Lord, draw some conclusions which may be profitable. Not that I am going to give myself any concern or uneasiness at what is coming on the earth; for the whole world, and kingdoms of it, are the Lord's, and he is the Governor among the people. It is with the Governor of

the world to dispose of it, and all in it, as seemeth good in his sight. May the Lord bless the Misses Hooper, and raise up from the grave, if it seem good unto him.

There is a gentleman and lady just arrived at Plymouth; the name is Idle, who, I conceive, will attend the Doctor's ministry. I do not conceive they know any thing at present of our Lord Jesus Christ savingly; yet I entertain some hope they are on the enquiry. If you thought fit, you could mention them to the Doctor. If he chose to call on them, he might make use of my name. I mentioned him to Mr. Wilson, when he said he should be quite happy to see him. You are to know he has been lately very ill, and I visited him. All I think is, if the Doctor or Mr. W. were to call on him, it might be of use to bring him, with the Lord's blessing, to attend to the things which concern his everlasting peace. I believe he is very rich.

If you please, give my very best respects to the Doctor, and Mr. W., and all our friends in Christ, not forgetting your very particular friend. I have a real sense of all past and present favours. May the Lord abundantly bless you and them for the same. You will not expect me to write again before I leave London. I have intentionally one keepsake in reserve for you, and when I see you, hope to commit it to your care. Then I believe I shall have finished all; for by the time I expect an interview with you, I shall be in the sixty-sixth year of my age; so that I am running on now very rapidly towards the full age of man, which is seventy, beyond which I have no expectation; and should it be shorter, or ever so near, it gives me no uneasiness. The Lord be with your spirit. Amen.

Your's, in Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXIII.

 TO THE SAME.

London, April 24, 1811.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

NONE of your friends could more sincerely and heartily rejoice at being informed you were entered into the marriage state than myself. I am truly thankful for it. I esteem you both very highly, and have sent many petitions to my Lord and your's, for your welfare. Thus all is well, we can add nothing to it; only it will be needful to go over the same ground again and again, because you will need the eye of Christ to be upon you, the heart of Christ open to you, the Lord Christ to be holding communion with you, until he is pleased to take you into his immediate presence in the state of glory. As nothing makes the state you are now in more pleasant than to have free intercourse with each other, without the least suspicion of each other, and nothing will sooner mar the pleasing communion you should each have one of the other, so neither should you ever admit of the least suspicion of your dear and most precious Lord Jesus. He is in every respect unchangeable: his love is not only infinite, but he has spoken out the whole and uttermost of his heart in his most holy word; it is the very index of his mind. Read, therefore, his heart in it; see what it is by what he says; never call it into question; let his word dwell richly in you, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; seek to grow into real knowledge and acquaintance with Christ, by the word of his grace; seek for increasing communion with Christ in the word. You can never know Christ but by the word; you can never know more of Christ than what is recorded of him in the word. I do value the Bible next to Christ himself; indeed I do. I am but a very poor disciple. I have to be thankful for what I have received. It is not

to me a matter of consequence how much I know of Christ, as knowing what I do, rightly, truly, and spiritually, from the word and by the Spirit. Blessed be his name, that in the knowledge of him consists eternal life; and in heaven we shall be completed in the knowledge of him, so as to see him face to face, and know as we are known. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you and your dear partner, and make you of one heart, and of one soul, in every thing, spiritually and temporally; then you will be truly happy in your married state. I would never have you do any one thing without your wife; a prudent wife is from the Lord. She is your other self, your nearest and dearest relation. No one is now so near and dear to you. There is a sense in which you cannot love and esteem her too much. She is your ornament and glory. The woman is the glory of the man. You have each of you a large share in my heart. I hope our Lord Jesus graced your marriage-day with his presence. I hope he will crown you every day with his blessing; then you will live together as heirs of life: so then your mutual prayers will not be hindered. Domestic happiness is an inestimable blessing. The marriage state is an holy and honourable one. You have a singular promise which belongs to us. It is one all-sufficient to carry you through life and death. The apostle has been addressing believers in a married state; saying, "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers, and adulterers, God will judge." Then he gives this advice to believers in a married state: "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The words are, as some of the learned tell us, 'I will never, never, never, leave thee. No, I will never, never forsake thee.' This promise is in a very particular manner applied by the apostle to married people. To which he adds, "so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me." I most earnestly intreat the Lord Jesus Christ most abundantly to bless you. My present to you both on this occasion is this, 'The blessing of the Lord be upon you.' It will be so. All I therefore mean is, that you may have such a spiritual sense and perception of it, as to see and know that ye are the blessed of the Lord which

made heaven and earth. I believe I have said enough on the subject.

I shall be very glad to accept your very kind invitation; not but I suppose I must go to the Gun Wharf. If I am to preach at your place, I conceive you would not like it should be there whilst the Doctor is engaged. Let everything concerning this be settled, and just as is convenient. I am very much obliged by what you sent, and hope to remit it you before the close of the summer. Now you will not hear again from me, unless I send you a few books on the Last Week of our Lord's Life, &c.; until I inform you when I expect to see you. May it be your happiness to receive into your bosom for all the great kindness you have from time to time done me. I do not find any one to me like yourself; that I must say; the simplicity, as well as the reality of your friendship, suits me to an hair's breadth. Whilst no one will say they perceive it, yet I most sensibly feel it, that my strength begins to fail. I have such nervous feelings as I never used to have; not on my spirits, but on the nerves. I know it is what I must expect. I am getting on in life, drawing on fast to the grave. I should be very glad if I could give up London. The place at Shoe Lane is enlarged; yet I do not think but my voice will be too low. I wish to give myself no concern about it, because it is the natural effect of old age. I wish everything to be so correct, as if I drop off no one thing concerning me might be unsettled; therefore I will put it down on this what is between you and me. You sent me £5, out of it I had to receive 30s.; then I owed you £3 10s.; since which you have sent for me £1 to Nanny Smith; so that I owe you £4 10s. Since which I have borrowed of you £5, which joined to the former makes the sum of £9 10s.; and this, as soon as I can I will send you. My good friend, I do not want you to give it me; no; I am in no want. I only want it for a purpose just now, and therefore do not want you to labour under any mistake about it. I would not wish you to say anything about it except to your spouse. When I thus express myself, it is not that I conceive you would with design expose me, yet as I do not want any manner of thing which is good, so I do not want people to contribute towards me, when I do not really need it.

I have opened my mind to you very freely; it is a part of friendship so to do. Let me be remembered by you at the throne. Remember me as in the body, as the subject of sin and sorrow; as having a variety of evils and enemies to withstand; as being under absolute necessity of being particularly reserved; as being bound to be almost always suspicious. I have lived to see the vanity and nothingness of the creature. I have many friends, yet I sometimes think not one who altogether suits me. No one enters into my case and feelings. I am a pilgrim; as such, I have the heart and the trials of one. Well, so it must be, until I drop preaching and writing, which I really believe is much nearer than expected. Well, so be it. The will of the Lord be done.

My very best respects to your dearly beloved wife. May great grace rest on you both.

I remain, your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Aug. 1, 1811.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

How shall I address you? Your kindness, and your partner's, have made a deep impression on my heart. May the Lord bless you with some special tokens of his love, as proving thereby how well pleased he is with you for your very great kindness unto me. My dear Sir, it is not that I can possibly accept of your and your dear partner's kindness, but yet it is the same as though I did. It is so in my sight, and more so in the Lord's. I can only add, I have often wondered, and still do, what you ever saw in me, or heard

from me, should so incline your hearts to me. Well so it is; and all the glory must be ascribed unto him, who is excellent in counsel, and wonderful in working.

As it respects the goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ towards me, I have been brought very low. In my own, and in the apprehension of my friends, very near breathing my last again and again. Through the abundant mercy of the most precious Lord Jesus Christ, I have been sustained in a way of believing in a very gracious manner. I have, in my own view, and that of others, been again and again just going to shoot the gulph, and been brought back again; yet I have found, when I thought I was in the very views of death, the Lord Jesus Christ all-sufficient for me. His everlasting efficacious life and death hath been found by me all-sufficient to bear me up in the immediate views of death; so I write. Blessed be his most dear and precious name, I have found it so for more than forty years. Why, death is not the greatest evil I ever feared! no. Sin hath been to me thousands of times more tremendous than either hell, death or damnation; yet views of the Lord Jesus Christ hath again and again lifted me off myself, and carried me off even sin itself to Christ Jesus, who was made sin and a curse, and hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and abolished the curse and death also.

My good friend, these words have been to me more than all contained in the Bible: "The blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth from all sin." My good friend, to be in God's sight everlastingly righteous, and clean through the most precious blood of Christ, is the best of blessings. To apprehend it spiritually is life everlasting; to take it into the mind is health and cure. I am, therefore, in all I say respecting this subject, aiming to declare our whole salvation is in Christ without us. That this salvation is ours in believing; and that we enjoy all the blessings of it, as we are led to live by the faith of the Son of God. My dear friend, you must have nothing to do with yourself in believing on Christ; neither must you have anything to do with yourself in living on Christ. But living on Christ is the simple exercise of the spiritual mind on the person and work of Christ.

I hope you are taught by the Holy Spirit more and more

to renounce all you are and have of your own, be it gifts, graces, experiences, enlargements, or whatever, and to rest wholly and alone upon Christ without you. The Lord grant you may be always keeping your eye on Jesus as he is set before you in the written word. I value a knowledge of Christ from the word and by the Spirit above the whole world. Many good souls have a great deal to say about Christ, but it is in their way, and not in a scriptural way; they make more of inward grace than they do of the Son of God. Instead of believing on the Son of God for salvation, they believe in themselves, and that they are so and so; and because they conclude they are so and so, therefore they believe they are the Lord's. Why what of Christ is there in all this? Just nothing at all. I do see the real knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ among the people is very, very little. Let us bless the Lord who hath made us to differ from others. May the Lord Jesus Christ be higher and higher in our understandings, hearts, and minds, so as that his salvation may dwell in us, and that we may be shewing forth his praises for it from day to day.

I expect to set off from this place with Mr. Castleden next Monday, for Chard, if the Lord will; so that I conceive after next week, if you address me at Chard, I shall receive it. I must stay there for some time. I understand you have sent for half a dozen books. You are to remember they belong to me; you are to pay me for them; not that I want you so to do until you have sold them; no, by no means; I do not by any means desire it. But I have a request to make; it is this: there is a poor man in Cornwall I wish to do some little service unto. Since I was ill, and here, I received a letter which was expected to fall into my hands at London, but it did not. Now I would wish to send him £5. If you sell the books, and would put £2 to it, I will very honestly repay you; or should I drop off, you shall be paid.

Now you are to know I am very poorly. If I could put it off, I really would not set off for Chard next Monday. Let this be the token between us; if I go to Chard you shall hear from me; if not in a fortnight, you may be sure I am not there; and then, if possible, I will write to you, and tell you where I am.

The direction for the man in Cornwall is as follows: Mr. John Tamlyn, at St. Columb, Cornwall.

Then write as follows: that you received a letter from me, wherein I said I received a letter from him which did not come to my hands until I was at Reading, where I was, and still am very ill. That I request you to send him £5, which he is immediately to inform you he has received; and he must say nothing about it.

This will be quite enough. I believe he loves our Lord Jesus Christ, and I love him in the bowels of Christ. It will be my last to do for him.

My very best respects to your very good spouse, and ten thousand thanks for her kindness.

The Lord bless you both.

I remain, your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXV.

TO THE SAME.

Chard, Sept. 20, 1811.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM not so ill as when I first came here; yet I have lost not one of my complaints; therefore, I do not think it safe for me to leave any one single thing unsettled. Therefore, I send you these two notes, as I think it will settle what is between us; if not, let me know in your next. If there is any odd money, give it to Nanny Smith, of Moxton.

Mr. Weeks and Mr. Tapley came here last week to see me. They think I am well, or at least better than they expected to find me. I have made no such complaint of late, as to give

any body any reason to expect to find me a dying man ; yet not one cause of my complaint is removed, nor will it be but by death. My friends are very much like Job's comforters.

Mr. Daubney, of Bath, desired me, if I wrote to you, to say the people have dismissed him. You will find the note wrote upon as good as any ; if you do not like it I will change it. I at present intend setting off from hence the beginning of November, and then of coming to see you ; but you shall hear from me again ; therefore be assured I will not come on you suddenly, nor to stay long. If I can carry my plan into execution, I will be so long with you. It may be a little at Mr. Wilson's, then a little at Truro, Chard, at Reading, at Mr. Byles ; I will make a variety of it. I shall never be any thing in the preaching line more, my voice is so low.

My very best respects to your wife and Mrs. Wilson, and all friends. I do not want you to have any more books, but if you have, you must write to me, and not to London for them ; I mean the last book. As to the others, they do not belong to me ; the money for those, if you have sold them, as I said in my last, does.

My dear friend, excuse my writing on this paper. It is not out of disrespect. A person here belonging to us is dangerously ill. My memory begins to fail ; therefore, since I got up I have written this for fear of consequences. Let me have a line from you to say if all is cancelled. If you do not like the note written on, send it back ; I can send it to Castleden, he can get it off.

Your's in the Lord, with ten thousand thanks for all favours,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXVI.

 TO THE SAME.

Chard, Oct. 4, 1811.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

You congratulate me on my speedy entrance into glory. I fear it is too good news to be true; I am on the recovery, at least I conceive so. I have for a long season past had it as a lesson, to learn to be perfectly contented to live or die, just as my Lord thinks fit. I do think I shall yet be continued for a season; not but I have my liftings up, and then my castings down. I am speaking of the frame of the body, not of the mind; as in Christ, I am always safe, not one time more than another; but he is unchangeable, and so is my state in him. I have renounced all hope in God but in him alone, in his righteousness and blood, many a year; and I have had some real and special communion with him these many years past, and have to the present moment; therefore as it respects my confidence in him, I am always one and the same. I have an interest in the free favour of God, and am the object of everlasting love, because it was the sovereign will of God it should be so. All was vast eternity when the Father loved me, and chose me in his Son. It was an eternal act in the mind and will of God before the foundation of the world. Now what took place in the infinite mind of the Lord God from everlasting towards me in Christ Jesus, must remain the same to eternity, because with him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. These truths are so fixed and settled in my mind, from the word, and by the Spirit of God, that I never have the least shadow of doubt concerning my personal interest in the everlasting love of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In receiving and believing the doctrine of everlasting love, I believe my own personal

interest therein; and I believe both on the authority and truth of the word of inspiration, so that I cannot be more fully persuaded and assured thereof. I mention this that you may know, neither time, age, bodily infirmity, nor divine dispensations towards me, make any alteration in my faith; neither inward sin causes me to doubt, nor inward grace encourages my faith. No. It is a knowledge of the Holy Three, the Holy Ones in the one incomprehensible Jehovah, together with their will, council, covenant, word, and oath, as revealed in the word of grace, is the foundation of all my faith and hope in God, Father, Son, and Spirit, as the Lord my God. It is in Christ God-man, all the divine persons have manifested the good pleasure of their mind and will concerning me. I would look unto Christ therefore; I would ever remember all God's love to me is in him; that my election is in him, the Father chose me in him before the foundation of the world. I am in Christ the object of the Father's everlasting complacency. I am not always alike happy in the actual belief of it. The actual belief of it is always in my mind; but my mind is not always alike exercised in the lively actual belief of it. I make more account of the true knowledge of it, than of any actual enjoyment flowing from it. I am more taken with what I am in Christ, than with what I enjoy of Christ. I conceive the great work of the Holy Ghost consists in revealing the Father's love, and Son's salvation to me. Well, how does he this? Why, by giving me an enlightened understanding, so as for me to take it into my mind from the word what is revealed therein, concerning the Father's everlasting love, and what is set forth in it concerning the person and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I think if this, in its reality and simplicity, were taken in more clearly than it commonly is into the mind, we should find in real believers more confidence in the Lord. There is the utmost importance in the truths of the everlasting gospel, and there is the utmost simplicity of faith, in every branch of divine worship; in fact, it is too simple for us. Hence, poor worms that we are, we are always going off the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus; indeed we are. We make a great deal of what we think, of what we feel, of what we experience, whilst at the same time we make very little of God's revelation of Christ,

of God's views of Christ, of God's thoughts of Christ, of his testimony of of him, of his record concerning him ; and the seal which the Holy Ghost sets to all this, these matters we leave aside. Yet, at the same time, we insist on it we must be under the influence and operations of the Holy Ghost, or we cannot be right. Why, how can we be under the influence and operations of the Holy Ghost, whilst we most awfully neglect his own sacred testimony in the word, concerning the Father's love, and the Son's salvation? When I thus write to you, I do not mean but you see eye to eye with me. But I mean to state it as it really is ; and I have no doubt but you see with me, that the bulk of professors, yea, and some who cry up gospel preaching, and the doctrines of grace, are altogether unacquainted with the real and simple truth as it is in Jesus. Well, so it is ; and so let it be. We have nothing to do with it ; let us leave all such alone. In every age, the elect have obtained the true and saving knowledge of Christ, and the rest are blinded ; so it is now in our time. It should lead us to admire the sovereignty of grace ; it should excite us to praise the God of all grace, who hath chosen us unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.

May the Lord bless you with a clear and scriptural knowledge of every truth you believe ; never overlook the simplicity of it. The gospel is full of majesty, yet the glory of it consists in the simplicity of it. There is the misery of many ; they overlook truth in its simplicity, therefore they never make any great matter out of what is the very principal matter in the gospel itself.

Thus I am running on. Does it not seem very unnecessary? Indeed, my friend, I should have deemed it so, had it not been for your letter, which contains some things I have to set in a proper point of view. I am not very certain, but I may return to London in November ; if so, I shall not come down to Plymouth. It is indeed of no great importance where I am, as I shall never be able to exercise myself as I have done. However, as I am better, although not what I was before my late illness, yet if the people I belong unto were to choose me to return, I would comply. Let this

be as it may, say you nothing to any one about this. When I myself know how this will be, I will let you know it.

My duty and most cordial respects to the Doctor. If I remain without going to London, then I shall set off from hence, about the first Monday after the first Lord's-day in November; and get if the Lord please to Mary Church, and then get on for you.

If you wish it, you must get leave of his Majesty, who has been very gracious unto you, and granted you many a favour. My very best respects to your beloved partner. I am glad to hear you are both recovered.

I am, your's in our Lord Jesus Christ,

S. E. PIERCE.

P.S. My dear friend, I should not have troubled you at this time, but you mistook what I wrote. I had nothing to do with any thing, nor have I concerning what may be between you and Mr. Castelden, except it be on the subject of the last books he sent you. You know I borrowed £5 of you, which you sent into Cornwall. I conceived if you had sold the £3 worth of books which you had of mine, on our Lord's Last Week, then if I sent you £2, I should be out of debt. Then I said, if there was any money due for the books you had of Mr. Castleden, meaning the Sinner's Free Access to Christ, and I did not know but there might be some on Indwelling Sin, you might send it to Moreton. I am necessitated, therefore, to clear up the mistake. I have enclosed this note, for I fear you have paid more than I had anything to do with. I would not wish you to write; as soon as my matters are fixed I will write to you. The Lord bless you. Amen.

LETTER XXVII.

 TO THE SAME.

Chard, Nov. 6, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IT appears unto me to be the Lord's mind and will I should return to London; the time is fixed, and I am to be there on the last Lord's-day in the present month. I am much better in body; and as I stand related to the church at Eagle and Child Alley, I think it right for me to give them a full proof of my love, and accordingly am preparing to go unto them. It seemed to me necessary to write to you at this time. May it be full of Christ, and the savour of his most precious and most adorable name, in which everlasting virtue is contained. We want to be always living on him; without we do, everything within us, and without us, will make us miserable. It is good to know how the whole Trinity are interested in us, how they are engaged for us, how they delight in us, and rejoice over us to do us good. Our all flows from Christ, and our everlasting all is in him; and in a very little while we shall be with him, and see him face to face, and see him as he is.

You will, I hope, never be tired at looking unto Jesus; he is such an object that the more he is looked at, the more the eye of faith becomes strengthened; and the whole of our life, as spiritual, consists in our knowledge of Christ. We have just so much eternal life in us, as we have the true knowledge of Christ in our understandings; it is from the knowledge we have of Christ in our minds, he dwells in our hearts; it is in proportion to our knowledge of Christ, we have real confidence in him. We should be always seeking after a more perfect knowledge of our beloved Lord. Paul did,

although he knew more of Christ than any individual beside; yet his prayer was, "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable unto his death."

May the Lord Jesus Christ shine upon you, and make you perfectly happy in himself, and admit you more and more into the secrets of his love, and advance you higher and higher into communion with himself. The Lord the Spirit help you to live wholly on the Lord Jesus, without any consideration of good or bad in yourself. When you are looking unto Christ, you are not looking at your faith, any more than when you are looking at an object, you are not at the same instant looking at your eye with which you see it. I wish this was better understood. For many are more taken with their faith, and their own outgoings after Christ, than they are really taken with Christ. It is awful; but it seems to me there is very little of the knowledge of Christ among the people, go where one will. Much profession, a good deal of preaching and hearing, but very little believing on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Hence we seldom hear any speak in a heart-warming manner, either of the person of Christ, or of the love of Christ, or of the righteousness of Christ, or of the blood of Christ, or of the ascension of Christ, or of the glorification of Christ, or of the intercession of Christ, or of the advocacy of Christ, or of the fulness of Christ. Most assuredly these very subjects are suitable to the faith of God's elect; and the very bread of life by which they are strengthened and nourished up unto everlasting life. Yet all sorts of people are for something felt or experienced in themselves, which hath nothing to do with Christ, but which may give them as much, or more content, than the simple knowledge and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is really a most awful day; the foundation which God himself hath laid in Zion, as the sure and only one of a sinner's faith and hope in him, is sapped. Not in one place only, but it is so universally throughout our whole kingdom. It is a misery even, in such as profess to know the gospel, to be very supine; they seem to be content to say or do very little to defend the truths of the everlasting gospel. Many a year past, I think at least almost twenty, I said publicly in the pulpit, the Lord God would never make use of any of the present ministers to

revive his work throughout our land. I am sorry to have no reason to repent this assertion. We have multitudes of preachers, but they do not differ as it respects the subject they deliver one hair's breadth one from the other. They do not say so much of Christ, as to take the people off from themselves; neither do they say so much of the fall, as to leave them without all hope in themselves; neither do they say and preach enough of sin, as to give the people to understand if they die under the guilt of it, they will perish everlastingly; neither do they open and explain the nature of God's holy law, with the extent and severity of it, as to prove all flesh are dead and damned who live and die under the curse of it.

I am truly thankful my time is going on. I shall not die in myself, therefore I have nothing to fear. I do now live on Christ, and therefore I cannot but die in him. It is very satisfactory to me, that I know nothing of the Lord Jesus, neither in doctrine, experience, or enjoyment, but I have given all the account of it in my preaching and writing in my power. I am called upon to go again to London. There is a sense in which I should prefer the country; but the Lord will not admit me to have my own choice. I have been long wanting to know his mind and will concerning it; as from letters I am inclined to think it must be so, I have settled it to go; since which the Lord has given me the following passage, which is very satisfactory to my mind. It follows, "For I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand; saying, Fear not, I will hold thee." I find in it every thing I need; I have mixed faith with it; I have prayed over it, and have found my account therein. The time fixed for my being there, is the last Lord's-day in this month. I expect a friend to come down to convey me thither. I am better.

As it respects your writing to me, I do not want you so to do. Nor must you expect to hear from me until next year, if I am permitted to live so long. I have nothing to say but what you have heard from me over and over. I find, with Mr. Romaine, the lessons I have now to learn, are very simple! It is only how to live over in my mind afresh the record given concerning the transactions of the Eternal Three, and the free and full salvation set forth in the person,

blood, and righteousness of the ever blessed Immanuel, and rest simply thereon. This is very easy; next unto it, and which completes the whole, is to live on believing views of the state of glory I am to enter on, with the sight I shall be then favoured with in seeing the King of glory, the Lord of glory, the fellow of the Lord of Hosts, face to face. This is what I have to learn.

I beg my best respects to the Doctor, to your spouse, and to all our friends. You may depend on it you have lost nothing by my not coming to see you. Our Lord well knows what all his people need. We do well when we leave all in his hand; he is ever mindful of his covenant; he will never turn away from his beloved ones from doing them good.

May the Lord bless you and your beloved partner, with great grace and boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. May you enjoy much of the divine presence, and may you be mutual helpers of each other's faith in the Lord; and as heirs together of eternal life, may you be perfectly happy in each other, and in the Lord.

I would beg you not to be carried away, at any time, with any one who may call on you, at any time, in my name. Let your mouth be very close concerning me; it will answer the best end. As to any books of mine, you have none; all is settled betwixt you and me. If you have any books of or from Mr. Castleden, you must be accountable to him; therefore you have no money out of any of them to give away. If you want any of the 'Lord's Last Week,' they are mine, and you must have them of me.

I had your letter; all is well. That is quite enough. I do not see any necessity for writing often to each other, as we love each other in Christ Jesus, and that is all we need. I am very well-pleased with you, and I hope you are with me. You must never on any letter say, or intimate any thing, but what every one may see. I have destroyed your letters, I hope you have mine.

I am,

Your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXVIII.

 TO THE SAME.

August 15, 1812.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED both your letters, and am very much obliged to you for your kind remembrance. I should have wrote some time past, but was disposed to defer it, as I could bring nothing to a point; but now I have. So that if I had not heard from you, you would have heard from me.

You must know I am so pressed to go down to Truro, that I have obtained leave here to be absent one Lord's day, and no more. I am therefore, if the Lord will, to set off from hence to Exeter, on the 31st day of this month; the next day, which is the first of September, I mean to set off for you; and I expect to reach you the same day. The next day, which is the 2nd of September, I mean to set up my rest with you; and if your place is not too large, will give a word that evening, or as you please in secret. Then I must set off from Torr Point the next morning by the coach, to reach Truro the same evening; this must not be departed from. As to your coming here, I am not very fond of it. I should rather you would accompany me into Cornwall; but even that I lay no stress upon, as I cannot afford to pay your expenses; and to drag money out of your pocket is to me very disagreeable. Now this you will please to observe, I may return from Truro your way, but I cannot stop; so that you must not expect it, as I must be here on Saturday, September 12. This cannot be departed from. You must be so kind to consider how we are to get over to Torr Point the next morning. As to the hint dropped, I do not know it to be contrary to the word of God; and it does not concern me, so there I leave it; and if you choose to keep me to yourselves,

then you may conceal my coming, and say nothing about it; otherwise I suppose I must, if I can, preach at both places.

I was heartily glad to hear of the birth of your child. May God Almighty, the all-sufficient Jesus, bless the dear little one. May the Lord Jesus watch over, and protect from all evil, and bless with all good. My best respects to your beloved spouse. I am very greatly obliged to you both for your very great kindness.

I am very greatly recovered in my body; not but I am an old man, and have my sinkings and upliftings, yet the air and rest are very useful unto me. I can by no means bear fatigue; therefore you must be sure to let me go very early to bed.

The Lord Jesus hath been very gracious unto me. Whilst I am just what I am in myself, the very same I have ever been since I drew breath, a poor sinner in myself, and of and from myself, without the least difference, yet I never suspect my interest in Christ, nor his love for me, because it is by no means built upon any thing in me; nor do I believe in Christ upon the footing of any thing I am in myself; no; election is an eternal act in the mind of God; it is upon the footing of everlasting love I was in Christ. His union to me, interest in me, and relation to me, is founded on the Father's everlasting love to my person in Christ; his life and death is my salvation; he is ever mindful of me; he hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in his own blood; I am saved in him with an everlasting salvation. What I want to have, is, for the Holy Ghost to bring my mind more under the power and influence of the sublime truths of the everlasting gospel; so as that I might be living in the active and actual belief, of what I know from the truth of the Father's love, and the Son's finished salvation. I most certainly know that of Christ which is sufficient to keep me up, were the world all in flames; but it is living so on Christ, so as to be giving such incontestible evidence of the reality of a living communion with Christ: this is what true christianity consists in.

I am less than the least of all saints, not worthy of being numbered with any of the Lord's servants; it is by the grace of God I am what I am. I wish you would not look on me in any higher point of view, than a sinner saved

by grace. And truly could I take in this, and live in true and proper views of such transcendant grace, as to be fully possessed in my renewed mind with proper views of being saved from the imputation of all sin, and from the whole curse due to all my crimes, by the substitution of the person of Christ in my room and stead, and the transfer of all my sins from my person to him; and that he was made sin that I might be made the righteousness of God in him, and that Christ hath redeemed me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me, this would be sufficient to lift up my heart above and beyond the whole body of sin, and to fix my heart on God in Christ, as my centre of rest and everlasting happiness.

You will be pleased to give my best respects to the Doctor. My christian regards to all friends. I do not want you to write. All here desire remembrance. If the Lord please, I shall be at Plymouth on Tuesday, Sept. 1. I would not have you say much about it. I am going the week after next, if the Lord will, to Ritsford; then I shall return here, and set off from hence. If you would meet me at Plymouth where the coach stops, I should be glad.

Your's, in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Chard, Sept. 27, 1812.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I send you the book you paid me for. I have been at Mary Church, and am almost dead. Well, there must be an end to all things; and there must be an end to my

visiting. I conclude I have taken my final farewell of Devon; old age will not be put off; no; it is but the approach of death, it is the harbinger of it. I expect to set off for London to-morrow.

My best respects to your spouse, and love to your little son.

My best respects to the Doctor; also, my christian remembrance to all our friends in Christ.

Yours, in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXX.

TO THE SAME.

London, June 4, 1813.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

YOUR letter came in due season; but I was and had been extremely ill, so that I was constrained to omit giving you any reply to it. On the beginning of the month of February, I was seized, and thought myself arrested by death; medical advice was had, and it was pronounced my case was very extreme. I was all but dead over and over again; seven weeks I never preached. My voice was so lost I could not speak but in a low whispering way. The pain of my stomach was so great, that even that was too much for me. At present, I am most astonishingly revived, and I am once more able to preach once every Lord's-day. As my case was so extreme, I could by no means undertake a journey, otherwise I should have been very glad of leaving town and going to Frogwell, but I could not have borne the fatigue; so now that I am so much recovered, as the people were so much disappointed in the spring, I mean to

make it up to them by staying in London all the summer, and preaching to them every alternate, Lord's-day; the other I preach at Brixton; so you see I shall not be with you this year; at least it does not as yet so appear. We may be sure all is best.

I have nothing more to say concerning the love of the Holy Trinity towards the elect of Adam's posterity, in Christ; nor concerning the person, the work, the righteousness and sacrifice, the death, burial, and resurrection, the ascension and glorification of Immanuel, than I have delivered over and over, so that you will sustain no loss if you never hear me again.

I have been in my own apprehensions in the very act of dying, over and over again; and I have found the knowledge of Christ all-sufficient to bear me up, and sustain my mind, without and beyond the least shadow of doubt, so that I have only to proceed to testify the gospel of the grace of God, and can add nothing unto it. My support for many years past, and when I was so extremely ill, was from the knowledge of the Father's love, the Son's salvation, and the Holy Spirit's testimony concerning the same in the written word; and I found it quite enough to bear me up, in the immediate views of falling asleep in Jesus. My Lord has indeed wrought wonders for me; for none could have reasonably hoped my recovery. Oh, that I might live Christ as one with him. My first text was, "The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up." I took occasion to speak of the supports conveyed to my mind from the word, and from Christ as apprehended in it, and in what way I was thereby supported. My next text was, "Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death, that I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of Zion; I will rejoice in thy salvation."

I have often relapses; I am old. The second day of the month I shall enter on the sixty-eighth year of my age, so that I cannot expect ever to be what I have been. Whilst I am in the body, it appears to me there is some end the Lord has to answer thereby, whilst I know not what; nor have I any business therewith. It is sufficient for me to bow to his sovereign will. Blessed be his name, that he is very good and gracious unto me.

I could very clearly perceive, in my late most extreme moments, that all is of grace. Election, salvation, effectual calling, perseverance, support in the article of death, admittance into heaven, a sight of Christ and the vision of him, and uninterrupted communion with him, and the Father in him, through the perpetual indwelling of the Holy Ghost, is all of grace. In these views I had a feast. To be in Christ is the greatest act and display of grace. I had nothing to do with inward sin; no, nor with inward grace. I was neither troubled about the one, nor comforted with the other; so that I have learnt I was quite right, in understanding myself to be wholly passive, in all the great acts of the Holy Trinity towards me, and upon me. And I clearly perceived I shall be but the subject of all the good pleasure of Jehovah's will even in glory.

My friend, I have lost my letter-writing knack, so you must excuse me. This day I have been better than I have been yet; you may be sure I have not forgotten you nor yours. But for a long season past I have been so much the subject of disease, that I have not been able to do anything, but what necessity required. I hope you are a gainer by the Lord's late visitation. I am very glad you are again restored; the Lord be praised for it. You will be pleased to present my christian regards to all those friends which you named in your letter. May the Lord bless them, and reward each, and every one of them, for all their kindnesses towards me. May they look right simply to Christ; may they trust alone for the whole of their salvation on the person, righteousness, and atonement of the God-man Christ Jesus. They cannot honour him more than in so doing; in life or in death, they cannot put a greater crown on the head of Jesus, than by trusting in him for their complete salvation.

Please to give my best christian respects to the Doctor. My very particular regards to your beloved spouse. I am now living in the daily and momentarily expectation of death. The Doctor said, just as the former medical persons did when I was seized two years past, that my case was the falling down of the midriff, and that the lungs were affected, and that the least exertion would be fatal; however, I am now a little patched up. I am still in the body, and absent

from the Lord. I must be out of it to be present with him. It is most likely when I am removed, it will be by a sudden stroke; even so let it be, amen, Lord Jesus; thy will be done. I suppose I have tired you; I cannot help it; it is out of my power to do better; so there I must leave it. The Lord be with you.

I remain, your friend, most truly in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

P.S. I hope you will be careful of speaking concerning me, let people possess what friendship for me they may. I have lived to see and prove, that all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of the field. A hint to the wise is enough. I want for nothing; in this respect I have nothing to complain of. Farewell! The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

LETTER XXXI.

TO THE SAME.

June 12, 1814.

MY FRIEND,

WHAT you say is true. It hath been a long season since we wrote to each other. I have sometimes thought on it; but having been in deaths oft, conceived it to be of no manner of use. You know I profess to be in Christ; to be one in him and with him; to be saved in him, and by him, with an everlasting salvation. Therefore, let death make what alteration it may in my body, it can make none in my mind. "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." I considered, therefore, I had nothing to write to you about; nor you could have anything to write to me but I was fully acquainted

with. I did not cease to love you, or yours, on any account; and love you and your spouse and child as well as ever; yet, I thought it best to be as free of all incumbrance as possible.

I can assure you what I have passed through in my bodily frame, is beyond what I can give any account of. I have expected to be in the unseen, separate state, again and again; yet I am still in the body, and have at present a very remarkable revival in it. I do not know but I may see you this summer; I leave all in my Lord's hands. I have nothing to do but die. I have no one thing to settle. My mind is quite as ready as ever; my eyes and ears, not in the least broke in upon; my views of Christ, and God's free grace in him, equal to any period of my life, in the school of the gospel. But I cannot bear any fatigue. If I exert myself, I feel it at once. My whole complaint hath been, and still is, in my stomach. The Lord be praised for all his mercies towards me. I have known him, been known by him, very near fifty years; in the course of which time I have contracted many wounds; I have been defiled with many guilts, I have contracted many stains, I have committed many sins, I have been the subject of many wants, I have felt many miseries, which have all been peculiar to myself; they have all made way for me to have particular access to Jesus Christ; and I never yet made so free use of any friend, as I have with him. Blessings on him, to this very present moment he is as loving, and attentive, and closely attached to me as ever, and there is a very blessed freedom kept up between us; so that it is really realized to me, that in his friendship is contained all the blessings of time and eternity. He has healed all my wounds; he has freely forgiven me all trespasses; he has supplied all my wants; he has been, and he still is my wisdom, my righteousness, my sanctification, and my helper and defence; he is my complete salvation; he is my complete redemption. I am complete in him, and my all is in him. I know he may as soon forget himself as me. As I am perfectly assured of this from his own infallible word, I am as confident as I possibly can be. Were I able, I would be daily preaching him, his name, person, righteousness, sacrifice, and salvation; but I cannot. He is very kind to grant me the desires of

my heart. I want but eleven days of being sixty-eight years complete. On Thursday, June 23rd, about half-past eight, I shall, if in the body, enter into the sixty-ninth year of my age. You see I have almost reached the term of seventy; it affords me pleasure.

A friend of yours very kindly called on me. He told me, what you have many a time repeated, that many in your towns would be very glad to hear me proclaim life and salvation in their ears, by the blood of the Lamb. I intend, if the Lord will, to leave London, the first Monday in July. If I can be admitted to have my way, I shall stay over one day at the city of Salisbury, on purpose to preach there; then as the Lord may be pleased, I hope to get on, either to Yeovil, or to Frogwell, so as to be at Chard on the second Lord's-day; then stop about four Lord's-days, and proceed to Honiton, from thence to Exeter, then to Ashburton, then to Plymouth.

I shall take you and your spouse at your word to make your house my own; and you have my best thanks for the same. I conceive Mr. Wilson will see me from Exeter to Ashburton; it may be, will see me to Plymouth. I conceive I can command some one from Truro to fetch me from you; then, if you will fetch me from thence back to your house, the matter will be so far completed.

Now, all this is my plan; the Lord's may be quite otherwise. Should it be so, I am quite prepared; neither have I the least request to make it should be otherwise. You will be pleased to give my real love and christian regards to the Doctor; he has my heart and interest at the throne; tell him so. I heard him twice, and with very great satisfaction. He is a growing believer. May the Lord in blessing, bless him. Be pleased to observe I must travel very leisurely. If I want you, I will write; if not, you must not come for me. It may be, if permitted to get to Exeter about August, you may have a line from me, or Mr. Wilson, when you may expect me.

Our Mr. Wilson, who was once your neighbour, has lately been near this place; he made very kind enquiries after me. I felt myself very greatly obliged for the same. If I should come, and be enabled to speak in the name of the Lord, others must begin and end the service. My kind

remembrance to your spouse. I feel myself very much obliged for both your kindness and affection. I am glad your child is well. May he be found among the living in Jerusalem. I hope to be at Truro the four Lord's-days in August. You will thereby apprehend what time you may expect me. I mean to visit you on my journey to Truro, and on my return. If I can get to give up Chard, I shall be glad, as it would be pleasant to me to go from you to Mary Church.

I mean to write to our old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Tapley; though I can assure you I am not so fond of writing letters at this time of life, yet I believe friends think otherwise, as I had two new unexpected customers last week, and if I can will oblige them. I shall do this with the more pleasure, as I shall inform them I am about to leave London for three months, and I shall take care to give them no address; so that they will not be able to write to me.

Please to give my kind respects to all our christian friends. May the Lord bless you, and your well-beloved partner, with rich communion with him, in all the blessings of his love, mercy, and salvation. Amen. Lord Jesus, let it be even so. Amen and amen.

Your's, in him,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Truro, Aug. 17, 1814.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I HAVE ordered a small parcel from Chard to be directed for me at Truro, and outwardly to be directed for you,

with a note requesting the favour of your sending it to me at Truro, by the mail. I shall be very ready to repay you any expense.

I deal with you as a friend; and a man that hath a friend must shew himself friendly. I want to give you to know I cannot afford you a Lord's-day; you know how your neighbour is. I do not want to come to Plymouth, if I could decently avoid it; the time here seems to be limited. I expect to set off from hence Monday, August 23, that is, the last Monday in this present month; so that I would have you give me your thoughts. If you would have me come to Plymouth, then you must not come here, but you must come to Torr Point to conduct me over the water to your house; and if I come, I can stay until Saturday morning, and go off then for Exeter, as I have engaged to spend one Lord's-day with them. As to Mary Church, I must drop them; indeed I can see no need of coming to either place. You can, I conceive, hear nothing beyond what the Doctor delivers, and whilst I do not conceive Mr. Weeks equal with him, yet he preaches Christ; and what can any one have, or, what would they or any have more? I am now an old man, full of corruption and infirmity, so that I cannot move about as heretofore; therefore, it is but a trouble to myself and friends also to attempt it. Now you will, on the receipt of this, and on consideration, give me an answer. Send my parcel with all speed, and you can put in a note, as it will save expense. My best respects to your beloved spouse and child. I mention none else, as I do not call this a letter.

The parcel should be directed for me, at Mr. Fisher's, Parliament Street, Truro; they named it heretofore, Pyder Street, now it is Parliament Street. If you want to send any book to Mr. Fisher, it can be put into the parcel.

My dear friend,

I subscribe myself,

Your's in Christ,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXXIII.

 TO THE SAME.

London, May 2, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your's, but have for some time past been very much affected in my eyes, so that for five days together one of them has been closed again and again. Writing, therefore was not suitable employment, so that I wrote no letters; and whilst I have often thought on writing to you, yet I forbore, as you and I do not doubt of our real regard one for the other; as we do not, there is no need of writing to assure each other of what we have in our minds, not the least suspicion.

As it respects what you have suggested, the Doctor has my heart and prayers, such as they are. I most heartily rejoice he has set up a weekly lecture. May the Lord bless it, to lead many from themselves to Christ, and to the building up of many in the knowledge of Christ. As to taking no notice, I think it the only way of dealing with such an one. I understand it is committed to the press, and will soon come out. Were I the Doctor, I would never read it, nor take the least notice of it; nothing will be a greater mortification. I conceive the publication will be the downfall. It is very sad so much self-sufficiency prevails; the wise man tells us, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Well, I have no more to say. I do not mean to leave town this summer. I am growing in years; I am not so disposed to go from place to place as heretofore. I think I am far best off at Brixton; as if I there fall asleep, it will be very easy to prepare the body, and fit it for the house appointed for all living.

As it respects eternal things, my mind is stayed on

Christ ; he is my hope, he is my rock, my foundation ; he is my centre ; he is my circumference ; I cannot be more safe than I am in him ; therefore, I am always at one and the same point as it respects my eternal state. I have not the least doubt concerning what I believe from the scriptures of truth concerning the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his putting away sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness, and conquering all the host of hell ; abolishing death, sanctifying the grave, and rising from it as an everlasting conqueror, ascending to heaven in glorious triumph, and entering into the holiest of all, as the head and representative of his people ; and in the belief of these immutable veracities, my mind is supported, my heart is comforted, my guilt is removed, my faith is strengthened, my confidence is maintained. In the knowledge of the Father's love, the Son's salvation, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit, all my religion is contained. I want nothing but increasing communion with the Eternal Three in the remainder of time, and in a glorious eternity, which to me is fast approaching. If I live till the 23rd day of next month, I shall then enter on the seventieth year of my age ; so that it is not far off before I shall close my eyes in death, and shall have the eyes of my mind opened to behold Christ in his kingdom of glory. The Lord be praised, I am perfectly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord towards me ; he has fed me all my life long to the present day, he hath protected me, he hath saved me, he hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in his own blood ; he upholds me to the present moment ; and though very few know, esteem, or love me for his name's sake, yet he gives me to see it is so much the better for me. I do not want to be esteemed or admired. The truth is, if I did I should go without it ; I am perfectly easy that he knows me altogether ; that all I am, and ever were, or ever shall be, is before him. I am perfectly well persuaded he will never turn away from me from doing me good. This saves me from millions of distresses many are the subjects of, and for which I have reason to bless the divine Majesty. It is all, and altogether from him ; he hereby proves himself to be a Jesus unto me ; he hereby evidences his peculiar attention to me. Indeed I do think no one out of heaven so well

off as myself. I have nothing to fear, I have nothing to be concerned about; I owe nothing; I have all things; I want for nothing; I have enough; I have all-sufficiency; I have every thing which concerns security in Christ, and this by the will, covenant, oath, word, and promise of the Three in Jehovah; and this can never be set aside. It is not what I am now, and what I may be in the very article of death, can make the least alteration in God's will in Christ Jesus concerning me. This is my foundation, my boast, my glory. In the knowledge of this, I commit my all to the Eternal Three, knowing whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him. It is an honour to be an old disciple of our Lord's. You and I value ourselves on being old acquaintances. I have been admitted to an acquaintance with our Lord Jesus Christ, and had an experience of his most blessed friendship more than fifty years. Surely he will not leave me now, no; he hath said, "I will never, never, never leave thee; I will never, never, never forsake thee." I can say, I have no doubt, fears, nor suspicions concerning our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am better in my body than when with you last year; I have, notwithstanding my eyes, experienced a surprising alteration and revival in my body for several months past. Well, I desire to be thankful to the Lord for this, and all his mercies towards me. Now I am, as you may say, got home very nearly to the city of habitation. The very moment death hath done its office on me, and my soul is disengaged from it, I cease from all sin, sorrow, and grief for ever; it is a blessed subject and moment to contemplate; more especially what will follow, to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

Your letter to Mr. C. was received, but I have nothing to do with it, only drop this hint that you may know it came safe.

You will be pleased to present my most cordial and affectionate respects to the Doctor, with every good and spiritual wish for the Lord's blessing on him; I do most highly esteem him. My respects to your wife. I am very glad the Lord is pleased to bless your son with health. May he be found among the number of God's elect. This, should

you in future time have gospel evidence of, will be best of all. I hope, whilst this must be left with the Lord, and he only can give evidence of this, you will not forget it to be your duty to attend and practise the command of the Lord given by Solomon, "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The apostle says to believing parents as follows, "And ye, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." May your eye and heart be fixed on Christ Jesus; may you be continually giving yourself to him; may you be living on him, moment by moment, and go on cleaving to the Lord with full purpose of heart. I hope the person of Christ is more and more your joy and rejoicing; all heaven is contained in him. It is grace to esteem, to prize, and admire the person of Christ. Most people forget the person, glories, beauties, perfections, and excellencies of the God-man; yet he should be the very first object and subject of all our spiritual contemplations. I am grown so old and dumpish, as not to know how to fill up my paper; so you will plainly perceive it is too late to expect any more long letters from me. Well, we cannot always have four groats for a shilling. No; you must bear with old people, and never expect much from them. May the Lord himself direct you in all things. Say nothing about one person; leave him, you will find this mortify more than ten thousand words. Where there are no tale-bearers, the fire of strife goeth out of its own accord. Take my advice, do not read the pamphlet. The Doctor cannot be injured by it, nor will the other gain any thing. You may assure yourself, that if you take no notice of it, you will gain a great victory. "He that is slow to anger is of great understanding; and he that ruleth his spirit is better than he which taketh a city."

I remain,

Your's, in the Lord Jesus Christ,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXXIV.

 TO THE SAME.

Truro, Sept. 11, 1815.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I AM now at Truro; and hope, by the Lord's permission, to set off next Monday, September 18, for Plymouth. Will you be so kind as to meet me at Torr Point? The coach will be there about three o'clock. I am at present remarkably recovered; indeed, I have not been so well in my body as at present for these five years past. May the Lord Jesus be glorified thereby.

I would have no other object or subject in life or death, but Christ. He is my life; I would live in him, and on him alone; he is my hope in death; his death is my everlasting discharge from all the evil contained in natural death; by which I mean the death of the body; his life in heaven is my full assurance, that because he lives there I shall live also. Blessed be the Lord, my mind is kept up in act and exercise, under the influence of the Lord the Spirit, on Christ. He is glory, he is my glory; he is wonderful; I esteem him as the altogether lovely Saviour. I would fain give him glory, and serve him in preaching his gospel.

My stay with you will be very short, as I must be at Chard on Lord's-day, September 24. You know how things are with you. I will have nothing to do with a certain person; the less notice taken of what he hath published, in my view, so much the better. Do you think it could be possible for me to preach at Dock next Monday evening? Then I need not go there afterwards. What think you of my preaching at Mary Church? Is it best to give them a sermon? You know, if it were so, I need go off on the Wednesday from Plymouth. I conceive it would not do to go there on the Thursday, as I must be at Exeter on the Friday evening,

to go off the next morning for Chard. I wish you to consider all this for me. I really, for my own part, do not see such importance in these preaching visits as many seem to make out of them. If the Lord Jesus Christ was not preached at Mary Church, I should look on it of vast importance to go there; but as I really believe he is, I do not look on it as a matter of the least importance by whom this is.

Now, as I look on you as a friend, I write thus freely to you; wishing you to act the friendly part, and to act for me. I am going off on the coming day, if the Lord please, for Penzance; hoping the journey will, through the Lord's blessing, be of real use to my body. I am to return here on Friday, and preach on the coming Lord's-day, and on Monday set off for you.

I beg my most cordial respects to the Doctor. I wrote him a few lines a few weeks past. I proposed, if he pleased, to give a word concerning Christ in the school-room, or in any other he and you may think fit. You must excuse it; but I have really lost my knack of letter-writing. I can now preach better than I can write. It was once the reverse; I could write better than preach. Old age is what it is; I cannot drive it from me. I must submit and be contented.

My best respects to your beloved spouse.

I am your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

P.S. I want no reply to this; but I want your friendship on Monday next, at Torr Point. Farewell. The Lord himself be with and bless you. Amen. Lord Jesus, may it be thy holy will to add thine own amen to this. Even so be it, O Lord.

LETTER XXXV.

 TO THE SAME.

Chard, August 4, 1817.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

It is not that I love you less, or am in the least forgetful of you, that I have not wrote you since I came here ; but I have been so engaged, it was not convenient. I expect to be at Torr, if the Lord will, Saturday, August 23rd. My plan is, to leave it on Wednesday, 27th of August, and preach at Totness Wednesday evening, and be with you the next day, so as to hear the Doctor that evening : to tarry over the Friday, and set off on the Saturday morning for Truro. You know, with regard to my preaching, how it will, or will not, suit. If it is to be so, you will manage the whole, so as to leave me nothing but to fall to work, and nothing for you to say, but ‘ God speed the gospel plough.’

You will be pleased to present my best respects and christian love to the Doctor, and to the young lady who so kindly sent her regards to me. I think as the family are not at home, it would be best for me to be with you. I am tolerably well ; yet you must expect I feel myself older than I did last year ; so I would have you to take this into consideration. If you would have me preach on Friday, morning and evening, do as you please.

I would present you with the following prayer, which of all I ever read, is the most substantial, and full of the very essence of all which can be spiritually expressed. ‘ In thy light let me see light ; in thy life let me live ; in thy righteousness let me stand ; in thy strength let me walk ; in and by the vigorous and suitable growth of thine image upon my soul, let me have communion with thee ; in the savour of thy grace, or precious ointment poured forth, let me relish

the salt of thine everlasting covenant, and the eternal mysteries thereof; and in thy joy and glory, as Father, Son, Holy Spirit, one infinite undivided essence, let me be enwrapped, enrolled, and involved for evermore. Amen! Amen!

I cannot say to whom it should be ascribed; but I must confess it is vastly comprehensive. I suppose you are improving in the knowledge of Christ, and increasing in communion with him, so as to have free and most blessed access to him on all occasions as your particular matters require. We want nothing else than more and more to live in sights of Christ, as this will increase our high prizings of him. I am well pleased to leave myself and all my concerns in my Lord's hands. I have much to bless him for: not only for saving me in himself with an everlasting salvation, and admitting me into real fellowship with him, in the belief of the same, but in removing from my mind all distress, and saving me from the fears of death and dissolution. To be old and full of days, in the full prospect of being dismissed from the body, and to have no doubts and fears, or any concern about the same, is an unspeakable mercy; I would say, it is a real blessing, even a covenant blessing. If this were not the case, I could not go from place to place with so much composure; for death is in me; it must be, at my time of life, making very near approaches, yet I lift up my head in hope, and have before me the prospect of a glorious immortality. I have my discharge from all guilt and condemnation in these words, "The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin." I have confidence for a dying moment, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;" I have assurance for heaven in these words, "Because I live, ye shall live also." I have, therefore, nothing to do, but to rest myself simply and wholly on what my Lord hath spoken; nor can I have, nor do I desire, a better warrant than his own word, which contains in it immutable truth. I can never trust too confidently in what the mouth of the Lord hath said. And the very age to which I am arrived, is really, in the hand of the Spirit, and through his divine teachings, a means of my more simply trusting in the Lord. These are great advan-

tages in old age, as it furnishes the mind and memory of old saints with many particular records of the Lord's dealings and goodness with and towards them, than younger saints can possibly have the least idea of. And if we ourselves value old friends, and such as we have been acquainted with for many a year, we may most undoubtedly conceive our Lord must have a high esteem and valuation of such as he has held long, free, and intimate communion with. I like for myself to think so; it can do me no harm; it yields much pleasure to the mind; and more especially, when our Lord's friendship is founded altogether on free favour and sovereign grace. It is good to be looking to him, to be living entirely on him, to trust wholly in his blood and righteousness, to lean wholly on his arm, to receive our all out of his fulness, to glory in his holy name, to triumph in his victories, to enter within the veil by faith and spiritual meditation, to be viewing the glory which is to be revealed in us; it serves to make us quite disengaged from any present good or bad with which we may be exercised in this mortal state. We may, under true views of Christ and heavenly things, count all but dross and dung. I should most certainly prefer the life of a spiritual pilgrim this side heaven to any other; there are very many real advantages in it, as such can have no great concern on their minds, and that is very comfortable to travellers. It must, as Mr. Romaine somewhere says, be very easy for such to die in the world, who are perfectly dead already to the world. It is easy to die and go out of it, to those who are already dead in and to it, that is, to the things of time and sense. I look on myself perfectly easy and happy in what respects both my soul and body; and I am willing to leave both in the hands of the Lord, and with the Lord, to do with me as seemeth good in his sight.

I have of late been so employed in writing, that my mind is quite exhausted and barren; you need not, therefore, wonder at receiving a letter from me of so little importance. I would always be full of Christ; I would be always alive to Christ; but I am a man of like infirmities with others; it is my blessedness that my Lord is "The same yesterday, to-day, and for evermore;" that with him there is no varia-

bleness, nor shadow of a change. I would not for millions of worlds have any part of my state before the Lord rest on anything of my own! No; nor on anything within me, and done by me. Why I shall be in heaven itself nothing beyond being a sinner saved! nor at the very utmost extension of grace and glory, be anything beyond being the object and subject in whom and on whom, the Three in Jehovah will be pleased to display their glorious and transcendent grace! I shall never want to be anything in myself, nor enjoy anything in my own mind, but what flows out of the infinite ocean of free, sovereign, and everlasting love, through the channel of the glorious person of Christ, who is the Father's all, and will be the all and all to his people, and in his people for ever and ever. It is a real preparation for all this, to feel, see, and apprehend our nothingness; for thereby way is made for our renunciation of all we have and are, in, of, and from ourselves. We must be emptiness in heaven, or how can we be filled with all the fulness of God? A sight of Christ in glory will be the consummation of our happiness in glory; and communion with him in his glory, will be our blessedness in that state of immortality.

You will, by this letter, know the present state of my mind, and the whole of my arrangements; therefore, you will expect me to say no more on the subject. My best respects to your dear partner, and all our christian friends. I requested Mr. Brown to write to you; yet when I re-considered it, I thought it would be best for me to send you this line, as you will best understand my own mind from myself. I would wish you not to put any one thing out of order for me; I am no stranger to you; the most essential thing I shall need, is, to be conducted the Saturday morning over the passage to go to Truro. If you cannot, with convenience to yourself, some one may. We need not be there so soon as we were the last time; not but it is always best to be in good time, especially as there is water to pass.

Please to give my kind respects to your brothers and sisters.

May all grace abound towards you; may great grace rest upon you; may the Spirit of God and of glory rest upon

you. You need not write as, unless the Lord set it aside, I shall be with you at the time proposed.

I remain,

Your's in the Lord, most respectfully,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Chard, Sept. 6, 1817.

MY VERY GOOD FRIEND,

I RETURNED yesterday to Chard; and Mr. Brown says, I must write and give you an account of myself. I have been exercised with a most violent rheumatic pain, occasioned by getting cold. I have been, in the view of those with whom I was, in dangerous circumstances; the Lord was very gracious unto me; he kept my mind quite easy for body and soul; let it be life or death, I had not the least concern; I wanted for nothing; no one could be more carefully nor more affectionately attended; they were real christians, and I cannot speak too much of their kindness. Through the Lord's goodness towards me, I am raised up again; and whilst I feel some of the effects of my late pains and confinement, yet I am, everything considered, very well. Praised be the Lord for evermore. Amen and amen.

You will be pleased to present my most dutiful and christian regards to the Doctor, and many, many thanks for his kind concern and enquiries after me. I begin to feel myself an old man; it will not do for me to travel much; a very little while, and I am to be conveyed a very long journey; it may

be, some thousands of miles; but I am to be conveyed without any trouble; this well suits me; the Lord himself of the place is to come for me, and there is great preparations made for my reception, and I shall be very glad to go; for I have drunk some of the choice wine of the place, and it went down so glibly into my stomach, that I never felt anything like it; it has really got up into my head, and put me on speaking as if I could never say when I would stop. You must know, I suppose, all about it; it is heaven I mean, and the love of God in Christ; and when I am to be translated I cannot say; but that I shall, I have the Lord's word for it, and it is to be in the best time for me, and when it will make most for the Lord's honour and glory. I care not how soon; but I must wait the Lord's time. He comes to many of his favourites when they least expect. I think he will to me; however, I have nothing to do with that, nor do I give myself the least uneasiness concerning the same; it is not worth my while; because, as soon as the clock strikes, when the moment is completed, I shall be off instantaneously, and all will be everlasting life and glory, from thence to an eternal duration. Well, thus I go on, yet I am really quite tired of writing; for what is there in it? nothing but the old subject in few words. It is with me much easier to live the subject, that consists wholly in the exercise of the spiritual mind on the same. To write it, requires a good deal of thought to put the same into suitable words; this to old men is tedious. I find it so, and very often is a wearisomeness to the flesh; no doubt but it must be so to such as we transmit the same. Well, you must pass it all by. A man that hath a friend must shew himself friendly, which must at times be exercised in overlooking the infirmities of each other.

My good friend, it seems very likely I shall continue in the body some time longer. I am resigned; the will of the Lord be done; I am to return to London, in all appearance, at the time appointed; that is my destination. The Lord help me to improve every part of my remaining time to the praise and glory of the most glorious and most highly renowned Lord and Saviour, whose name, person, love, work, salvation, righteousness, sacrifice, and death, are wonderful. Elect angels admire and esteem him, they love and worship him,

they shout his praise: yea, they aim to make his praise glorious. I love them for it; indeed I do; yet they have great reason; they owe all their blessedness to free grace, and all their enjoyment of the same to Christ their Head; and they receive the whole of it in the vision they have of the God-man; and they cannot behold him, but they must have fellowship with him, and in fellowship with him consists the very essence of heavenly and eternal blessedness. I am in Christ beyond them, and shall enjoy what they cannot: a real sense and apprehension of God's everlasting love to my person in Christ, and the continuance of the same to me, notwithstanding the fall, and all I am, and have been in consequence thereof. All the saints enjoy and have the spiritual perception of, concerning God in Christ, is but by a transient thought created in their minds by the Holy Ghost; yet it is for reality, equal to any conception formed in the mind of any angel or saint in heaven. I sometimes think I lose much for want of freely and fully considering this; I know the truth of it, yet I do not always live in the full belief of it. If I did, I should outlive the elect angels in heaven, seeing I have more to praise the holy Trinity for, than they have or ever will. They never sunk so low, they are not raised so high; their crowns are cheaper far than our's, nor cost the Lamb his blood; their intellectual minds are fully opened to supernatural grace, so as to contemplate the subjects contained in their election, and union, and communion with Christ, and these contain a perpetual feast upon them.

Well, you say, do finish your matter, for if you go down to the bottom of your paper, you will be weary to be sure, and so shall I; the sooner you shut up so much the better. My good friend, you say the truth. I will come to the close, with all possible speed. Only I must beg you will present my respects to your spouse, and the Miss Hawkers', and all the friends; I mean, our friends in Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ be with their spirits. Amen.

My love to your son. May the Lord Jesus Christ bless him, and grant him the true and saving knowledge of himself; therein is contained the best portion, nothing is worthy of comparison therewith. It is beyond all on earth, and in heaven. In the knowledge of Christ, eternal life is con-

tained. He, who is eternal life, is our portion and inheritance. Blessed be the Lord for the least true knowledge of him; it exceeds in value the gold of Ophir. If it does now, what will it be in heaven, when and where we shall know even as we are known?

Well, it is to be hoped, and I really do for myself hope, I shall get there before you; for I hope my Lord will not lengthen out life until it becomes quite burdensome; not that I want, or would prescribe to him; he is God all-sufficient, his word is immutable; he hath promised never to leave me, nor forsake me. I want no more, it is enough, I seal it with my amen; even so be it, O Lord; even so be it as it is, and I am everlastingly safe, and well provided for; even so it is, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; and blessed be the Lord, and so it will be in eternity; for the word of the Lord endureth for ever, and "this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto us."

Now, my dear friend, you cannot say I have not wrote enough; it is most likely you will say, it is quite enough; so let it be. May the Lord be with you and your's. In blessing, may he in blessing, bless you.

I remain,

Your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Truro, Sept. 19, 1817.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I AM now at this place, where I have engaged myself in plenty of work. May the Lord be with me in it, and give

me strength to go through the same. I am now an old man, yet I do not always act as if I believed this; yet so I am. I write to you as a friend, I wish you to attend to the same. I think, as so many errors prevail, it shews how few have been brought to the true reception of Christ and his truths. I must come back your way, because I am to be at Torr on the first Lord's-day in October; yet I really think were I to omit preaching at Plymouth altogether, it would be the best; but I shall leave this altogether, with the Doctor and yourself. I have wrote to London for more time, but cannot obtain it. Mrs. Paynter, at Boskenna, has kindly invited me there. I should like it, yet there is this in the way: if you and the Doctor would be pleased to come in to this, that instead of your meeting me at Torr Point, on Monday, the 29th of this month, you meet me there on Thursday, October 9; then convey me over the water, and I hear the Doctor that evening; then, if it be acceptable, I preach the Friday morning and evening at the old Tabernacle; and set off the Saturday for Torr, then I might be indulged with a visit to Boskenna. Should this meet with your approbation, you must favour me with a line immediately, directed for me at Mr. Fisher's. I shall not enter on carrying this into execution until I hear from you; if you and the Doctor agree in this, then I shall be for setting off on Thursday next for the West, and returning on the Saturday to this place; and by preaching the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings, I should give these friends all the opportunities I have promised them. You must, my friend, if possible, write me by return of post; and if you agree for me to act as I have intimated, then you must drop a line to Mr. Tapley, saying, I am not going to preach at Totness, unless they can take me on a Saturday night, namely, October 4, and he can convey me the next morning time enough to preach at his place. You will be punctual in these matters.

It grieves me what you write. I am afraid such awful untruths will prevail; it only proves how very little there is known truly, scripturally, and savingly of our Lord Jesus Christ. To deny the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, is to rob the church of God of the very foundation upon which the whole truth of the inspired volume rests. It is in the doctrine of the Trinity every truth of it rests, is founded, and

in it all centres. Blessed be the Lord, I do not know one truth or article of my faith I have ever altered in, nor did I ever find any temptation for so doing. No; the communion I have had with the Three in Jehovah, the real support and confidence I have had in them, founded upon the revelation which they have most graciously made of their covenant acts and transactions in the everlasting covenant; the complete salvation which is the fruit and effect of the same, hath been such a staff to my faith, that I might as soon deny my existence, as reject the same; and as to my being in Christ, I believe this was before the foundation of the world; yet I was not born again when Christ was born into our world; yet I have received a new, spiritual, and supernatural birth in Christ, and from Christ, and I am born into Christ's spiritual world, as truly as I ever was born into this open natural, visible world. I think this heresy will soon fall; it cannot stand of itself; it is far more awkward than his who opposed our good friend. He only would have it that certainties are better than uncertainties, in the Doctor's account; but in his own uncertainties, and yeas and nays, are by far more, and most assuredly the more, and the most preferable. But the other, if I understand it, is this: to be without all spiritual faculties, is far beyond having the same; it is undoubtedly the most admirable logic. I conceive I know from whence the whole was fetched; I wish it may die of itself. I hope no one will openly oppose it, as I think silent contempt will be more effectual than open reproof. No one, who is the subject of regeneration, will ever deny the truth and necessity of the same, to the intent the true and spiritual knowledge of Christ may be received into the mind; no one can have a spiritual knowledge of Christ in them, who has not a spiritual faculty to receive the same. I am for laying still; the whole I conceive will fall with its own weight; it is but a seven days wonder; it will soon vanish into smoke. I must allow, I conceive it is to try the outward visible church. Let who may espouse the same, we need not fear, "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

The Lord bless you and your's, and keep you near himself; and keep you from all evil, and keep your soul alive to himself and to his truths, which are as immutable and everlasting as He is, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

My very best and cordial affection to the Doctor, and love to your consort and christian friends. If you have sent me any message yet, I shall have nothing to do with it, until I receive your answer to this.

Your's in the Lord, most affectionately,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE REV. DR. HAWKER.

Truro, Sept. 19, 1817.

MY VERY DEAR AND MOST HIGHLY RESPECTED SIR,

I return you my most sincere thanks for your very kind comprehensive note. May every blessing be yours in the knowledge of the same Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever. My malady was the rheumatism; such strong bodily pain I never endured before. I am now raised up from it for a season, for which I desire to praise the Lord. I must confess I do think you have too high an esteem for me; I wish you would only view me, as less than the least of all saints; as to my prayers they are nothing worth. I cannot deny but that I was your remembrancer to our most precious Lord; but depend on it, you over-rate the same. Well, let us not say nor think any more of that; the Lord himself be thanked for his appearance for you, and goodness unto you, amen and amen. I hope soon to have the honour of seeing and conversing with you. My best christian regards to the whole of your family.

I remain, in the Lord Jesus Christ,

Your most humble and very greatly obliged
friend and servant,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XXXIX.

 TO MR. J. TREGO.

Truro, Sept. 27, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

NOTHING respecting the going to London at the time appointed, can be altered. It hath been already attempted, but in vain; I am sure there is no want of me at Plymouth. You have my doctrine, if I may so call it, in the ministry of the Reverend Doctor, who exceeds me. I am really sorry he esteems me, as he does, because it is beyond what is my due. As to my time with you, it will be as long as it used to be. I have not as yet had a line from Boskenna; I am not going thither to preach. I have said on the letter, I think a letter on the best of subjects of more importance than a friendly interview, which I conceive will be very readily received, as the time will be so short.

I hope to set off next Monday, Sept. 29, and be with you about four o'clock, or the hour the coach comes to Torr Point. If you will be pleased there to meet me, I shall be very greatly obliged to you. I say nothing about preaching that evening, yet if it so turns up, I shall not refuse; then, if you like, Tuesday morning and evening, Wednesday morning and evening, Thursday morning, Friday morning and evening, and go off on Saturday for Totness, and preach there if they choose on Saturday Evening, and from thence to Torr, where I am to be on the first Lord's day in October, so let it be. I am not very solicitous to preach at Totness, so I shall not care if I do not. I have written to Mr. Tapley, so you need not. My friend, here is good measure, pressed down and shaken together; and what would ye have more? If you think it is too much, I hope it will then stop all complaints; which, if it does, it will answer a very good end. And pray what do you expect from me, but one and

the same subject which ye have heard me recite over and over again? Well, you must expect me to give you a stroke, and it will not do to spare the rod and spoil the child; indeed it will not.

My very best respects to the Doctor and his good family. I hope all is well with him and them. My love in Christ to your spouse, and all our friends; to your son. If you ought to send his love to me, and have not, tell him I give and send by you my kind love unto him. Now I believe I have written all we need on these subjects.

I have been most graciously carried on here. I have preached nine times successively. I am to preach this evening, to-morrow evening, and Lord's-day; then farewell Truro, for a season; it may be, to see it no more for ever; be it so, if the Lord please; then I come to you. Whilst I have given you my plan concerning preaching whilst with you, yet I do not compel you to follow the same. Let this be most exactly as agreeable to the Doctor, yourself, and friends. And be it so, when I leave you we may never see each other in the flesh more. What is there in the same? Nothing; you have no doubt of it, that when I am absent from the body, I shall be present with the Lord; then it will be good riddance of bad rubbish; for I know, feel, and find, "in me," that is, "in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." And the natural infirmities of the body, and old age, hath its clogs; so that I am sure of it, to be taken to glory before extreme of age comes, will be a great blessing; yet I leave all this with the Lord. I give myself no concern about it. If I did, it would not alter one jot or tittle of the Lord's most holy will concerning me. My everlasting all depends upon God's most holy and immutable will in Christ Jesus concerning me. So doth the whole of my continuance in a time state, and the very hour and moment of my departure out of this present evil world; and blessed, for ever blessed be the Lord Jesus Christ, I am most truly easy concerning all this. I have for many years been learning in his school to be casting all my care on him who careth for me; and it is now, the Lord be praised, become quite easy for me so to do. I know this is all I have to do, or can do, in a dying moment; and even should I not, the Lord Jesus hath me in his holy care

and keeping; so that I say now, with the apostle, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." I cannot die out of Christ; I cannot die without Christ, because I am in him, and he is in me. I was in him before the foundation of the world; I was viewed by the eternal Father in him, and loved by him with an everlasting love. He never beheld me out of Christ. The being and existence I have in the great Head of the church, is my everlasting security; his incarnation, righteousness, and sacrifice, is my complete salvation; his burial and resurrection is my deliverance from the fears of death and the grave, and my assurance of a blessed and glorious immortality at the last day. The life of Christ in glory, is the ground of my expectation of an entrance into the state of glory, and of all the enjoyment of all the blessings of eternal glory Jesus having said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The Lord the Holy Ghost hath realized the truths of the everlasting gospel concerning the Father's everlasting love to the persons of the elect, and the fixation of the same on their persons, as the elect of God, in the person of Christ, that it hath as true an indwelling in my mind, as my soul hath in my body; so that I have no doubt of the same at any time; and between you and me as friends, it is thus, and by these truths indwelling in my mind, which under the influence of the Holy Ghost is the very principle of all my spirituality and activity. People may say what they may, but I know it of a truth, that there is a new birth or spiritual creation in my soul, which is expressed by our Lord Jesus Christ thus, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life." Yet my whole life is in Christ; this is the evidence of it. "With thee," says the Psalmist, "is the fountain of life, and in thy light we shall see light;" yet we receive life from the fountain of life, by communication, and it is in you and by the free gift of God; so people may say, as they conceive, great things about Christ, but if they make him but ideal, they may keep their ideal Christ to themselves. I am sure he is not my Christ, nor will I give up my Christ for theirs; you know to what I allude.

Let us leave all creatures out; Jesus is our all; it is

with me one of the greatest evidences of personal and eternal election, to be brought from the word and the Spirit to the true knowledge of Christ; and next to it is our being kept in the true knowledge of the Lord and Saviour; and not to find out a new creed different from that we received, when we first were led to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for life everlasting. The Lord be praised for giving us the knowledge of the truth; the Lord keep us in the truth; he will most assuredly do so, if he hath taught us the true knowledge of himself. I always set down in my own mind this, concerning all sorts of professors who swerve from the truth, that they never rightly received and knew the truth. Most assuredly no one in his senses ever yet gave up truth for error; no; it is everlastingly impossible. The apostle John says, "They went out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be manifested that they were not all of us." He says of us, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

I hate to see a large space in a letter, therefore it may be, I fill it up, sometimes with some hints perhaps needless. I consider the postage one and the same; and though it falls not on me, yet you may as well have enough for your money as too little; even if some of it is not of so much importance. I may well excuse myself, and be excused, where others may be blamed, because of my age; except you should break out against me, and say, an old man, and a fool too, is altogether inexcusable. It may be, but I was never so wise as Solomon; no; not in the very prime of youth, so that now I never shall. Yet what of that? The Lord maketh the simple wise unto salvation; the fool, the wayfaring man, whom the Lord enlightens, shall not err in the way to heaven. He shall have Christ for his way, he shall have Christ for his guide, he shall have Christ for his salvation, he shall have Christ for his portion, for his inheritance, for his shield, and for his glory; Jesus Christ is the light of everlasting life, he outshines the whole world, he outshines sin and death, he outshines heaven, and he hath shone on us, and shone within us, and he will continue his shine on us and within us to all eternity. We shall expe-

rience and enjoy all contained in these words, "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory;" in this, everlasting blessedness consists.

You will excuse everything you do not like. Friends should not be offended with each other, because they see imperfections in each other; especially old friends should not. The Lord God is my strength, and he maketh my feet like hinds' feet.

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XL.

TO THE SAME.

Truro, Sept. 27, 1817.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

A MAN that hath a friend must shew himself friendly; it is an obligation on him; he cannot deliver himself from it, but must submit to the same and discharge it. I am now writing to try your friendship to the very extremity of it; I hope it will not warp. This very morning a letter comes from Mrs. Paynter, which as it fell into my hands I could not but read it; in which she expresses her desire to see me next Monday. There is a sense in which I am sorry for this; or, as I may so say, rather sorry it should not have been expressed and received before I sent off my last letter to you. I cannot, however, charge myself with any design to act contrary to my proposal to you. But I do not know how to give up Mrs. Paynter's invitation; she is one of the oldest acquaintances which I have in Christ; we have known each other more than forty-one years; we have had and manifested very real friendship on both sides in the course of that time. It is very unlikely I shall ever see her in the flesh, except I see her now; the distance from hence is

thirty-five or thirty-six miles. I therefore write this to you, hoping you will receive it early on Monday morning, and falling early into your hands it will be the mean of informing you, that I will be with you by the Lord's permission, at Torr Point, on Thursday afternoon, Oct. 2, instead of being there next Monday, Sept. 29; and if the Lord please, will preach on Friday morning and evening, if you like it; then set off the next day for Totness and Torr; so that there will be no alteration there; then if you please, I will return to you on the Wednesday, and preach that evening, Oct. 8; the next morning preach again; hear the Doctor at night; preach the Friday morning and evening, and set off the Saturday morning for Exeter, and from thence in the mail coach for Chard; so as to get there by nine o'clock on the Lord's-day morning, and preach there according to expectation. You will by this plan have just the same number of preachments from me, except one, as was by me proposed to you. As it respects myself, I shall have less fatigue; for as I am not going to preach in the West, or at the most but once, and have since I came here been preaching successively ten times, and am to be engaged this night, and also to-morrow, three times, it will be a little breathing time for me. And as to the strength by which all this is to be performed, it must be supernatural; it depends wholly on the Lord Jesus Christ putting forth his power, and exercising his faithfulness in the fulfilment of that great promise, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be."

You need not write to Mr. Tapley, as this will by no means affect them. It wholly and only affects you and our friends at Plymouth; and this only as it respects the time of my coming; otherwise, you will most certainly have sermons sufficient; so you will not, cannot in the least be losers. I hope my good and well-beloved friend will see for himself I could not with any decency act otherwise. If any are displeased, tell them that looking unto, and living on the Lord Jesus Christ, is far above, and far beyond all other ordinances whatsoever. I really prefer it as my chiefest joy; not that I have got beyond the use of divine ordinances, the Lord forbid.

May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and open up the

channel of gracious communion between him and you, and may he impart most graciously out of his own immense fulness to you, that you may be filled with all the fulness of God. In the outgoings of your minds towards the Lord Jesus Christ, your spirituality and valuation of him is discovered. All spiritual acts must proceed from spiritual life; and spiritual life is from Christ, who is the fountain and spring thereof; and he lives in us, to put forth the same in our souls. It is in him we live; it is by him we are inwardly and spiritually strengthened; it is in him the life of our souls consists; he is to us the water of life, he is in us the fountain of life, he is in us the well of water springing up unto everlasting life. The Lord be praised for any clear and scriptural apprehensions of this. It is but a little while, and we shall have our minds wholly and for ever swallowed up in Christ, and he will be unto us the life of everlasting glory for ever, to a perpetual and unceasing degree, and to an eternal duration. To have some sips by the way is very pleasing, it is very delightful, it whets the appetite, it increases the desire. Our Lord himself says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." There cannot be a greater evidence of spiritual life in our souls, than the being drawn out in heart and affection after the Lord Jesus; he is, to such as know him, all in all; and to them, Christ is all in all. Well, you and I do not want to be informed of this; we have the evidence of the truth of all this in our souls. All which the Holy Spirit can do for us, is only to draw this out into open view and manifestation, by the acts of our faith, and hope, and love, into act and exercise, upon the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. We can never be more blessed this side of heaven than we really are, when our minds are fixed wholly and supremely on our most precious and adorable Jesus, and we are actually feeding on him as the very paschal Lamb of God. We live on what he hath done and most gloriously completed in his most adorable person. It is good to behold him in the glories of his person, and the perfection of his work, and the eternal worth and everlasting efficacy of the same. It is good to view our persons in Christ, and our eternal perfection and blessedness in him; it is good to be living

wholly off ourselves, and out of ourselves, on the work, word, and fulness of Christ Jesus. This is an effectual means to save us from unbelief; it is the only way of giving us real evidence of our interest in him, and his great salvation. Whilst we are living by faith on the Lord Jesus, we get on with a high hand towards heaven. The apostle says, "Christ liveth in me." "I live by the faith of the Son of God." "To me to live is Christ." He had the true knowledge of Christ in his mind; he had the true enjoyment of him in his heart; Jesus was the one continual object of his faith; the salvation of Christ was the subject of his meditation; he went on from one stage in christianity to another, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith." May you and I be kept as he was, ever looking on Christ as he is set forth in the word of grace, in the everlasting gospel. May we never look off him, then we shall never dishonour him; no, indeed we shall not. It is looking off Christ which makes way for our falling; it is looking at, and within us, makes us miserable. Well, to know the cause, should be the means of avoiding the miseries, which cannot but follow on our neglect of being well-pleased with Jesus; which, if we were, we should never neglect him and his great salvation, by looking off the same, by looking at ourselves, and looking within ourselves. And what can we expect to find there, but the same which casts us down? Sin, filth, guilt, emptiness, and the whole essence of apostacy from the Lord, the fountain of living waters. May we, under the light and teachings of the Holy Ghost, be renouncing sin, self, and every thing of our own; and may we be cleaving with full purpose of heart to our Lord Jesus Christ.

I hope you will entreat the Lord Jesus to be with me, and bless me in all things. I am better in my body since I came here.

My most sincere, and utmost, and uttermost regards to the truly reverend and blessed Doctor. My love in Christ to all the brethren and sisters, who are the beloved of God, called to be saints.

May great grace rest on you and your's. The Lord be with your spirit. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and

the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." My love to your son.

I subscribe myself your brother and friend, in the kingdom and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, being delivered from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE SAME.

London, Jan. 14, 1818.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I AM safely entered on the year 1818, and am very well; so that I have great reason to praise the Lord Jesus Christ, who upholdeth me in life, and giveth me all things richly to enjoy. And he also is pleased, most graciously pleased to continue the same unto me; so that it well becomes me to say, "Blessed be the Lord who daily loadeth me with his benefits." As to my continuation in a time-state, I am not one whit concerned about it; I am in his hands, I am wholly at his disposal; I desire to leave myself wholly and altogether with the Lord who careth for me; he is the God of my life, the God of my praise; he is my life in death, he will be my life in heaven, and glory everlasting; he is now my life, my glory, my portion, nor do I desire any but himself to make me completely and everlastingly happy, he being all-sufficient to make me completely happy and holy.

I am fully persuaded there is nothing out of him worth one single thought; there is all in him which is sufficient to make me completely happy in glory, yea, to make me so now, in the hour of death, and to all eternity. I do not expect heaven will make me happy, nor do I expect to be happy there, abstracted from the Lord Jesus Christ; no, I

do not. I shall not be happy in glory, nor be completely blessed there, but in the vision of Christ, God-man, and in real fellowship with him in his glory. So here below, I am no further happy, but as favoured with spiritual believing views and apprehensions of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and in real communion with him, and in receiving real communications from him.

I have been in the kingdom of God's dear Son many a year. I have had real fellowship with Christ, and with the Father in him, through the grace of the Holy Spirit. I am now brought to this. I want nothing, no, not any thing, but such realizing views of the person, grace, and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, as may keep up my mind in perpetual vigour towards him, and be the means of my living in continual dependance on him; indeed, I conceive the whole essence of grace and holiness, must consist herein. I find it a matter of importance to know what the knowledge of Christ consists in, what faith in Christ is, what it is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and what it is to walk with him, what it is to have communion with him, what it is to walk before him unto all well-pleasing. The true knowledge of the same, saves from many false thoughts of these subjects; it also enables the good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ to run the race set before him with cheerfulness and alacrity, which is always, at all times and circumstances, whilst we are looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith. It is but a little while with me, before I shall see the King's face, to sit with his nobles, to behold his glory, and rejoice for ever in him, as the Sun of perpetual and eternal glory; this is a very comfortable consideration, for though I am not in the least impatient, nor do I want to go one moment before his time, which I am fully persuaded will be the best time for myself; yet my age and years all suggest to me, that it cannot be long before I am to be dismissed from the body; and as soon as I am absent from the body, I expect to be present with the Lord.

I am going on fast for seventy-two. If I arrive to the 23rd of June, I shall be that complete. I began to preach, January 1776; so I have been more than forty years speaking of him whom my soul loveth. I have known him from the age of seventeen, not clearly and evangelically, yet I have

tasted of his love, and had breathings and aspirations after him from that time; and he is now to me, what he ever was, transcendently glorious, and altogether lovely and divine. I have really found and enjoyed as real a heaven in my own soul, over and over again, in believing sights of Christ, and in communion with him, in thinking on him, in speaking, preaching, and writing concerning him, as ever I shall in glory; not to that extent and enlargement as I shall there, no, that is impossible; but the reality of it is what I am speaking of. I therefore express it again, I know Christ; and the existence and reality thereof hath its indwelling in my soul, as much as ever it will have in the state of glory and immortality.

What I have been speaking of, has been the means of filling my mind over and over with the joys of Christ's love, and of filling it with the real enjoyments of his salvation. Let me therefore add, in the words of an apostle, "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

I go on every week, through the good hand of my God upon me, preaching, if it may be so called, five times. On the Thursday forenoon, I am attempting an exposition on the first epistle general of John; it is delivered in Sermons. I began it the year before last; and am come to chap. iii. 15, which will be the text to-morrow morning; "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." I write not one word on the subjects before me; yet having frequently drank of the water of life, and been refreshed in my own soul, with living streams from the living fountain, as I have proceeded in these discourses, I have proposed to write them all out. You will be ready to say, you must be a presumptuous old man, you can never expect to finish the same. My friend, I cannot say I shall; yet I have begun and finished thirteen, and there remains, according to my plan, eighty more. And who can say, what perseverance may do, especially if two things are attended unto; the one is, if you and others who love me in the Lord, would pray for me, and that specially and particularly as thus engaged; also, if you and others will not expect me to write letters during my

being employed in this work. The truth is this, and I have myself never departed in my own judgment from it, that the greater good should swallow up the less.

You see, my friend, I open my heart to you. I hope you and your's are perfectly well. The only general and grand restorative for all complaints of body or mind, and the one grand family medicine for the whole household and family of faith, and I profess myself to be one of that family, and so do you also, is contained in this most inestimably precious cordial, which if the family would admit me to give a fresh title to, I should call it, the only balsam of life—"the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin." The virtue of it is so universal, as to be efficacious to the whole family. If there is one of them ails any, it is because they have either not made use of it, or they have dropped making use of the same; those who have received it into their hearts, having received the benefit of the same, it so comforts their spirit, invigorates and strengthens the vitals, and renews the whole frame, that their very countenances shine; they as cheerfully follow Christ in the regeneration, as though there was no cross in the way. Nay, this had such an effect, that many who were under the cross, and some of them had the cross on their backs, yet one who was well acquainted with them wrote this concerning them; he said, "They looked unto him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed."

You and I can never be better off out of heaven than when our eye and heart is fixed on the Lord Jesus Christ. We can never do better for ourselves, than to be living in the continual believing of the Father's testimony, concerning the perpetual and everlasting efficacy of the most precious blood-shedding of the most precious and all-glorious Immanuel. May we be continually exercised in our minds on this important subject. Then we shall value what the Lord, even our Lord Jesus Christ says in these words to us, "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

I wish you a very happy year, in the increasing knowledge of Christ, and increasing communion with him. May your partner, with you, be a partaker of the same inestimable blessing. This is my prayer for you both, which you are to say, with my respects to your Mrs. Trego. My love to your

son. Be pleased to present my duty and best christian wishes and regards to the Doctor, and his family with him, and the young ladies. I do at times make mention of them to our Lord; I hope they do me also. May the goodwill of him who dwelt in the bush, be most abundantly enjoyed by them. The Lord be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

I remain,

Your's in Christ Jesus. Amen.

S. E. PIERCE.

P. S. The second volume on the Psalms is in the press. If you can get any subscribers, well; if not, it is but where it was. When you write, be so good as to say if I was correct in the number sent. I was not at Chard; I sent there four above what I received the money for. Farewell.

LETTER XLII.

TO THE SAME.

Jan. 25, 1818.

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your's yesterday noon. I was very glad, as I always am, to hear from you; yet when I had opened and read it, it gave me, and filled my mind with distress. To hear our dear friend was so greatly indisposed, as your account suggested, gave and created anguish of heart; because I am sure it would be such a loss to the church of Christ, as none of us can estimate. I do not mean our Lord could not raise up one in his stead, nor make one more useful; no: none of this comes in here; but we cannot have another

Dr. Hawker; I cannot therefore be pleased to part with him just now; no, indeed I cannot. I therefore went immediately to court; welcome or not welcome, on this very account. How it might be to our Lord, for me to be there in waiting, I did not consider; but to him I went, enquiring about the Doctor. I knew he was well known as a courtier, so I gave myself no concern how it might appear to our Lord, but thither I posted myself. Should it be pleasing for him to accept of me, and take notice of me, I was determined to make known my request. All I most wanted was for him to notice my being there; as then, should he give me to see he took notice of me, I should then have what I most principally needed. I presented my request for the life of my invaluable friend; it seemed to me, my Lord suggested, he was not going to take it, so I remain easy; so there I left it, and do there leave it; for I had no desire beyond this. You having informed me, our Lord could not be more gracious to the dear man than he was, so I am in hopes, as I am only concerned about his continuance in this mortal state, this will be the case. I must entreat, should anything unfavourable take place, you will be pleased to inform me immediately of it.

On reading your letter over and over, my mind is quite recovered from the distress I at first was in. At present, I conceive our dear friend has had a violent cold, which produced the effects you have related, and that as they are removed, there will be a removal of the present complaint.

On such views as these, our most dear and truly valuable friend will not die but live, and further declare the work of the Lord. For which none will be more truly desirous to bless the Lord, and speak good of his name, than we, you, your wife, and myself shall.

Please to present my best respects to him, and the family.

Your's, most respectfully,

S. E. PIERCE.

P.S. When you write again, say if I sent you one book on the Psalms for a keepsake. Also, if I sent one of the

Testimonies of the Spirit to you for Mr. Osborne. I conceive it was my mistake to send you twelve on the Psalms. It will be best for me to pay Mr. Hore, as he laid out the money for the eight which are not paid for; then, if you should sell them, so much the better, or I can have them again, for I do not want you to be encumbered.

Respects to Mrs. T., and your dear little boy. If the Doctor is better, as I am greatly in hopes of, you need not write.

I am very unwell at present; my eyes and head are very bad; not pain, but very great contraction.

Your's in the Lord most affectionately.

LETTER XLIII.

TO THE SAME.

April 17, 1818.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WAS most kindly favoured by our most highly esteemed and honoured friend, the Doctor, with his account of the Lord's abundant goodness both to his body and soul, which occasioned many thanksgivings unto God. I did not write to express the same to him, because I would not be troublesome. I did as he requested me, and hope he has long since been restored to his ministry and people; none will be more glad of this than myself. I am always busy in my way; so that although I have sore longed to hear how the dear gentleman is, yet I have hitherto forborne to write, yet I can no longer forbear; therefore, I now address you, entreating I may be admitted to know how matters are; and how our Lord Jesus Christ hath been pleased to deal out of himself, in his grace and compassion to you all. Blessed be his name! he is the Lord, gracious and full of

compassion ; his love is both immutable and invincible ; he is the rock, and his work is perfect. His righteousness is everlasting, his sacrifices of perpetual efficacy ; the Father loves and beholds his people with everlasting love and delight in him ; the Holy Spirit bears his testimony to the truth of this in the word ; he bears the same witness to our spirits, and we hereby are led to give glory to the God of heaven, by giving full credit unto the same. You and I want nothing beyond this, to live in the knowledge of the truth, in the true belief of the same, in the constant spiritual exercise of our minds on the same. All blessings will follow this ; we want nothing to go before this ; all is contained in the subject ; and when, and whilst we have communion with the subject, we have the enjoyment of all contained therein, so as to be perfectly satisfied, as being perfectly happy, and truly holy. Our inward, sensible happiness, consists in our spiritual apprehensions of the love of God to us in Christ Jesus ; these are created in our minds by the Eternal Spirit, who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. When he, therefore, gives us a real apprehension of them, he also gives us the real enjoyment of them ; it is hereby he sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, by the which we enjoy heaven in our own souls, as truly as we shall ever enjoy it in glory ; not so fully, but as really. This makes us happy, and it is this which makes us holy. There is no holiness, but what is the effect of the Holy Spirit's indwelling in us ; and this is the fruit of the Father's everlasting love. We can have no communion with our Father in Christ Jesus, but through the Spirit ; " No man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost." It is our blessedness not to be concerned about any other salvation, but that of which Jesus is the author and finisher ; and this is no part of it within us, it is wholly without us, it is wholly in the person and work of the ever blessed Immanuel ; all the virtue, perfection, and blessings of it, are now, and evermore resident in him ; it wholly originates from the will, council, and covenant of the Three in the one incomprehensible Jehovah ; it is the fruit of everlasting love, the gift of free and glorious grace. The gospel is the revelation of it ; we receive our knowledge of it therefrom ; this is by the inspiration and revelation of the Holy Spirit,

we receiving the same into our renewed minds, receive Christ therewith to the saving of our souls.

I have thus freely expressed myself, not as though I was going to inform you of what you are not perfectly acquainted with; but I suppose, if the truth were known, that the paper might be filled up, as you will not pay more for a full letter than for ever so short a one; you will be ready to say, but pray let it have some substance, it may then be of use; otherwise, what will it be to write a long matter, when it may be expressed and contained in a much less compass.

My good friend, I am growing old; you are therefore to expect many infirmities. If you do not expect to find them, yet your old friend is full of them; therefore, he answers no good end to attempt to hide them. How should it be otherwise? Almost seventy-two years of age, yet, blessed be the Lord, I go on preaching, if it may be called by that term, five times a-week; and you may be sure, I sometimes very sensibly feel bodily infirmities. How should it be otherwise? I am at times very much tried with the rheumatism; it fills me with great pain; it affects my eyes, yet the Lord be praised, it does not hinder me from writing, which I am really very thankful for. So the Lord is good, and he doth me good, and his mercy endureth for ever. He is my life, my light, my rock, my God, my salvation, my praise, my blessedness, my righteousness, my purity, my glory, my representative before the throne. What I am is all in what he is to me; what he hath done is my eternal perfection. What I am in him, is all by grace and imputation; what he most graciously communicates unto me, is no part of my salvation, it is but the effect thereof. When I am favoured with interviews with him, and have real sights of him, I do not then want to be in glory with him that I may be happy; for it is real happiness, and it is truly enjoyed, when thus favoured. And I do conceive, on such favoured moments, there is more made known and conceived in the mind, concerning heaven and glory, than at any other time whatsoever. It is evidenced then that it will consist in the vision of Christ, God-man; and to see him face to face, to see him as he is, this will be the beatific vision; most assuredly it will. Then my joy will be full. I begin to long to be at home; to be absent from the

body and to be present with the Lord. If it were only to be delivered from the body of sin and death, from the burden and clog of mortality, it would be a great deliverance; yet to be with Christ, and admitted to have uninterrupted communion with Christ, exceeds all this. So that on many accounts, to be removed to the house eternal in the heavens, is by far more desirable than a continuance in this present time-state; especially to me, who have been so long below; not that there is the least appearance of a removal, except from age, for I have at present a good deal of bodily strength. I suppose when I am called for, it will be suddenly; sudden death is said to be sudden glory. It can be no other to such as are in Christ, for there is no separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I know of no safety from all evil, either in life or death, but by being found in Christ. I cannot be found in him, if I am not in him; and if I am in him, it was from everlasting; and God, who loved me in Christ from everlasting, will continue his love to me, all through time, and to the ages of eternity; therefore, all is well with me; and as all my sins, the whole of them, and all contained in them, have been transferred from my person to the person of Christ, and the righteousness of Christ hath been imputed unto me, and the blood of Christ the Son of God cleanseth from all sin, and his righteousness delivereth from death, I am therefore safe, and prepared for the kingdom of glory, being brought to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. He saith himself, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." As it respects the Holy Spirit's drawing out my faith into act and exercise, that is with him. I do not make so much of it, and never did, as many do; because I never have any doubts and fears, and am not the least disturbed about eternal realities. Christ is always one and the same to me; I believe just the same concerning him one time as I do another. He is the object and subject of my faith; the everlasting love of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity is all in him, so is my whole salvation. And the whole testimony, and seal of the Spirit to all this, is in the written word; from thence I receive and derive my whole knowledge of it, which he is pleased to seal upon my heart. He has brought me to this knowledge many years;

he keeps me in the belief of the same truths; he sometimes shines on them, and reflects the glory of them, with fresh light and lustre on my mind, and I receive fresh light, and life, and unction from them. I am at no time looking out for any fresh truth; no; I only want to see into the spirituality of those truths of the everlasting gospel, which I have already received from the teaching of the Lord the Spirit; and I wait on him, that by his most blessed inspiration, I may receive Christ into my mind, exactly as he hath revealed him, and live on him as set before me in the sacred scriptures. My matters are very simple; it is all the better for me; I have nothing dark, nor high to trouble myself with; no. Revealed truth is clear and plain; and most especially so, when opened, explained, brought home and taught by such a teacher as the all-wise Spirit.

May the Lord make me a greater proficient in the school of Christ. You may think as you please, but I have nothing to boast of. And whilst my Lord is pleased to put up with me, and does not command me back to the lowest form, yet I have no claim to the highest. I know no use to complain; I find it answers a far better end to renounce myself wholly and altogether, and say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. May he bless, keep, and defend you and your's. Amen.

Please to give my best christian regards to the Doctor; I most sincerely thank him for his most excellent epistle, which he directed to me. My best regards to the young ladies. I am also very much obliged by their kind remembrance of me.

My best regards also to Mrs. Trego and your son; and if you please, to any who may ask for me. I am not able to write as I could wish, so you must be content with such as I can send. I have in my time wrote such a multitude of letters to you and others, that I have nothing fresh to communicate; and it appears to me I have lost my gift for letter writing, except on some particular occasions. But certain it is, I want to know how you all are; so I might, you will say, and send something worth reading. My good friend, you do not know what it is to be old, and full of pain; no, say you, neither do I want to

know the same; but I should think all this should make way for the more knowledge of Christ. My dear friend, I used to think so too, and I confess I think it ought; but you see what I am by my letter. Farewell.

The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XLIV.

TO THE SAME.

Bethel House, Brixton, April 10, 1819.

MY GOOD SIR,

I HAVE been very ill, owing to an eruption in my left leg, occasioned by a blow which I received when in Devonshire last. When I returned to London, it was bad; it continued so, and there was a violent inflammation accompanied it, so I lay through necessity for three days in bed; then it seemed better; so I went on after a little manner as I had done before; then, on a Friday night after preaching, on going to bed, I found myself extremely languid, and having slept I awoke very ill. My whole body was so seized, that I could not move; I therefore continued all the day in bed, and was fed, for I could not lift up myself. The next morning I found I could move; therefore I got up, and preached in the forenoon on these words, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." I was so frail, there were some who thought I should have expired in the pulpit. I came out again in the evening, and celebrated the Lord's Supper, went to bed, and concluded I was not the worse for

having been out. But so it was, I found myself extremely ill ; my left leg was in a burning heat. When the morning came, it was found I had what is styled St. Anthony's fire, which being most extremely violent, drove the gout into my left toe. In the course of the day the Doctor came ; he confessed it was a most extraordinary effort of nature, and he did what he judged necessary. I had a large wound, and a very great discharge of the same, and was very greatly reduced. I was not out of bed for ten days, except to have it made, and some whole days not even for that. I had no doubt of the Doctor's skill, and knew him to be a man of God ; but as in my view, there was from the first, considering my time of life, but very little hope of recovery, I therefore sent secretly, without telling any one of it, to the greatest Physician I could think of. I was well persuaded he full well knew my constitution most accurately, and had very great apprehensions of his skill ; he accordingly attended to my request, and proposed some pills for me to make use of. I had three boxes, which I was not to fail taking ; one was for the head, the other was for the heart, the other was for the lungs ; and they operated very efficaciously, on the head, heart, and lungs, and I made a very free use of them ; and the friend charged me nothing, yet he gave me an hint, as I had found the sovereign efficacy of his medicines, I might therefore, when recovered, express my gratitude to him, and thankfulness for his great care and attention unto me, by recommending him, and his healing medicines to such as might need them. I did not promise him I would, yet I hoped I should ; and I will give you an account of each of these, as they filled up the three boxes.

In the first box, the six pills were wholly for the head. I took them to strengthen the same, and they were as follow :

1st Pill. " Fear thou not ; for I am with thee : be not dismayed ; for I am thy God ; I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isa. xli. 10.

2nd Pill. " For I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not ; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm, I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel," verse 13, 14.

3rd Pill. " But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee,

O Jacob; and he that formed thee, O Israel; fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. 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 burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Isa. xliii. 1, 2, 3.

4th Pill. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." Isa. xliv. 21.

5th Pill. "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Isa. liv. 8.

6th Pill. "I will surely have mercy on him (on thee) saith the Lord." Jer. xxxi. 20.

All these were for the head, to strengthen the memory, to keep up the mind, and to keep it stayed on the Lord; and it produced this effect; so that it was to me, like what is said of the leaves of the tree of life, "They were for the healing of the nations;" and I found these pills very healing to my head and mind.

As to the next box of pills, which were for the heart, they were all in one box, six in number, and were as follow:

1st Pill. "Fear not, Abram: (I substituted Samuel Eyles Pierce, as the person spoken unto) I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Gen. xv. 1.

2nd Pill. "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John v. 24.

3rd Pill. "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, hath everlasting life." John vi. 47.

4th Pill. "Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." John viii. 5.

5th Pill. "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me, shall never die. Believest thou this?" John xi. 25, 26.

6th Pill. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go and prepare a place for

you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv.1, 2, 3.

All these were for the heart; for the fortifying it against all the fears of death and dissolution; so that I might have no fits nor shrinkings at the act of dissolution, but that my spiritual mind might be kept up to my last moment, in the exercise of faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, that I might die as became his gospel. In the which he saith, "Peace I leave with you, my peace give I unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John xiv. 27.

I found these most truly beneficial, as I heard the voice of Christ in them. And when I actually conceived death had seized me, I made great use of these; as also I did of the pills contained in the third box, which were for the lungs, that I might breathe freely and clearly without interruption, after the vision of Christ, and a glorious immortality.

I will enumerate these, as I have done the former; and I took the former in order, one after the other, and so I did these, and all at one time; it being suggested they so well suited one or the other, that I might well swallow them all one after the other, only leaving a little space to pray over each, and mix faith with the same.

For the lungs, the six pills were:

1st Pill. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end, Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 9.

2nd Pill. "The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Isa. lx. 19.

3rd Pill. "An entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. i. 11.

4th Pill. "He is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24.

5th Pill. "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from

henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Rev. xiv. 13.

6th Pill. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 16, 17.

The design of these pills was, that if in any case the lungs were affected, and there was not a proper breathing after heaven and eternal glory, they might be invigorated and influenced so to do; and nothing could possibly be calculated to promote this, more than these pills were. As I told you before, at all times, when I found my case very extreme, and felt the sentence of death in myself, that I should not trust in myself, but in God which raiseth the dead, I made use of these, and found them as efficacious for the lungs, as for the heart and for the head. I took them constantly, I might almost say continually.

I did not preach for several weeks. When I first came forth, it was in fear, and in much weakness and trembling. I took these words as my text, "The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" Blessed be the Lord, he hath raised me up beyond my utmost expectation. The Doctor had but small expectation; he considered, though it was not a disease, yet it might be expected to fall on the vitals. I was kept very easy in my mind, I had not one single thing to trouble me. The pain was extreme, yet I was not affected in my memory nor eyes thereby. The Doctor took notice of this to a friend, saying, the pain must have been extreme; so that if it had caused a delirium, it would not have been wondered at; yet nothing of this sort befel me; and I am now most marvellously recovered; so that I may well say, "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

I am able to preach again, and I am thankful in a manner for the same. My leg is without a wound, yet I am not to think too much of this. It seems there is a flying humour in it, which is attended with pain and swelling; but I am very contented it is so well as it is.

You will remember me before the Lord. Please to present my very highest regards, and best respects, and well wishes to the Doctor; and also to Miss Hawker, and Miss Caroline; as also to your spouse, and any of our friends in the Lord Jesus Christ; also to Mr. Babb. May the Lord abundantly bless you.

I preached on the past day on these words, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." Luke xxiii. 46. I am now quite disposed to finish, for it is enough; and it may be, you will say, a great deal more than enough. Well, it is as it is, and so there I must leave it.

May the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. My love to your son. Do not forget your obligations to him, to bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: neither should you overlook these words, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it:" neither should you overlook the high character the Lord gave of Abraham, "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."

With my best wishes for you, your spouse, and son, I conclude,

Your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XLV.

 TO THE SAME.

July 1, 1819.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I WAS very glad to receive a letter from you. As it respects myself, I am far from being what I have been heretofore: age is what it is; I feel it. This is not to be wondered at. I having closed the term of seventy-three years, I am now entered on the seventy-fourth year of my pilgrimage, ever since the 23rd day of the past month. As to my coming down to you this year, this must be given up. I have settled it very completely as to Truro, so as that I am not expected there; it is too far; nor do I intend going away from this place, but so as to be here all the Lord's-days I remain out of London. The time for return there is fixed so as for me to preach at Shoe Lane on the first Lord's-day in September. Whilst all this must be, if and as the Lord will, yet we must have our plan to go by; yet it is all of the Lord, if he will graciously be pleased to accomplish our designs, and admit us to execute our purposes: you need not, therefore, conceive I omit such considerations.

My dear friend, I am not disposed to quarrel with Mr. any one, who may say I do not preach to please them; yet it seems it ought to stare some in the face, and put them to open blush, that publicly, and but last year, there should be such praying for the Lord's blessing upon the ministry of his aged servant, and saying they preached the same gospel with him, and now it seems it is otherwise; so let it be, for I am sure I do not preach as they do. Well, so let it be; I do not envy them, nor their gifts, nor graces, nor will their ill-will give me the least concern. I will leave such to their own wills. I believe the natural temper of some is quite sufficient to make them most truly miserable; much more so, than my not preaching what they style

the gospel. I am by no means disposed to alter my preaching; because I know what I preach, and I am at a point, so there we will leave it.

My good friend, I sent by the way of Mr. Paris, two sets of books on the Psalms, and it was requested you would send one set to Exeter, to the person you sent the numbers unto; the other I requested might be given to Mr. or Mrs. Baker, at the Dock. I hope you have received, or will receive the same. As you made no mention of this in your letter, I conceived you had not received them at the time you wrote. I sent off, on Friday last, June 25, four sets on the Psalms, by Russell's waggon, directed for you, as you said you wanted two of the first volumes; it is best they should go in pairs. If you can sell them, well; if not, you are accountable to no one but myself; and if they are not sold, they may be as well in your shop, as elsewhere. You are to pay yourself for the carriage out of them; so that if you sell but one, you will not suffer loss.

My good friend, there is now a very near approach to the time when I must die. I am not sorry for it; the body begins to be weak and languid, it cannot but be so. I am not unwilling to yield up my spirit, when my Lord please. I am one in him, and one with him, and have had a secret being and existence in him, by the act of the Father's eternal election from before the foundation of the world. The salvation of Christ is my complete redemption: I am what he is in the sight of God, so that I am accepted in him; I am righteous in his righteousness, I am clean in his most precious blood, I am complete in him. I therefore have in him all I want for life, death, heaven, and eternal glory; so that I have nothing to look at, within myself, or at my preaching; there is no salvation in myself, nor in my services, yet there is salvation in the subject matter of my preaching. Yet I am not going to be saved by my preaching, no. I am saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, which Saviour and salvation are most expressly set forth and declared in the everlasting gospel, which I have the honour from the Lord God put upon me to preach; which gospel of the grace of God, the gates of hell cannot, shall never be able to prevail against it.

The doctrine of the Trinity, in the real confession of their

distinct persons, covenant acts, and relations to the election of grace, may be denied. But who are they who do so? Such as have been, and never were any otherwise than mere speculists in divinity. And I conceive it might have been said of most of these, even when they were at their best, they were described most exactly by Solomon, who speaking of a fool, says, "He was wiser in his own conceit than seven men that could render a reason." This will very well apply itseif to the creatures who resist, with might and main, the doctrines of the three divine persons Father, Son, and Spirit, in the one self-existing Godhead. For if it be not recorded in the Bible, why are they so madly against it? And if it be recorded therein, that so it is, then it must be contained in the Bible, so long as there is a Bible in the world. And what can they make of God's care of his church, who hath continued his true church in the confession of this, the belief of this, and the truth of this, from Adam's fall down to the present time; nor can there be any salvation preached to sinners by any who deny the doctrine. Well, I am for leaving all such, it being evident the Lord hath left them. I will not turn blasphemers in my old age, and renounce the belief of that which concerns God himself. I cannot, for this reason, I never learnt it from any man, or books. The Lord himself inlaid the truth of this doctrine in my mind. I have received light into the doctrine from the books, confessions, and preaching of many holy, learned, spiritual-minded men; nor will I reject the testimony these have borne in their writing and ministry of these important truths. The prophet Jeremiah asks the following question. "Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon, which cometh from the rock of the field? Or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place, be forsaken?" Surely not. The proper statement of eternal truth, given by the great men of God, whose works still praise him in the gate, are to be attended unto; they should not be treated with such contempt as some do; there is no wisdom in such wise-acres, as treat the testimonies of past saints, concerning the truths of God, with such contempt, and set up their own imaginations of their own brains as of far greater importance than what is absolutely founded on a "Thus saith the Lord." Nor could you with an unblushing con-

fidence dare affirm the Holy Ghost is not a person ; but is always spoken of in the neuter gender, and not as a person in the pronoun I, he, him. Were they honestly to advert to such a passage as this, “ Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” Acts xxi. 11. It may well be said to all these to whom I allude, “ Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, neither the power of God.” Or “ Do ye not therefore err, not knowing the scriptures, neither the power of God ?”

My good friend, let all such alone ; they are not worthy to be mentioned. I am very glad no one takes up his pen to write against them ; the only way to stop them is to take no notice of them. Our Lord says, “ Let them alone ; they are blind leaders of the blind ; and if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch.” If they were all to unite to write against me, and that which I preach, write, and teach, I would neither write against them, nor against their untruths ; nor would I read the same. Let God be true, and every man a liar. The Lord is all-sufficient to plead his own cause.

I think the following scripture is quite suited to the whole of this. The Psalmist says, “ Arise, O God ; plead thine own cause : remember how the foolish man blasphemeth thee daily.” You know me and my doctrine. Blessed be the Lord, it is, and hath all been long before the public ; and let the Lord do with me and it as seemeth good in his sight.

You will be pleased to present my best, highest, and most respectful regards to the Doctor. May the Lord be most evidently and gloriously with him. Also to Miss and Miss Caroline Hawker ; also to your spouse and son, and to all inquiring friends. I should be glad to hear from you, when you have received the parcel before-mentioned.

May the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, and in blessing may he most abundantly bless you. I believe I have wrote all necessary. My love to Mr. Ball and Mr. Babb. Do not meddle with, nor have anything to say to such as are enemies to the doctrine of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity. Live down their errors, by living the very doctrine

in your own soul, which they reject: this will be the best confutation of their mistakes.

I remain, your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XLVI.

TO THE SAME.

Chard, Aug. 14, 1819.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I RECEIVED last evening a letter from our most invaluable friend, the Doctor. He says he has appointed the 19th of this present instant; he adds, he hopes to see me in Chard before the 22nd of this month, and arrange with me for my journey to Plymouth.

My good friend, I was in hope to have been excused of coming down to you. But if it must be so, then I must set off from this place on Monday, the 23rd of this month. And if the Lord will, I shall be with you on Tuesday, the 24th; and if you can make it convenient, will endeavour to preach that night; also, on Wednesday morning and evening, and Thursday morning. This must be all; and set off the next morning for Exeter, where I should like to preach the Friday evening, and set off the next day for Chard. Will you be so good as to write a line to Mr. Nicks, at Exeter, and say, if the Lord will, I mean to call on him; and if he and the Minister have no objection, preach that evening, which will be the 27th of this month. I mean to come in the coach, if there should be one that travels all night, so as to be with you on the Tuesday morning. All this I must express,

whilst all this cannot be but as the Lord wills. I shall have a companion with me. I am full of infirmities, so that you will find me very different from what I was when last with you.

Now, you will be pleased to understand the Doctor requested me to write, to give you to know when I intend to be with you, which being done, all matters are thus far settled, and you need not write again. My christian regards to all friends, with your dear spouse, and love to your son. Mrs. Pitts desires her kind remembrance to you, and Mrs. Trego, and your son.

I believe I have now stated the outward matters. As to those of eternal importance, they are all settled. You know my subject is Christ, nor have I any alteration to make in this most glorious subject. There is no addition to be made to the person of Christ; his name is exalted above and beyond all blessing and praise; not one of the saints in glory, either angel, or saint, of the elect of Adam's posterity can, with all their gazing on him, and by all their intellectual sight and vision of him, comprehend fully his personal glory, majesty, perfections, and worth. He is what he is, incomprehensible; in his love, infinite; in his salvation, glorious and honourable; in his fulness, inexhaustible. There is that in him which will keep up the mind, so as to exercise the same in perpetual vigour on him, and that with increasing delight throughout the ages of eternity. Christ is the everlasting sun in the kingdom of glory; he is the glory of heaven, the fountain of everlasting blessedness, and the spring of all their joys, who see him face to face, who see him as he is. A glimpse of him is sufficient to create an everlasting day of grace and glory in the mind. What then must a sight of him in his full-orbed glory be! As it respects the knowledge of Christ, which is let into our minds by faith, this for the reality of it is as true and real, as a view of him in glory will be; the one is through the glass of the gospel, the other is by the vision of his person. It is good to see Jesus even now, as he shines forth in the word of truth; it is hereby we receive him into our understandings, will, heart, and affections; we, having received him in a way of believing, he dwells in our hearts by faith. He, dwelling in our hearts, we live by faith on him; and whilst we do, it is well with us, and we then cast our

every care and concern for body and soul on him. When we have a gospel knowledge of Christ, it is then very easy to place our whole dependence on him for salvation and life everlasting. The one most important truth of the gospel, even that which is the chiefest support of the mind, is the person of Christ, and the sacrifice of Christ. The person of Christ is the work of salvation; the work of salvation is our complete redemption itself. To be enlightened to know the truth of this, that Christ by his one offering hath perfected for ever the putting away of sin, this is the means whereby we are brought to believe the virtue and everlasting perfection of the same, and in the belief of it, trust simply and alone on the righteousness and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, as him who hath made an end of sin, and hath brought in everlasting righteousness. This is the one foundation; all which follow this, are but the fruits thereof. When the mind is once truly established in this belief, that Christ without us is the object we are to look unto, and trust in; and that what he did and suffered in his own person is our whole salvation, then he becomes most truly precious; and the whole support of the faith and hope of the believer in Christ Jesus, is maintained in the mind by what is revealed of him in the holy scriptures. It is not by our enjoyments of Christ, and the Father's love in him, we are fed and nourished up unto life eternal; but it is by what we believe concerning Christ, and the Father's love in him, that we are strengthened in our most holy faith. To have a regular and correct statement in the mind of the person of Christ, of the finished work of Christ, together with the Father's record and testimony concerning the salvation of Christ, that he sets it to the account of those for whom Christ died, and that the Holy Spirit is the revealer and testifier of this in the written word; and from the same, and with the same, testifies it to the minds of believers in Jesus, is of vast consequence to those persons who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The generality of such as profess Christ have nothing to do with these subjects which have been mentioned; they are for inherent grace, for placing all their confidence in a work of inherent grace; this they make more of than they do of the person and work of the most blessed Lord Jesus Christ. So that such persons are always best pleased to hear about

themselves, to be pleased with themselves; to have their feelings, frames, graces, and experiences made a good deal of. Well, the Lord be praised, we have not so learned Christ; neither do I desire to be acquainted with such. You will say, surely you have said enough of this; leave all this alone, preach Christ, be steadfast in the truth, let your profiting appear unto all. You say, my friend, that which is right. I will close this.

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and keep you, and cause his face to shine on you; even so, Lord Jesus. Let this be the blessedness of my friend. I ask it now of thee, O precious Lord Jesus, for my beloved friend, John Trego, of Plymouth. Amen.

I am, my good friend, your's in Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XLVII.

TO MR. AND MRS. JOHN TREGO.

Bethel House, Brixton, Sept. 27, 1819.

MY GOOD FRIENDS,

I HOPE you are well in your persons, in your family, with your son, in your circumstances; and that you are walking in the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost; then you may most truly say, all is well. And why should I not conclude it is thus, and that it must be thus with you, seeing it is declared in the sacred word of God himself, that "He blesseth the habitation of the just?" And who are the just? Are they not those who are justified persons? And on what footing are they justified? Is it not on the account of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ?

And who is it that justifies them? It is God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. How do they receive the knowledge of this into their minds? Is it not from the scriptures of truth, and from such open declarations of the same as these? "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Surely so it is. When it is given us to know Jesus, to believe in Jesus, to rest in him, and glory in him as the Lord our righteousness and atonement, then it is evident that we are passed from death unto life, and are translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son: in which state of free, full, and final justification, we may well enjoy the blessings of the same, as they are free grace blessings, which actually belong to us, agreeable to the state and kingdom we are now in. It is expressly said, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." All this belongs to him who believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly; to the man "unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works."

In the present day we have too little of this in the ministration of the word; we are too much for sanctification; yea, we make and esteem it much more, and far beyond the doctrine of justification. I am from my heart afraid, many whom we suspect not, who in words profess with ourselves to be saved by Christ alone, yet they are not clear in the doctrine of a sinner's justification in the sight of the Lord, and before him; that it is altogether a gratuitous act of God's will; that the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, which he himself, being made under the law, as our Surety, which he wrought out in his own person, this is the matter of our justification, which being imputed unto us by an act of God's will, constitutes us righteous before him; upon the ground of which he pronounces us righteous in his sight, and justifies us from all things.

We find people always look within themselves, and wanting

to bring forth something of their own, to prove they are in Christ; they do not make the whole, what respects election, salvation, effectual calling, knowing our personal interest in Christ, with our being admitted into real fellowship with Christ, matters of grace. It is only by the true teaching of the word and Spirit of God, we can be brought to this. Many, with all the true teaching they are favoured with, get above such ideas as these, that had it not been for Christ's mediation, the Lord God could not have loved us, he could not have been propitious unto us, if Christ had not died for us; all which shews they have no true and proper views of what is actually set forth in the revelation of grace, the which is made known by the everlasting gospel. Most assuredly therein is contained the manifold wisdom of God, in a mystery. Why is it called a mystery? Because it exceeds the comprehension of any of the sons of men. How can any of them understand the same, if it be a mystery beyond their natural comprehensions? Is not the mystery of the gospel fully revealed in the scriptures? Most assuredly it is. Yet the truth is, neither Adam in Paradise, nor the elect angels in heaven, could have ever had the least knowledge of the same, without a supernatural revelation of the same to their minds. Take into consideration the following scriptures, and then judge if it be not even so. "For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." Isa. lxiv. 4. "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. "The mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you," or among you, "the hope of glory." Col. i. 26, 27. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." John i. 18.

Does it not fully appear from these quotations, that

neither elect angels, or elect men, can have the least knowledge and perception of the divine mysteries of the everlasting gospel, but by supernatural revelation? Let me add to this these words of the apostle, who says of his being brought to the knowledge of Christ, "How," says he, "that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." Eph. ii. 4, 5. And again, in verses 9 and 10 of the same chapter, "And to make all men see what is the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." It is not sufficiently acknowledged, that there can be no true knowledge of God, nor any true acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, but as the mind is under the supernatural light, and teaching of the Holy Ghost; yet every one that professeth Christ, giveth full and convincing evidence of this; for many in all they talk, preach, and profess of Christ and gospel grace, say nothing on these most sublime subjects, but are altogether below the same. It amounts to nothing above and beyond a natural knowledge and apprehension of the same. Our Lord Jesus Christ says, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to them it is not given. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears for they hear." It must be so, for all goes by the divine sovereignty: it is well for us therefore to adore the same, and ever to acknowledge it. "As many as were ordained to eternal life," it is these to whom it is given to believe. Most assuredly, such as have a true spiritual and supernatural knowledge of Christ, and the deep things of God, and agreeable with the revelation which God has made of his Son in the scriptures, it is such that have the clearest proof and evidence of their personal interest in Christ, and most undoubted evidence of their election in Christ, that the Lord God can give them. Let us prize such a knowledge of Christ as is beyond the reach and attainment of nature; such as cannot enter the heart of man. This will be the best evidence of our being

born again of God. I am for a true scripture statement of truth; yet I am not for needless disputations about our own views concerning it. Let me have God's thoughts of Christ, and of me in him, and let me live in the real knowledge and belief of the same, and then I shall have in my own soul, the greatest evidence of the reality of the same, so that I shall not be removed from the hope of the gospel. If evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, I shall not be greatly cast down. Let me be but a living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men, I have then all I want or wish for; for I cannot live Christ, unless I am by the Holy Ghost brought to the knowledge of Christ; neither then can I live Christ, but in proportion to the knowledge of him, and his great salvation, which he is pleased to give me. And it is as he is pleased to take of the things of Christ and shew the same unto me, that my regenerated mind can be and is kept up to the subject. And when I live Christ, what do I then enjoy? A real apprehension of a free and absolute pardon of all sin by faith in his most precious blood-shedding; complete and absolute justification before the Lord in the obedience of Christ; a sense of pardon as completely made by the blood of his cross; boldness and access with confidence to the Father, by the faith of him, all which makes way to look on myself, and at myself, as one with Christ, as righteous in his most complete righteousness; as pure, and without all spot of sin, in his most precious blood; and whilst I am beholding myself in him, I dwell on high, and find him to be my place of defence; he being to me as the munition of rocks; so that he is my daily bread, and my water of life.

I must mind how to conclude, or it will prove I have a bad memory. My love to your son, and my christian regards to you both, as one in Christ, and as my friends in him.

Acknowledging myself very greatly obliged to you both for all kindnesses,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO THE SAME.

London, Nov. 1, 1819.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM going to inform you, as one whom I most highly respect and value, that my dearest dear, Miss Elizabeth Turquand, expects to join hands with me in holy wedlock on the coming Friday, November the 5th, in the parish church at Clapham. As I want you to partake with us in our joys, which are spiritual, I therefore am desirous that you may know the time when the knot is to be tied, so that you may offer up suitable prayers for us.

When I left Chard, where I saw and conversed with the Doctor, I communicated my intention to him, and what I had in view as soon as I came to London, and also to such as I was disposed, and to them only whom I knew there was a necessity for the same. Mr. and Mrs. Bailey have acted extremely kind indeed. They freely and most generously granted my request concerning the rooms; they have caused them to be very comfortably fitted up for our reception. They have given us many things towards furnishing them; they also say they will do anything in their power to make us happy. Mr. Bailey will give her, whom I love as my own soul, to me to be my wife; and we are to dine with Mr. and Mrs. Bailey on the bridal day; all which is most truly pleasing and acceptable to me. We shall want nothing on that day to make and render it a most blessed and highly important day unto us, but to be favoured with most precious, distinct, and clear views of our most precious Lord Jesus Christ, together with some real communion with him, and with the Father in him, through the gracious indwelling of the Holy Ghost in our souls.

I have most solemnly and importunately requested and invited him whom our souls love; well knowing none can be more blessed than those are, to whom he is pleased to come, and grace their nuptials with his most gracious and life-giving presence. I know so much of him, and of his heart towards me, by many years' personal acquaintance with him, that I have proved and found it is only to ask, and he will most assuredly grant. As I do expect his company, so I know he will not come empty-handed. He is full of grace, his hands are full of blessings, his heart overflows with love, his lips are full of grace and truth; they are like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. I have known him above fifty years. He cannot come, but he will most assuredly bless us; no, he cannot. I am fully persuaded of this. In blessing, he will bless us; and this will be very acceptable unto us both on the marriage-day.

I intend to take up these words of his for my motto on my wedding-day: "In blessing I will bless thee;" to the which I will, if permitted, subjoin, "Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth." Then turning all this into a prayer, it shall, for the substance of the same, be as follows: "And now, Lord, thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant. Now therefore, let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever; for thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed for ever." This will afford matter for spiritual meditation, such as cannot but end in present, personal, and particular communion; and I know something of the spiritual blessedness hereof; indeed I do. The Lord be praised for the same, or I could not have gone on so many years, through evil report and good report. I may well say in the past, present, and future tenses; Jesus the Saviour, who is God over all blessed for ever, hath been, is, and will be my defence. I hope to enter on my wedding-day, with the same spirituality and glorious views of Christ, and true believing apprehensions of the truths of the everlasting gospel, as I would desire to die with, and enter the state of eternal glory, and a blessed immortality. That is, in the full belief of the love of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to my person in Christ: and also in the firm belief of the Father's record of the person, work, and

finished salvation of Christ, given in the sacred page. This will remove all guilt from my mind, all fear from my heart, "For if God be for us, who can be against us?"

I include my dear wife in the us on this present occasion; and I say to her in these words which follow, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up freely for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?"

To be brief. I hope to enter on Friday next, as I would wish to enter on every future day of my future life, in the full belief of being one with Christ, as having been as one in Him, the object and subject of the Father's everlasting love, before the foundation of the world; I hope to enter in the full belief of the everlasting efficacy of the righteousness and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, upon the footing of which I am, in the sight of God, as pure as the blood of Christ can purify me; and, in the righteousness of Christ, imputed to me, I am constituted the righteousness of God in him. I hope to be living in the full belief of what Christ is to me, and what I am in him, of my acceptance in Christ, of my being freely justified and pardoned in him. I will be willing on my marriage-day to have the settlement looked at, the inheritance surveyed; I shall then be for making use of the unsearchable riches of Christ; I shall be for feeding on Christ the bread of life; then I shall be for drinking royal wine, even the wine of the kingdom, such as makes glad the hearts of elect men. I will most assuredly go to church in my best robe, with my heart in the perfect peace of God, in the full belief of that peace which Christ hath made by the blood of his cross, in the enjoyment of the peace of God which passeth all understanding. "I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God, I will make mention of his righteousness, even of his only."

If the Eternal Three will be pleased most graciously to sup with me, my beloved spouse, and select company, and make the bridal visit, and bless us with immediate fellowship with themselves, the Father holding fellowship with us, in the fresh discoveries of his everlasting love; the Son conveying the knowledge of his person to the mind, in his glory and grace, in his mercy and salvation, so as to draw the whole heart after him, and most divinely impress the same with the true knowledge and enjoyment of himself; and the

Holy Ghost granting personal communion with himself, by his indwelling in us, in his revealings of Christ unto us, and by his taking of the things of Christ, and shewing the same unto us, and thereby forming Christ more fully in us, and forming us, and fitting us more and more for shewing forth his glorious praise, it is hereby we shall be blessed with that real communion with the Eternal Three in the one incomprehensible Jehovah, as will fully justify us, in saying with the apostle John, and as truly as he did, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, by the Spirit."

I believe you must be very nearly tired in reading over so long a letter, and so much of it taken up about myself. Well, my dear Sir, I was willing to request your prayers; for in praying one for the other, we most certainly express our real love in Christ one to the other. I received Mr. Ball's letter. He must be content; I cannot write soon. Miss Caroline Hawker must make as much of her letter as she possibly can. She must live it over, then she will get some of the good of it into her mind. You will be pleased to give every regard, with all possible respect, from me to the Doctor; and every kind respect to Miss, and Miss Caroline Hawker; also to your dearly beloved wife. She must excuse me at this time, if I have not been particular enough.

It is at present a very particular season with me. The dear object of my affection and delight is uppermost; so that I am overcome with a great deal of thought; you will be pleased to receive her very best remembrance to you and your's. Pray remember me to Mr. Ball, I wish him as happy as myself. There is nothing to prevent this; looking to the same Jesus will make him as perfectly and truly happy, as he can be this side heaven. Few believe this, yet it is as true as truth itself; you will communicate to the dear Doctor the subject of this letter, and request on our behalf the benefit of his prayers. It will be doing us honour; he will reap the good of the same; as we cannot go forth in any act of love towards each other for Christ's sake, but it redounds to our own profit and benefit. I know it to be so of a truth. You cannot conceive how highly I value my best beloved friend, according to God's ordinance! yet, blessed be the

Lord, I do not find she takes off my heart from the most adorable and precious Lord Jesus. The Lord forbid this should ever be the case, no; nor neither from the true church of Christ, or its real concerns and interest. I am most certainly assured that thus it will be, that thus it must be; the Lord God will be as immutable in his word, as he is in his nature; and he says, "I will never turn away from you from doing you good." "I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me." And he is that God that cannot lie. He says, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."

I once more entreat you to be our remembrancer before the throne. The Lord himself be with you and your's, and bless you exceedingly,

I remain, your's in our Lord Jesus Christ,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER XLIX.

TO THE SAME.

London, Feb. 19, 1820.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I HOPE you and your beloved spouse and son are in good health. We have had a very tedious winter; the cold has been most severe and extreme, yet the Lord has been most graciously pleased to sustain me beyond expectation, so that I was carried on almost to the close of January. Then I was seized with a severe rheumatic pain, which confined me to my bed for more than three whole days; so I was not engaged in preaching for one whole week, since which I

have been admitted to go forth, and go on as usual. I have a real blessing in my partner. She is a most truly loving and affectionate wife, a real friend, and a good nurse; she is also one who believes in the name, person, righteousness, and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. I do love her indeed. Many see with me, that she is the gift of the Lord to me, to take kind notice, to pay attention, and be a comfort unto me in my old age.

My good friend, we can say nothing, at such a distance of time as it is, to my leaving London; yet we have it in contemplation, and thanking you for your mutual kindness unto us, we shall make your house our residence, should we be permitted to come. My time, my life, my breath, my all are in the Lord's hands, and wholly at the disposal of his most absolute and sovereign will; I am well pleased that it is even so. I would not it should be otherwise. My whole existence in time and eternity, is fixed on his immutable will. He says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." The Lord be praised, he keeps my mind stayed on Christ. He is my rock, he is my God, he is my salvation, my righteousness, my purifier, my defence. It is what the Lord Jesus Christ is in himself, and hath done in his own person, and hath finished by his obedience and sacrifice, in agreement with his Father's will, is the ground of all my confidence before the Lord. It is what Christ is to me, and what I am in him, that bears me up. I do find enough therein to carry me out of myself, above myself, and beyond myself, so as that I most clearly perceive an all-sufficiency in Christ, for me to glory and rejoice in; for me to make my boast of, and to triumph with an eternal triumph over all and every evil I am the subject of. It is the everlasting virtue and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, silences the guilt of sin in my conscience. It is the gospel knowledge of it which keeps my mind in perfect peace. The Lord be praised, I have no strife in my conscience. I look wholly and simply to the Lord Jesus Christ for the whole of my salvation. No part of the same is within me. I have the inward knowledge, perception, and enjoyment of the same in my renewed understanding, heart, and conscience. But the salvation itself is without me, in the person, blood, and righteousness of the ever-blessed Lord Jesus Christ. He is my head, he

is my life, he is my purity, he is my righteousness, he is my foundation, he is my hope, he is my perfection, he is my all; yea, he is my all and in all. There is nothing in my fallen nature but sin, emptiness, misery, and death. There is nothing in my new nature but a capacity to receive, enjoy, and partake of the blessings of salvation. My freedom from the imputation of all my sin, both inward and outward, from original and actual transgression, is in Christ. He was made sin, by the Father's transfer of the same unto him, and laying the same upon him, and imputing the same unto him, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The plan of this was conceived in the divine mind before the world was; the draught of it was the foundation of the covenant acts from everlasting, between the Father and Christ. The execution of this ancient covenant compact between the Father and Son is salvation completed. It is very gloriously expressed by the apostle, who says, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Now if my everlasting life, salvation, state and blessedness before God, is founded in the eternal acts of the divine and immutable will of the Three Persons in the One living, true, and everlasting God; and this is all set before me in the revelation of Christ, who hath fulfilled the will of him that sent him, in obeying the holy law, and fulfilling all righteousness, "by the which will we are sanctified, by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," what have I then to fear, or give myself any concern for?

Let me live long, or die soon; let me feel myself to be what I am, as having the essence of all sin, and the whole contained in the same in my fallen nature, there is nothing in all this to interrupt my faith and confidence in the Lord. It is by the covenant will of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that the sacrifice of Christ should always be the same, in the efficacy and virtue thereof. So that I am always everlastingly pure and clean from all sin, in the sight, and before the Lord, through the most gracious blood-shedding of Christ Jesus.

My dear friend, it affords me boldness with the Lord, confidence in him, on the knowledge and belief of these eternal truths I have been reciting. And from them it appears,

that the joy of the Lord is my strength, and the salvation of God is that which sets me up on high. It is eternal things, the knowledge of the unseen Jesus; it is communion with him, it is a looking for the glorious hope, and the appearing of the great God even our Saviour Jesus Christ, which keeps up and maintains my faith, and animates me in views of death and glory. For glory will most certainly consist, in being absent from the body, and in being present with the Lord; and to be present with him, will consist in beholding his glory, which will be reflected on us by the vision of his glorious person, which will reflect eternal glory on us.

I do think the best actual preparation for death and heaven, must consist in having the mind fully, actively, and personally exercised in believing apprehensions of the person of Christ, the Lord of glory. In views of the life he lives in glory; how he is there instated in glory, as seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high; as having purged our sins by the sacrifice of himself. It is not that I can reach the subject, yet I inwardly have some faint apprehensions of the same, that to shine forth in the person of Christ, before the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, it must be the very essence of glory, perfection, and blessedness. And this is all in Christ. It is but reflected on the elect saints within the veil; it is not inherent in them, yet they will be filled through and through therewith. We shall live there in the righteousness and blood of Christ, as to apprehend ourselves fully, to be as pure and sinless, as truly and immutably as righteous as we can be, as we are purity and righteousness itself, in the person of Christ, in whom we shall thus shine for ever and ever.

Thus I go on, I fear, to very little purpose, except it be by increasing the king's revenue, by your having to pay postage for this very imperfect scroll.

My wife joins me in the kindest remembrance of love and regards to you both, and your son. Should we be permitted to visit you, it will not be sooner than August. We shall not leave London until July, I suppose it may be about the middle of the same. My very best regards and every thing which is respectful to the Doctor, with christian regards to both the Ladies. Love in Christ to all our spiritual friends. My sincere regards, and

wife's also, to Mrs. Trego. I mention this so very particular, as not having forgot how I was reprov'd for such an omission.

Your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

P.S. I have sent two dozen of books for to be conveyed to you by Mr. Paris, I sell them six shillings each; I have none other in my own hands, except those on the Psalms, and they are thirty shillings a set.

LETTER L.

TO MR. AND MRS. JOHN TREGO.

Brixton, June 28, 1821.

MY GOOD FRIENDS,

YOUR letter was received in due season, although it hath not yet received an answer. I am now this very morning entered on a new era of time, having this morning, about half-past eight o'clock, closed seventy-five years of my life, so that I am just entered on the seventy-sixth year of my age. I have more to be thankful for, than I can either express to the Lord, or to his chosen ones. It affords me therefore a subject to fill up a part of this paper before me. I assure you I am so got out of the habit of letter-writing, that I have lost the gift I once seemed to possess that way; neither am I quite so fond of it as in times past. Having wrote so many, I really look on it as needless. It is of greater fatigue than to preach a sermon. I also think it quite needless.

I would wish to enter on the present period, I mean on this anniversary birth-day, looking afresh to the Lord; and

in the secrets of my own mind, and in the exercise of my mental faculties, record his mercies, and merciful acts towards me, both as they respect my body and soul. I may well say, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath dealt bountifully with me." I was born June 12, old style, 1746, about half an hour after eight in the morning; so you bring that to the present new style, and you will find I am quite correct as to my present age. I was early brought under solemn thoughts of God and of his Christ; and have been more than sixty years blessed with some supernatural views and apprehensions of our most precious Lord. I have been favoured in that space of time, with many gracious visits from him, with many most free and blessed accesses to him, with many blessed and most gracious communications from him, and very many real communions with him. You may be sure I have not rendered again according to the benefits received. No, that I have not. I have sinned; I have been wounded; I have been in the most tremendous cases as it respects my conceptions of the same, a believing man could be in; yet I have found the Lord "a God ready to pardon," or, as it is in the margin of the passage to which I allude, "A God of pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness, who hath not forsaken me." So far from it, his mercies have kept pace with my sinnings; his compassions with my miseries; his grace hath in the display of the same, towards me, within me, and upon me, all throughout these past years, been astonishing to myself; they are beyond all I have ever conceived, they exceed all my blessing and praise, they are beyond all enumeration; so that I can only say they are incomprehensible. So they will ever be by me, let me remain in this present time-state, or let me be in the world of glory. I may therefore well say, "I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."

I desire my faith may at all times be supported, strengthened, increased, and maintained by the word of God. I have selected these words for that purpose, and do therefore take them up for the present birth-day, and to go on with them

even to the very hour of death, which, when it will be I know not. It is fixed in the Lord's will and decree, I have nothing to do with it; yet I would be properly provided for it. And I think I am most completely furnished in these words which I have this day taken up; and by mixing faith continually with hope, to be improving upon: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. I conceive there is every thing in these I can possibly need, or the Lord himself can be unto me, either in life or death. I am also vastly delighted with the spiritual amusement the following scripture affords my intellectual mind, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon: those that he planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God, they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing, to shew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him."

You will be ready to say, what a long story you have gone over, and all about yourself, and about the Lord's goodness to yourself. I wonder you had not lugged in Mrs. Pierce, to have settled the balance. Why there is nothing of Christ and his salvation! I thought with you, the revelation of Christ, and his righteousness and death, was estimated by you to be the gospel. My good friends, I really apprehend it to be wholly and alone the gospel by the which I am saved. What I have related are the effects of the grace of the gospel produced in the mind, and realized therein from the word, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. As it respects my partner, I received her as a blessing from the Lord, and as a gift of his free grace, given me from him as the God of my salvation; and must say she is the crowning blessing of my old age. Well, I will close with observing, the Jews thought a man at sixty an old man; and at seventy they looked upon him as grey-headed. Solomon says, "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." He also says, "The glory of young men is their strength, and the beauty of old men is the grey head." And the Lord himself says, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord."

Well, I am as full of church-yard blossoms as my head

will admit of. They are not many, because I have but little hair left; the moisture of the head, and the strength of the constitution being greatly diminished, yet this old man you want to see. I wonder what you are to see. Is it not almost expected he is only fit for the bed, or the grave? Well, we will come to business. I am to go to Truro. I think it will be best for me to go there before I come to you. I must act with discretion; or I shall be like as last year, so over-done, as not to be able to come amongst you. My plan is as follows. We are to leave London, Monday, July 2nd, and set off for Reading; we stay there until Thursday morning, for High Wycomb, in Buckinghamshire, and spend the second Lord's day in July. From thence we are to set off and make the best of our way for Chard, so as to preach there on the third Lord's-day in July, and three beside. Then I shall be for leaving that place on Monday, August 6, and get to Honiton, and on to Exeter, and set off at midnight in the mail, and get on to Launceston and stop at Mr. Eyre's, who is one of the oldest of my friends in Christ in the world. Having rested there, we set off for Truro, so as to preach there at the Tabernacle, on the second Lord's-day in August. We are to be engaged two Lord's-days after; this will bring us to the end of the visit; then we come to you on Monday, August 27, and stay until Saturday; then set off so as to return back to Chard, and from thence to London, so as to preach at Mr. Bailey's Chapel, at Brixton, on the second Lord's-day in October. Whilst this is so fixed, there can be no departing from. You may use your thoughts as you please about our going into Cornwall; whether it shall be from Plymouth, or as I propose, from Chard and Exeter. I should think it best from Exeter and Launceston; yet if you like to state it otherwise, so let it be; only let me hear from you as soon as we get to Chard, as I shall write to Truro accordingly. If you see Mr. Clemo, you can say about the time they may expect us in Cornwall.

I have seen the Doctor, and he says, the Bishop of Exeter is to be at his house on Friday, August 15, and will, he supposes, leave about the Monday following. Soon after he expresses his very affectionate expectation of receiving the Bishop of Devon to his house. I hope you will not

expect me to exercise myself, as the last time I was with you; if so, you will be altogether disappointed. I can assure you I am not capable of so doing. I have been forced to reduce my preachings to twice on a Lord's-day, and once in the week; and I find this as much as I can really do.

Please to make our kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. Ball. We do remember them, and hope they also do us. I could wish you to consider old age to have many peculiar infirmities; you must not admit many to see me. If I preach, I must reserve my mind and bodily strength for the pulpit, or you will find I shall not be able to go on. I conceive you had best avoid speaking about any place to preach in until I come; you will then be a better judge of me. I doubt not but I might preach at Mr. Cotton's, at Stonehouse, and that without expense.

My christian regards to those who love me in the Lord.

May the Lord give us a blessed and comfortable interview with each other. It can only be as we look wholly to Jesus, converse of him, and centre wholly and only in him. We do not mean to go to Mary Church or Torr; we mean to make the present journey a kind of innocent recreation to the unbending of our minds, that we may thereby receive some bodily advantage to the revival of the animal frame; that we may be better fitted on our return for more spiritual employments; not that we are going to drop our spirituality. If we would, we cannot; neither do we desire it; no: what the Lord hath wrought in our souls, we cannot renounce nor annihilate to all eternity. I am as well as I ever expect to be in the body, until the resurrection of the just; then I shall have no sin, death, nor mortality within me. The apostle says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." I want to have the same perceptions of that subject, that I might be like-minded with himself. I hope your dear spouse is much recovered from her late indispositions. May the Lord himself be with her and bless her. Our best love and regards to her in Christ. My love to your son. I hope his very great spirits and activity redounds to your and his own profit. You will be pleased to notice, if the Lord will, and by his own good

hand upon us, we shall be at Chard on the 12th of July, if not before; there a few lines will be acceptable, to know your thoughts of our going into Cornwall from Exeter. I think it would be best; yet if you prefer our coming to you first, say so, as I should wish to write them soon after we reach Chard.

The Lord himself give you peace always, and by all means.

I remain, your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER LI.

TO THE SAME.

Chard, July 24, 1821.

MY GOOD SIR,

YOUR letter is very kind; I thank you for it; yet you and I differ. You leave me to judge for myself; I therefore am of my former opinion, that we had best go into Cornwall first, and come to you from thence. This, therefore, we fixing on, shall write by this present post to Truro, to say, we shall leave this place on Monday, August 13, and be with them the same week, and continue with them three Lord's-days, and leave them the first Monday in September, and set off for you; hoping you will be so good as to meet us at Torr Point, about the time the coach will arrive there. This is now fixed; the Lord grant us grace and strength to carry us safely through. We would thank you to present our best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Savory: we have received a line from them, and are so busy we cannot spare time to write. But if we come to Plymouth, we will call upon them. As

it respects preaching, I shall leave all this to the Doctor and you ; only you must not expect too much ; if so, you will be disappointed, as fatigue overcomes me. It will not be needful for me to write a long letter ; a few heart-warming expressions concerning our Lord Jesus Christ must suffice. He is our object. When we look to him, and our faith is fixed simply on him, we have a real apprehension of him in whom all the glory of Godhead dwelleth personally, in whom all the love of the Eternal Three is manifested, in whom all the hidden arcana of God is revealed. There is nothing can exceed a sight of Christ, nor can any thing go beyond this. The Lord the Spirit be praised for revealing Christ unto us. He hath revealed Christ in us, we have seen his glory ; we have enjoyed his life-giving presence ; we have known his love ; we have seen the glory of his righteousness and sacrifice ; and all our actual and practical holiness and godliness consists in thinking and speaking of Christ, and of the Father's love to us in him ; which whilst we are so engaged, we enjoy as perfect a feast as we shall in heaven and eternal glory. Therefore we are never well, either in body or mind, when we are not thus engaged ; which, when we are, it is then we are living the life of faith on the Son of God. It is then in believing he loved us, and gave himself for us ; and in the spiritual enjoyment thereof, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The true views believers have of the person, and work, and finished salvation of Christ, puts down all on earth, and all in heaven. Herein the sovereignty of grace is displayed, and the glory of God in the manifestation of it is most highly exalted ; some who are continually under the preaching of the pure gospel, know not a tittle of it in the reality of the truths of the same ; whilst others have the knowledge of it let in upon their minds, from the word, and by the Spirit of the living God. There are but few hearers in this our day have anything beyond common thoughts and views of Christ ; very few have supernatural thoughts of him, and the doctrines of his gospel.

You will be pleased to present my, I should have said, our best respects to the Doctor and Miss Hawker ; we anticipate the pleasure of enjoying their company. Be pleased to give our best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Ball ; also I would request

my christian regards to the Doctor's good Curate, Mr. Courtenay. I hope your dear spouse will be recovered by the grace of Christ, from her present indisposition. May the Lord be gracious unto her; our very best regards unto her. Also, please to give my love to your son. My christian love and regards to all our friends in Christ Jesus. I wish you great grace; so said Mr. Romaine to his late Majesty, on his being admitted into the royal presence. This is according to report; I cannot say anything about the truth of it; yet most assuredly the sentence is vastly comprehensive, nothing can be added unto it. I am quite tired with writing. I must therefore conclude.

Your's, most affectionately and respectfully,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER LII.

TO THE SAME.

Brixton, Oct. 28, 1821.

MY BELOVED FRIEND,

YOUR letter was very acceptable unto me; I thank you for it. I have been worse since you wrote it; yet how, or what the issue may be, must be left with the Lord, in whose hand is the breath of life, and in and with whom my time is. I am by no means solicitous about the same; there is no reason I should. I am not now going to commence a fresh acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, just as if the past were all worth nothing; no, not so. For were it the good pleasure of the Lord to renew the days and vigour of my spiritual youth, I should not more highly esteem, prize,

and cleave to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Son of the Father in truth and love, than I now do; neither should I value his person, blood, and righteousness, more than I do at the present moment; nor could I have more real knowledge of him, neither could I have more true communion with him. What, then, is there in death to cast me down? nothing sure, and sure there is not; neither is there any thing in life which is to come so attractive, as to cause me to have the least desire to live any longer in the same; for my body grows very infirm; the things of time and sense were never very attractive to me, at, or throughout any part of my life. I have all my days lived a very mortified life; now I do not want to live merely for the sake of life, no, that I do not; neither do I want to live for the sake of the church of Christ, not as through the church of Christ, and the gospel and ordinances of the same, by which she is nourished and fed up unto life eternal, were of no moment and concern to me; the church is to me next to Christ himself, yet Christ himself is to me beyond the church, either on earth, or in heaven. Yet I have laboured in season, and out of season, for the benefit of the same, according to the measure of the gift of Christ given unto me. I have nothing to add to my testimony of the Father's love, of the person and work of Christ; of the grace, person, work, and office of the Holy Ghost, than I have in my poor weak way delivered. Nothing therefore remains for me, but my setting my last seal and testimony to these essential and immutable truths, as they are recorded in the revelation of the same, in the everlasting gospel, by dying in the free and full confession and acknowledgment of them. I do verily hope, through the good hand of my God upon me, he will honour me thus; by retaining the use and exercise of my spiritual faculties to my last moments, and thus get himself from me an everlasting name of praise.

I have a very great languor and debility over my whole frame and body. I cannot consider my present age, and promise myself any great reviving. I do not say it will not be so; yet I must say, I have no great expectation; neither do I very greatly desire the same; yet I am not impatient; therefore, say for myself, "Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done."

I have no one thing unsettled, either for soul or body; no one will lose by my death. The Lord is all-sufficient for his church, for his truth, for his own cause and interest, for his people, and beloved ones; that is enough for me. Jesus Christ, who is the true God, and eternal life, is every way, and under every point of view, all I need when my breath ceases, and my pulse drops, and my soul departeth out of my body. When it is even thus with me, why he will raise up my mind to himself, and so fix it on himself, as thereby to fill the same with all the fulness of God. If my friend is in unison with the things I write, it is then impossible I should dread, or shrink at the approach of death, because I have a full view of the conquest of death in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is he who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel. It is given me, and hath for a great number of years past, to believe in the person, incarnation, birth, life, obedience, righteousness, oblation, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of God manifest in the flesh. It is from this knowledge I receive the subject into my renewed mind; the only proof that I am born of God, is contained in my spiritual perception and apprehension of these mysteries; they are the life, the soul, the sustentation, and *primo mobile* of my understanding, heart, and affections.

I have known you these many years. You are as dear unto me as ever. I doubt not but I am as dear unto you, and your's as ever. All this is so much the better; I know no reason for going over the same ground as ever; yet we have done so to confirm the truth of this; neither do I think there is any absolute necessity for my writing and giving an account of my knowledge of Christ, of my faith in him, of his salvation being all-sufficient to lift me up beyond every sorrow, fear, enemy, or death. Because the subject of all this runs, more or less, in, and also throughout the whole of my epistolary communications with you; in some more enlargedly, in others more confidentially; so that when I have said, I will write no more unto you; no, that I will not; it is good you should have the right understanding of the same.

I am altogether tired of writing letters, not with the

subject; but it is a great expense of spirits to me, such as I cannot bear up under, but feel the consequence of the same in my frame; so that it absolutely is to my body worse than preaching. I am at present set aside from preaching; it is not that I am going to die so soon as I wish for; no, this does not depend on me; no, it does not. I want perfect submission to the will of my Lord; for him to fulfil in me the good pleasure of his goodness. If he choose to exercise me with strong pain, so let it be. I want to be wholly passive; to have no will of my own, to prescribe nothing to him, to look so unto him continually, as to live above and beyond all the perverse workings and feelings of flesh and blood; for I do find these obtrude themselves, and want me very closely to attend unto what these have to say, or may further have to say. It is all carried on very slyly and subtilly, as if it was all the greatest kindness, and altogether out of real affection. But I do suspect that it is all from the devil, and in order to let him loose upon me. The Lord, therefore, for his mercy sake, save me from carnal reason, and consulting flesh and blood.

Now, my dear friend, make no more or further enquiries after me for a season. If anything unexpected take place, you shall be informed of the same. I cannot open my mind more freely to you; it is all meant in love and goodwill.

We are both united in our best wishes to you, Mrs. Trego, and your son. I mean to write on the opposite page to your beloved wife. I am really concerned for her. I would wish you to get the very best advice; then leave it with the Lord. You will observe I put no seal to either, lest any of the writing be broken in upon. My nights are very wearisome; as I am in very great pain; much like rheumatic and lumbago. I suppose the cause of the same is, that original sin is got so soaked into all my bones and constitution, that nothing but a good underground sweat will ever fetch it out. There is the cure of all my maladies. Indeed, it is so; and the soul cure is, "The blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin."

I remain, your's, in Christ Jesus,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER LIII.

TO MRS. CHARLOTTE TREGO.

Brixton, Oct. 28, 1821.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

WE were both very greatly obliged to you, for the very kind letter which we received from you. I feel myself very desirous of your real welfare. You will not I hope neglect receiving all the medical advice and assistance your case requires. This I must however think necessary. I must say no more of it. I will say, I would have you to be very simple and particular in your accesses unto the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows your case perfectly well; he has had other patients in your case, whose thoughts, frames, and feelings, were so exactly like your own, that had you conversed with them, you would actually have thought they had taken a leaf out of your own book. He loveth at all times. He is "a friend that closer than a brother;" nothing in us makes the least alteration in him. I would therefore have you not give yourself any concern about any one thing whatever; cast yourself and all your concerns, for soul and body, for this life and that which is to come, upon the Lord. Think about nothing, except it be this one subject, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; that he knows you, that he loved you, and washed you from your sins in his own blood; that you are as safe in him as you possibly can be. And thus go on thinking, until you find yourself perfectly happy in him. I know what all this means; and I know what the subject will bear; and its blessedness in its improvement, therefore I cannot but recommend the same to you. It is not your exercising your mind in thinking, Am I in Christ? Is he mine? Am I safe to live? May I die with confidence of my personal interest and persuasion, that Christ is mine, and I am his? Your thinking on all these will never bring Christ into

your heart! No, indeed it will not. Yet this was the old way, taught in the old schools, and by the most celebrated masters; yet it was, it is altogether wrong. We must first begin with God's free grace in Christ, then go on to the person of Christ to whom we belong; then to the consideration of what they were in the love and sight of God, as he viewed and accepted them in Christ before time began; then, of the relation of Christ unto them, how he engaged as their Surety before the fall took place; how he revealed and made known himself as such, as soon as the fall took place; and this in his open, visible, incarnate state; took off from his people all their transgressions, and purified them in his own blood, and doth continually present them in himself, a glorious church, without all spot, holy, righteous, and unblameable; so that they are, as considered in him, as pure as his blood can cleanse them, and as completely righteous as the imputation of his righteousness can constitute them. Now these are the subjects I would have your mind engaged in the contemplation of. It is hereby you will drop all other subjects. You will say it will not do for you to begin at the effects and end with the cause. But you must begin with the cause, and then it will do to end with the effects. If you begin aright, you will clearly apprehend that Christ died for the ungodly; that he came into the world to save sinners. The true knowledge of which will set you at rights for ever; for then the true knowledge of this lays the whole foundation for your faith and hope in God, in Christ alone; and this wholly without you, or anything wrought within you. And this, my dear friend, is what you want to have clear views of, and would enable you to go on the right way to heaven without a guide. By which I mean, that you knowing Christ aright, might thereby know how to exercise your mind directly and particularly on him.

My good friend, I can say no more. I must leave off, for I am very greatly exhausted. May the Lord be very precious to you, and present with you.

I remain, your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER LIV.

 FROM MRS. PIERCE TO MRS. TREGO.

MY DEAR MADAM,

YOUR great kindness, in your friendly reception of us at your house during our visit at Plymouth, be assured is not forgotten by me. And I am glad of the present opportunity of addressing these few lines to you, being truly concerned to hear of your indisposition. After my beloved Mr. Pierce's epistle, I will not attempt to say anything, but I would wish you to know that I do most cordially unite with him in what he has expressed. Our Lord has been pleased to lay his hand on my best earthly friend; he belongs to him in a very special way, being a part of him, a member of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; he therefore will not do him any harm, because he loves him too much for that. But it is a season of exercise to see him suffer so much, for his nights are truly distressing. Should it be the will of the Lord to take him, it would be a happy removal for him, and Christ is longing to have him, that he may be where he is to behold his glory. But I sometimes think he will be brought out of his present illness. I believe that you do sincerely sympathize with us at this time. Blessed be the Lord he has, and continues to proportion his help and strength and supports to our necessities, so as to cause us to sing in his ways, and in some measure "to glorify him in the fires, to kiss the rod, and him that hath appointed it." He proves himself indeed to be "very pitiful and of tender mercy."

Should any particular change take place, you shall be informed of the same; but I do not expect it at present, but still we know not what a day may bring forth. "And may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and

good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

Your's respectfully,

E. S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER LV.

TO MR. JOHN TREGO.

Brixton, Jan. 31, 1822.

DEAR SIR,

IT is now Thursday, Jan. 31, and we are just returned from London. We have just had the pleasure of receiving yours to us, dated Jan. 26. Next to what is both expressed and contained in the words, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us," nothing could have yielded me more real satisfaction than your letter hath.

I have often been concerned for Mrs. Trego, and we have often remembered you and your spouse and son before the throne. I have also been very anxious to hear from you. I wrote to the Doctor and Mr. Ball and you, and Mrs. Trego, some time since, and sent it by favour of any conveyance, through Mr. Paris, but heard nothing: so that sometimes I thought one thing, and sometimes another.

Some short time since, being pressed upon by my friends, I wrote to the Doctor requesting a favour. He most readily granted it; and with such dignity of respect as hath made an indelible impression on my heart, as hath imprinted a lasting impression. Will you be so good as to present my best thanks to him for the same; it answered the end. The poor boy obtained the benefit. I intended to have made my acknowledgments to the Doctor; I hope those concerned in the case have.

I am myself so infirm, I cannot so well frame myself for letter writing as heretofore; so this is the only apology I

can make. I do remember him and his kindness before the throne, and each of the family we have the knowledge of; so that what is different in one way, I aim to make up in another.

Mr. and Mrs. Ball, and their case hath been frequently remembered before the Physician of value. I am as freely disposed to thank his divine Majesty for the benefit and blessing vouchsafed, as to intreat his favour that all might be well. As it respects your dear spouse, I am from my very heart glad and thankful things are with her as they are. It is a most marvellous interposition of divine favour on her behalf; it shews that the case was extreme, that her deliverance was of the Lord alone; that her extremity was the Lord's opportunity. It is worthy of remembrance, even to be noted in a book, and subscribed with her own hand, and laid up by way of thanksgiving before the Lord for ever. May we all unite in blessing and praising the Lord, for the deliverance he hath graciously wrought on her behalf, including yourself, and your son, as very deeply interested in this salvation; for so you both are; and it is salvation, though not that salvation by the which we are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, so as that we shall never be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

I was very much dilapidated after my journey, for a long season. I could not preach for some Lord's-days. I expected to be called up higher. I gave, Mr. Ball an account of the same, yet I received no letter from him; I knew not to what it was to be imputed, whether it was because I wrote him in an enigmatical way, or that it was because the time of his dear partner's confinement was drawing nigh. The deliverance was marvellous; it should be celebrated with songs of praise. Now we know it, we shall be among the number of those, who will join on her and her partner's behalf, to praise the Lord for his exceeding great kindness to them both.

I am exceedingly fond of the 117th Psalm; it is very short, yet it is very sweet. "O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us, and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord." It is our blessedness whilst we are in a time-state, to have, at some special times, pecu-

liar mercies to be thankful for, and also to be more than ordinarily affected with. I have, I do; I am glad when so it is; it therefore often is an ordinance to me, and I feel it, and am sensibly refreshed therewith, "for his merciful kindness is evermore and more towards us." Blessed be the holy, essential Three, the Three in covenant, Father, Son and Spirit, whose covenant is from everlasting to everlasting; their kindness in the outward evidences, and manifestations of the same, to our souls and bodies, is great towards us.

My beloved wife a few weeks past, at this place by missing her standing, fell from the top of the stairs to the bottom upon her head, and had the door been shut, she must have died; but we say in Devonshire, 'a miss is as good as a mile;' the door was open; and at the same instant a man comes in which belongs as a servant to the premises, and he is the means of lifting up from the tremendous fallen state. Well, the Lord be praised, he hereby gives evidence, he was ready to save us; so you may perceive, we have reason to say, each for ourselves, "My soul shall make our boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us rejoice;" or, as it is in the Psalm, "magnify his name for ever."

It must all have been for time, as I conceive, very near one the other, so that we are all united, and bound to praise the Lord our God, on the behalf of each other: we are safe in Christ. I have for two months gone on three times a week without intermission; this is at my time of life, as I conceive, a great mercy. I have many appearances against me, yet the Lord is on my side; he is my salvation; he is the Lord God, my portion, and my all in life; he must be my all in death; and he will be my everlasting all in all, throughout the ages of eternity. All this I must really live over in my own mind, or it is not my writing all this to you, or reciting it to others, will be of any benefit to myself; and I am very sensible of the truth of it. Therefore, I learn to cease from all confidence in myself, and in all others; looking unto the Lord alone, is the greatest ordinance of support, for body and soul; and we need to be improving in the same continually. We shall not be in a practical way, the lesson must be practised. We

shall not be one whit the better in our own minds, for any knowledge of divine truth, but as we are brought under the power and authority of the truth, as it is in Jesus. It is by this means, the Holy Spirit is pleased to lead us experimentally and practically into the same. I much need your prayers, I see something like the devil in the shades; he likes to play the snake in the grass. Our Lord says, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. iii. 10. Well, my friend, those who live longest see the most, and there are very few sincere professors. Mr. Toplady used to say, for himself, 'I am heartily tired of professors'; and I suppose this must have been included in the same sentence, and also with them. I aim to have as little knowledge of them, or to do with them, as may be, yet so it comes to pass, they will have to do with me. I wonder not, if the Doctor should have a letter from London, containing a tale of a tub concerning me. I write at random, for I am not sure. I conceive it may be so; I shall let this pass. It will be sufficient when it is so for me to say, "Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence, which I make now unto you." The outline is one of the most pious of the episcopalians has been with me, and overcharged me with acting so and so towards him. He has requested my wife to use her influence to prevent us both from having any further acquaintance. Now I am requested to sign my name to a paper that I forgive him; this I refuse. Every effort is made use of, so that should an application be made to the Doctor, I should not wonder at it. I am just now warm, otherwise I had not given the least hint of it. I bear the person no ill-will, God forbid; yet I will not sign my name on this subject. I have had nothing to say of him, or his, yet he has charged me with keeping him from his father's house. The Lord be with you, and your's.

Our kind remembrance to Mrs. Trego and your son.

Your's in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE,

LETTER LVI.

 TO MR. AND MRS. JOHN TREGO.

Plymouth, Devon, April 2, 1823.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I INCLUDE you, and your dear spouse and son in my writing, as you do my dear partner in your writing to me, therefore there needs no repetition of this.

You are an old friend of a long standing ; I cannot ascertain the date, yet it is of some considerable duration. I am, as you conceive, very much affected by age and time. I never suffered like what I did the past winter, nor as I have done this spring ; so that, as to travelling, I have wholly given up all thoughts of the same, unless it be within twenty miles of London. I have such frequent dilapidations, it would be presumption in me were I to attempt anything beyond this. We have a very kind invitation into Hertfordshire, which we have accepted. If we live till July we intend going there, if not, all will be well ; for I have no one thing to communicate by preaching, writing, or conversation, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and eternal things, more than I have, over and over and over again. I am at a point as it concerns my dying in the Lord. I am not unwilling to die. I continually experience death working in my mortal body. Many a season for months past, it hath been with me all but death ; I have been kept quite passive, without fear or dismay. Indeed were it not so with me, it would be evident that I had received the grace of God in vain ; for the salvation of Christ is wholly without me ; it is wholly independent of any thing within me, it depends upon no one thing wrought within me ; upon no grace, no feeling, no frame, no experience inherently my own. No ; my salvation is wholly of grace. It is the work of Jesus Christ ; it is con-

tained in his being made sin, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him. He hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and I am saved in him with an everlasting salvation; and this without any act of mine. I believe in him, and in his everlasting righteousness and efficacious offering of his body and soul, which perfects for evermore, the putting away of sin; I believe in him, and his finished work, on the account given concerning the same in the scriptures of truth. These contain the record of the Father concerning the same; as it also doth the Spirit's testimony likewise. On this I rest, and find it all-sufficient; I have nothing but this to build upon, and it contains all I need. Therefore, in the truth of all contained herein, I give myself no concern about my salvation, nor respecting my interests in it, nor about my evidences of it. No; there is an all-sufficiency in the person of Christ, in the work of Christ, in the word of Christ, in the record of the Father concerning Christ, in the testimony the Spirit bears of him, and his free, full, and complete salvation; and this for sinners as sinners. It is in the right apprehension of all this I commence a believer in Jesus; it is in what I receive herefrom I have eternal life in my soul; and in the being strengthened with all might by the Holy Spirit, to hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, given to sinners as sinners in Jesus Christ, that I am kept free from all doubts.

Concerning Christ being mine, and my being his, this is my anchor-sheet, at all times, in all places, at all seasons, on all occasions, let me be living or dying. What is it? I ask the question, that the subject may appear the more clear and plain. It is even this, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." I am not saved by Christ as a believer on him, neither am I saved as a saint, no; I am saved as a sinner, for it is only as I am such, I need salvation. It is by believing in him I am a saint, for it is wholly from him I receive light, life, holiness, and blessedness. It is wholly in believing in the name of the only begotten Son of God I am saved by Christ alone. His righteousness and sacrifice is my complete salvation and perfection; the true knowledge of the same is my complete sanctification; it is from hence all the fruits of the same flow. It is in Christ I am com-

plete; the Father sees me in him; I am accepted by the Father in him. Therefore as I look off myself, and look wholly to the Lamb of God, I have in him every thing to support my faith, to encourage my hope, to increase my expectation, to enlarge my prospects of heaven and eternal glory.

The work of Christ is beyond my estimation, the glory of Christ beyond my comprehension, the love of Christ beyond my knowledge of it, the mercy of Christ beyond all my sin and sinfulness. He is my all; I am in him, one with him. It is what I am in him lifts me out of self, fixes my thoughts on him, and lifts me up on him. Death cannot separate me from him; yet it will for a season dissolve the union between body and soul; this will be a blessing, as it in an especial manner, as old age increases, makes the same burdensome, so that one feels it is troublesome. When I was younger, then the body of sin and death was very troublesome; when sickness and disease came on it, this was very tiresome. The Lord be praised, I am not so much tired with these now, as I am with a burden of mortality; and this, as well the body of sin and death, will at the Lord's own appointed time, fall off from me instantaneously. This will be a part of the blessedness of this, that I shall be delivered from sin, mortality and death, without knowing when and how; for I must be out of the body before the release is given, and even when it shall so be, for death to be invading the body, yet I shall not know what death is, until the departure of the soul from the body hath taken place. I do find my real spiritual blessedness, as it respects the enjoyment of the same, consists in the right scriptural apprehension of the same. That to talk of any experience of this, that, and the other, in ourselves, which is not produced in our minds by means of the true and right apprehension of the word is nothing better than enthusiasm. And what does all true experience consist in? Most assuredly in a total renunciation of self, so as to be dead unto it, in all its shapes, forms, and workings. In being alive to Christ, so as to be well pleased with him. To have communion with him, in all the parts and benefits of his salvation, that hereby we may centre in him, as God's ordinance of grace and glory. Surely this must be the essence of the same, of the whole thereof; and all the

blessedness of the whole subject is enjoyed by us in the right intuitive knowledge of Christ from the word and by the Spirit.

I am satisfied with Christ; I have all I need. I am living in Christ, and upon Christ, in my way, and according to my knowledge of him. I cannot live him, but in proportion to my knowledge of him. I find it a very simple life, most exactly suited to old age, and to old people, such as are old disciples, who may be expecting their dissolution every day, yea, every hour in the day, yea, every moment; to such as can do as well with their eyes as their ears; and be as well, if not better, without speaking than with it; to such as can do as well with thinking as by any other way whatsoever. I am old; I cannot speak, nor talk much; it is too tiresome, it fatigues me. My eyes are old; yet they having been long exercised, and being anointed with golden eye-salve, I can see Jesus as clearly as ever; and in views of him I see sin, death, and hell are most completely conquered by him; and myself a conqueror in him, and more than a conqueror over all these. My ears are good; I hear as quick as ever; I hear his voice, "I am thy salvation." And I live hereby, which is a very easy life, just fit for dying persons. Our Lord says, "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live."

As it respects speaking and preaching Christ, I most certainly have found real blessedness and life everlasting therein; yet I am now stopped in the same. Once a week is now enough for me, sometimes it is too much; yet I can think, and I really have found as real blessedness and intuitive communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as in preaching and speaking, concerning the everlasting love of the Father unto Christ, and the whole election of grace in him. Of the person of Christ, God-man, as the Head of the whole election of grace; of his union to their persons, of his love to them, of his interest in them, of his salvation wrought out and finished on the behalf of all his beloved ones, of his delight in them, of his rejoicing over them, of his presentation of them to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; I say I have found real blessedness in being solemnly engaged in thinking over these subjects; and taking into the renewed

mind these subjects clearly and distinctly, as they are revealed in the everlasting gospel of the blessed God.

I should not be what I am in the knowledge of Christ, had I not by divine grace been inured by spiritual thought and meditation into converse with Christ, in each of these subjects: so also as it respects my knowledge and faith in the personality of the Holy Ghost, his oneness with the Father and the Son, in the essence existing; his personal love to the elect in Christ, his union to them, his office for them, how he performs it in them; it is from inward communion with him, agreeable with the light which he hath shone in upon my mind from his own sacred word of inspiration, that I have been strengthened with strength in my soul, and have enjoyed personal and real communion with him.

The time is now going on, and fast approaching, when my life, that is, my natural life, will cease; my time will end, my breath expire; not so my life in Christ. No; not so indeed, he is my life. I am to live with him; my mind is to be perpetually engaged in beholding his glory, in communion with him; and this without the least cessation for ever and ever. All the love of the Father, and all the joy and consolation of the Holy Ghost, will then flow into my mind, through the person and mediation of the God-man, for ever and ever. All I want, is to live in the full belief of these most divine and scriptural truths continually; not that hereby they will be what they are not; they will not be more important, neither will they be more excellent, nor will there be more blessedness in them, nor more virtue and efficacy, yet by their being realized in my mind by the Holy Ghost, I shall hereby be brought under the mighty power and influence of them; and hereby be cast into the very mould of the gospel.

I shall not live Christ in heaven. He will then live in me, and fully possess me, so as that I shall be filled with all the fulness of God. Here, and so long as I continue in the body, I am called to live a life of faith upon the Son of God. Whilst I live on Christ, in a way of believing, I have all the confidence I can have from the scriptures of my interest in Christ, of his love to me, and of his being my salvation. It is in real communion with him, he is pleased

to impart and bestow that unction which teacheth all things, which leadeth into all necessary truth. It is the Holy Ghost who sheds the love of God abroad in the heart, as we are led into believing apprehensions of Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who takes of the things of Christ, and shews the same unto us; it is the Holy Ghost that seals us up to the day of redemption; it is he who is the earnest of our eternal inheritance.

I am now in my last sands. I am on the very brink of eternity; I am without any care, or fear, respecting either body and soul. I have all things richly to enjoy. I want no manner of thing that is good; so that I may well say, "Blessed is he," and happy also is he, "that hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein, which keepeth truth for ever." Not one truth in the everlasting gospel will ever cease; there will be no change in Christ, let me live or die, when, where, or how I may. I may therefore take sanctuary in his eternity, even as the prophet did, whilst I say, "My days are like a shadow that declineth, and I am withered like grass." I may draw comfort from this, "But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy memorial throughout all generations." My death will make no alteration in Christ; he will be present with me, he will receive me to himself, that where he is I may be also. For we cannot be separated one from the other.

On your reading this, it may be it will be conceived I am very near death. It may be so, it may not; there is no immediate prospect of the same; yet I write as I have done, that you may know the whole of my present mind, in my views and prospects of a blessed immortality. You must never more expect so long a letter from me. I require a good deal of rest and cessation. I cannot be surrounded, at my time of life, with writing to one and another; it is too much trouble for me; you are an old and particular friend. I love you in the Lord; therefore I am not going to lay myself out in the same way for any other. No, I am not.

I write to your spouse with you, and wish you both every blessing, and your son also. My wife joins me in the whole.

Please to present my best and most respectful remembrance to Dr. Hawker. I cannot tell my obligations to him;

I therefore will not speak of the same. It is to me a singular mark of honour our Lord Jesus hath put on me in my old age, to incline him to pray for me, and mention me in all his accesses to Jesus, at his throne of grace. May the Lord most abundantly reward him for the same.

Our love to Mr. and Mrs. Ball, and their little one. He is a letter in my debt. Let that stand there. My love in Christ to Mr. Curtis; he is one of my oldest friends in Christ. I greatly esteem him. Next comes Mr. Thomas Eyre, of Launceston; then Mrs. Paynter, of Boskenna; then Mr. Hore. This was each of these in the year 1777. My best christian regards to Mrs. Gaskin; also to Mrs. Nettleton; and if you see the old Mrs. Philips, my love to her. I also request, with my wife, our love and respects to your son John.

You have a good parcel. Be it good, be it bad, you have enough for your money. It may be you will be tired before you get half through the same. I can assure you, I was myself, before I had half finished it. We expect to leave London in July, until September, if the Lord will. It will not be expected, nor desired, I should preach, unless it will be quite easy to me. This is just as it should be; for I must be quite easy and calm, so as to be rested in body and mind, or retirement would be of no use. I was at the place last year, and was all the better for the same. I hope I also shall at this ensuing excursion. The Lord be with you, bless you, keep and surround you with his mercy as with a shield. May this be so evident, as to excite such as notice this to say, "Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord." May your house be as Obededora, whom the Lord did bless.

I have expressed to you all, every kind, respectful, affectionate regard; so that I now conclude, your's in the Lord Jesus Christ until death, and for ever. Amen.

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER LVII.

 TO THE SAME.

Plymouth, August 22, 1822.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I CONCLUDE you have not heard how extremely ill I have been since you saw me last, otherwise I suppose we should have had a letter on the subject. I was laid aside for six weeks : a part of the time I was really ill ; I really expected my dismissal. I was very resigned. I was at perfect peace. I was most blessedly stayed on the Lord, and had some blessed views of him, and of the blessedness which must be contained in beholding his glory, in seeing him face to face, in seeing him as he is. The Lord is raising me up again. I preached last Lord's-day morning on these words, "In God is my salvation, and my glory ; the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God." Ps. lxii. 7. I hope to preach next Lord's-day morning ; then I mean to go a short way in the country, hoping it may be beneficial. As to all long journeys, I must give them up for ever.

If you remember, I wrote like this when I addressed you last. The Lord's will be done. My age is great. I may make light of the same ; but they will not make so light of me ; and it is so much the better. No place now is like home. Nothing more desirable as dying in my own nest. I very greatly desire it may be so. It must be as the Lord please. I am in Christ ; in this consists my everlasting blessedness and security. I am saved in Christ, and this without the least uncertainty. I am beloved of God, in the Beloved of God. I am blessed of God in him. I am in him that is true everlasting life, and all the blessings contained in the same. And what can I have more ? I neither know, nor can conceive any thing can be added unto this ; therefore, I may well be content. If I am not, I most justly deserve to be contemned by all who know and love our Lord Jesus Christ. But the question is, Do you always live on Christ ? Have you no doubts of your interest in him ? Have

you infallible evidence of your interest in him? Do you never call your title in him into question? Do answer these questions? It may be I shall then understand you better. Pray avoid all reservation, and let us have out the whole truth; as hereby we shall the more clearly, and with the greater certainty, come to the point.

My friend, I have not the least objection. As it respects the questions you have proposed, I will endeavour to take them up in their proper order. And as it respects this, as the first question, Do you always live on Christ? This, my good friend, hath nothing to do with my believing myself to be in Christ, and that I am one in him, and one with him. It is true blessedness to live Christ. It is, I most freely acknowledge it, the very effect of Christ being in me, the hope of glory. Yet as no act of mine can give me natural life, so neither can any act of spiritual life add any thing to my spiritual life; it is but the effect of the same. And as I have no respect to any thing I am the subject of, in my living Christ, neither am I either more or less influenced by any thing I experience, or am the subject of; and as I conclude a life of faith upon the Son of God consists in a total renunciation of every person, and thing, but Christ only; so I am bold to say, if these things are so, then I do always live Christ, let my frame, case, and temper be as it may, or what it may. The person of Christ is my object, his salvation is my one subject. Looking unto him is the perpetual exercise of my mind. My faith consists in thinking on him. The true spiritual acts of my mind, are the outgoings of the same after, and towards him. It is herein all my spirituality consists. I therefore reply to the question, Do you always live Christ? I reply, yes, in the way and manner I have here stated it. He is my life; he liveth in me, I live in him. And this is expressed by my high prizings of him, in my attachment to him, by my own simple trust and confidence in him, and by my cleaving unto him with full purpose of heart for life and salvation. I leave out all comforts which may arise out of living Christ; let this be noticed, and all enlargements of heart towards the Lord. Living on Christ is a distinct thing, whatever may be conceived to the contrary.

Well, my good friend, will this content you? If it does, I will proceed to the next question, which is this: Have you

no doubts of your interest in Christ? I reply, no, that I have not; for this would be calling into question the whole gospel of the blessed God, which declares from first to last, that salvation is of the Lord. That it is contained in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ; in his putting away sin by the sacrifice of his whole person, as God-man, in the person of one Christ, and by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. The infallible word declares, "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." I believe in the person of Christ; in the work of Christ. I have received the record and testimony which God hath given of his Son in the scriptures, into my heart; I have set my seal to the truth thereof, in my believing and receiving the same. The Father, Son, and Spirit, have set their joint seals to this truth, that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." And Jesus saith, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Now all this I stedfastly believe. This believing admits of no doubts concerning my interest in him. It is by the gospel I am brought to see, know, and apprehend how it is he hath interest in me; and that my interest in him, and his great salvation, is not founded on anything in me. No; it is wholly founded on free, sovereign grace. It is the fruit of everlasting love; a mystery which is enjoyed by faith; but the grace of it can never be fully known by elect saints and angels; no, not in heaven; even when they are filled with the most full enjoyment of the same.

The truths of the gospel leaves us nothing to doubt of. The belief of them constitutes the existence of them in our minds. It is hereby we cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart.

My friend, does this give you satisfaction? The knowledge of Christ is the foundation of all the spiritual acts and exercises of the mind towards the Lord. These are all so many fruits of spiritual life received from him, and drawn out towards him. They admit of no doubts and fears, because the object and subject these are exercised upon, is always one and the same. It is Jesus Christ, yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever, is the object of my faith. I

have no more to believe concerning him, his finished work, victories and triumphs over the world, sin, death, and damnation, one moment than I have another. The object and subject of my faith are always immutably the same. My faith in Christ, as an act of the Spirit of Christ, is always one; so that I am always at a point. Jesus is the centre. In salvation subjects, I have nothing to do but with him. I hope you see eye to eye with me here; if so, we are agreed.

Let us proceed then to the next question, which is this, Have you no doubts of your interest in him? To this I most positively reply, no, I have not. The reason for which is as follows. I know Christ from the word. I know him as he is revealed in the word. I believe him to be what he is therein declared to be; so that as my being, and everlasting well-being in Christ, union to his person, my interest in him, and his salvation, is immutable, I cannot doubt, if I would.

My friend, my interest in Christ is not founded upon anything I am in myself; neither is it in the least expected by anything I feel, find, or may be in the very article of death. It rests wholly in the will of God, which is as immutable as the Godhead itself; therefore there is nothing for me to call in question, or doubt of.

My good friend, it may be this may lead to a right apprehension of my present subject. I have nothing to do with myself. I neither believe I am interested in Christ on account of any good frames or spiritual consolations; nor do I call in question my interest in Jesus, when I feel the hell, demerit, and filthiness of my fallen nature. This is far from weakening my confidence in my belief of interest in Christ, it rather strengthens it. Now as all my faith of interest in Christ is built upon the revelation made of the same in the inspired word, there my mind is at all times stayed, just one and the same. I have not the least doubt of Christ's interest in me; of his being my salvation; that he is my fast and never-failing friend. If I once did, I should give the lie to what the apostle witnesses of him, when he says, speaking on the subject, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. xiii. 5.

I proceed to the next question, which is this, Have you infallible evidence of your interest in Christ? To which I reply, yes; nor do I place any part of my evidence for

the same on anything I am, or feel, or may conceive myself to be, by any change within me; no, not by regeneration. Our Lord saith, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Yet this makes no alteration in my state before the Lord; yet it has made an important change in the mind, such as will exist in it to all eternity. Yet my salvation is not in this; no, nor my interest in the person of Christ; neither is the revelation of Christ in my regeneration. This goes first; the revelation of Christ follows. If I had not been born again, I had not had spiritual faculties, without which I could not have been in the least capable of receiving the knowledge of Christ and his salvation. And this is an evidence of my regeneration. As the revelation of Christ, from the word and Spirit to my renewed intellectual understanding, is of my personal salvation; and what is declared in the scriptures concerning Christ, and salvation by his blood and righteousness, is all I have to shew for my personal interest in him. It is the gospel itself contains infallible evidence of my interest in Jesus. I would give the following scripture as containing my infallible evidence of interest in Christ. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," see 1 Tim. i. 15. This sentence is so inscribed by the Holy Ghost on the tables of my heart, that death and its immediate approach will never eradicate it out of my mind.

If you think this not sufficient to give me infallible evidence of my interest in Christ, I refer you to himself. He says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out; for I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." These declarations are my infallible evidences of interest in Christ. The knowledge of his person, love, salvation, and blessedness, exists in my mind. I have thousands and thousands of times come to him for life and salvation. I have found his words true. He never yet turned his back on me; no, and he never will; not throughout life, nor in the article of death. So far from it, that he

says, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 2, 3. Again, he says, "Because I live, ye shall live also," verse 19.

Now, my friend, as all my faith consists in believing in the person of Christ, the work of Christ, the word of Christ; so I say to you, I have in the same, infallible evidences of my interest in all these. And what want I more? If I speak for myself, I must say nothing; for there cannot be anything added to this.

We then come to the last question, which is this, Do you never call your title and interest in Christ into question? I reply, I cannot, because of the title-deeds, which are the will and covenant transactions of the eternal Three. These cannot be altered; they will remain the same for ever. These are immutable, therefore I cannot call any of these into question. No; the Lord forbid I should; because it would, according to my views, be calling into question the whole truth of God. As it is the gospel as revealed in the everlasting love of Father, Son, and Spirit, as the same is revealed and set forth in the person and salvation of the worthy Lamb; so I am supported by the knowledge and belief of the same, and as the Bible is as true as God is true, so my belief of the truths of them concerning Christ, the work of Christ, and his relationship to me, and my interest in him, is the life of my mind, the foundation of my hope, the joy of my heart. So allow this, and the reason follows: I have nothing respecting Christ, my title to him, and interest in him, to call into question.

My good friend, I have wrote you a very long letter. I do not expect to write you again; you and others may think as they and you please. I feel myself, and what I am the subject of. I hope the present year will be my last, in this present state. My whole bodily frame is struck to its very centre. Nothing but taking the whole of it down, and raising it up at the last day, will be the thing for me; and that will most completely. As then I shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body, the body of Christ in glory, according to the mighty working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

My beloved wife is very kind to me. I have in her a most astonishing evidence of my Lord's kindness. He would not trust me out of his own keeping, but to her's; nor will he ever take me out of her's, until he takes me immediately into his own bosom. Blessed be his name for this. I have no one thing to give me uneasiness, either for body or mind. We both join in our kind and christian remembrance to you, and your dear wife, and son; with many thanks for the friendship received from you. The Lord bless and reward you for the same. I am in the seventy-seventh year of my age; so you see my age is an advanced one; and on this account, a much longer continuance in this mortal state is not to be expected.

I am, my dear friend, in Christ, your's in him,

S. E. PIERCE.

LETTER LVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Brixton, March 20, 1824.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It is now many years since you and myself commenced friendship; many conversations we have had with each other concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. It was he who began our acquaintance; his person and salvation was our great and ultimate subject. Our meditation and conversation concerning him hath many a time been sweet; and we have been exceeding glad to speak of him. We have been glad in the Lord; our love to each other in him hath been sincere. Time is going on; we must, for a short season, be separated; one must be admitted into the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; whilst the other must remain in the lower house, and be content here to remain, until the Lord says, "Come up hither." It is to be expected, I am to be dismissed first; so much the better. I am willing to take my last farewell of you, shewing I am very far advanced in life, as I am at no great distance from

being seventy-eight years of age complete. It was said of one of David's friends, "Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old;" and pray, if I am seventy-eight years of age, should I reach to enter on the twenty-third of June, in this present year, 1824, I may be considered an old and aged man; and so I am, and full of bodily infirmities, such as I call old age infirmities. I am not troubled with the body of sin, nor with the corruptions and influences of the same, as with the effects of mortality; I am going out of my way to touch on the same. I am in the Lord's hand. I cannot be safer, nor more safe than I am in him; Jesus is mine; he hath saved me, he hath loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood; he is my object and subject, my all in all; he is my whole, my complete, my everlasting salvation, my light, my life, my God, my glory, my joy, my crown.

I do not consider there is any necessity of my going over this distinctly; for what hath been the end of our conversation, from the first day until now? Hath it not been this? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Surely, in the essence thereof, both in writing, preaching, and conversing, it hath; therefore, I see no need to write you a confession of my faith, that you may know whereabout I am, what my object and subject is; nor what my foundation and hope of everlasting life rests on. This hath been so often repeated, there can be no necessity for the repetition thereof. I am now, as it agrees with my age, drawing nigh to the close of the same, and to the house appointed for all living. I have nothing to do with it, nor with the consequences which will follow thereupon. I am to be passive in the Lord's hand, and be entirely passive to the whole good pleasure of his will. To give myself no concern about my state, case, frame, feeling; but to be in all things well pleased, that the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. The everlasting love of God to his people in Christ Jesus, is fixed on their persons. It is immutable, so are all the blessings of the same; they are all actually bestowed on the elect in Christ Jesus; they are all treasured up in his immense fulness. An account of the same is given. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in

Christ." This cannot be set aside nor frustrated; these are acts in the mind and will of God; they cannot be altered; they are what they are revealed to be in the word of the gospel, eternal acts; "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

I believe these truths, and my person I consider as interested in them; and that upon the same foundation, by the which they are set forth and declared; therefore, I trust in the Lord, and call not one of these into question. But go on in contemplating God's having predestinated us (the elect, and I as one of them) "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." The choice of the persons of his elect in Christ, must be the effect of his own love to them; his giving them an election-being and existence in Christ before the foundation of the world, is a most solemn proof of the Father's love to his elect, in the person of his Beloved. This was most fully evidenced in his acceptance of them in the person of the Beloved.

Now I do not go about to enquire if I am one of these; neither do I want any evidence of the same, by any inward graces, quickenings, and consolations in myself; no, not I. The Lord hath been pleased to fill my mind with the truth and doctrine contained in the fore-cited scriptures, so that I have received them into my heart; they form the very basis of my faith and hope in the living God; as do also those doctrines of salvation, which are connected with the revelation made of Christ, and his salvation, as suited to and belonging to his people in their present state of sin and misery, corruption and death. As I apprehend Christ in the revelation given concerning him as Head and Saviour, and receive the same into my understanding, I believe on him, and in him, to the saving of my soul. It is not by believing I am in Christ, nor what I am in him, I am led to apprehend my salvation; no, it is not. But I am first led to a true scriptural knowledge of him, in his person, blood, and righteousness. I am led to centre on him for life everlasting; so that the truth of the gospel, and Christ himself, who is the truth of all contained therein, is my whole stay and staff. And as my mind is sustained by right appre-

hensions of the same, I am fully persuaded of the all-sufficiency of the person and work of the ever-blessed Immanuel, and his everlastingly complete salvation, and rest perfectly satisfied therewith, saying, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord." Thus, I leave out everything, in believing on Christ, of my own; it is neither my being in him, or what I am or may be the subject of; no, it is Christ abstracted from all this; and if he be the object and subject of faith, it must be so. Then even in a dying moment I have nothing to do with myself, for I cannot save myself; therefore I leave myself wholly and altogether with him, who saves to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

If these truths are stated in my mind, by the Spirit of God, as they are revealed in the word of God, then what am I waiting for and expecting? Surely, that I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him. And what have I committed to him? The care and charge of my whole person, with all the eternal concerns thereof; therefore, I have this, and nothing beyond it to look for, and expect from the most adorable Lord, to receive my soul in the article of death, to present me faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

The martyr Stephen in his last moments, and last acts, cried out, and called upon the name of our most precious Jesus, saying, "Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spirit." I have no desire for any thing beyond this for myself, when I am to yield up my spirit: it is sufficient for everlasting consolation. I want nothing beyond this, neither would I pray for any grace beyond this; to be quite passive in the Lord's hand, "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life."

The life of a believer in Christ, is a life of faith upon the Son of God. The walk of a believer is a walk of faith. The last act of a believer in Jesus, when he closes his life, is an act of faith. It is said of the Old Testament believers, "These all died in faith." And our Lord says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." This still remains for me to experience the blessedness of, yet I must wait my appointed time. The time, the place, and every circumstance is settled,

in the Lord's will and decree. I have only to say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change come." The Lord is all-sufficient to keep me looking to Jesus, in the very article of dissolution. He will look upon me, and be very near unto me, with his covenant presence. He speaks forth this truth to me continually, in the word of his grace, "I will never, never, never leave thee; no; I will never, never forsake thee." This must reach to my latest moment and continuance in this present time-state; therefore, it is sufficient for me, whilst passing out of my clay tabernacle, to the house eternal in the heavens. And as I am so far arrived at my journey through life, and there is now but a step between me and death, it becomes me to make use of such a word; not to drop it, but to hold it fast, for my own support, so as thereby to encourage myself in the Lord my God; for he is always one and the same; and as one with Christ, I am in the sight of his Father and my Father, always beheld by him in Christ, with everlasting complacency. I have nothing to do but to die. The Lord be praised, I am at present very infirm; indeed, indeed I am. It is a stagnated wind which affects and afflicts me in every part; so that no one conceives what I pass through; the Lord doth, that is sufficient. It shews his particular care, attention, and kindness to me, he should so provide a partner for me. Not one in the whole world would have suited me in in every case as she doth. May the Lord himself reward her, from the time it shall please him to take me from her, until his pleasure is to receive her to his everlasting kingdom and glory.

We desire our regards to your dear spouse, and son; God Almighty bless them. He says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord; which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

I am to preach on the coming morning, March 21, a Funeral Sermon on these words, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The person died not in child-birth, but before she was raised from her child-bed state. She left behind her a most affectionate husband and seven children; one of them an infant. Her partner says, in her expiring moment she looked so calm and composed, as though she was inwardly expressing the words of Simeon; for which

reason he gave them me to preach on. As it respects the occasion, surely there is everlasting consolation in Christ; and "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and he declares himself, that "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." These are immutable truths. We may say of the same, "These are the true sayings of God."

I would have you look on this as my last letter to you; not out of the least coldness or disrespect to you, no, not in the least; but I really find it now very burdensome to write. It is so much so, that I know not how to fill this up decently. Neither do I wish you to write to me; we have had a long season for our mutual exercise of friendship towards each other, neither do I conceive there remains any doubt of our respect to each other. There is, therefore, the less reason for letter-writing. We have no one thing to settle, or write about.

Be pleased to present my most respectful love and duty to the Doctor, and Miss Hawker; and to Mr. and Mrs. Ball. The Meeting at Shoe Lane, or rather at Printer's Court, is going, with the whole passage, to be taken down and entirely removed. I am by no means sorry for the same; it is not a matter of strife and disagreement concerning the place, worship, or people from any quarter. Fleet market is to be removed, and a beautiful street is to be built on the site thereof. And many of the passages in Shoe Lane are to be taken down, in consequence of the same. We have no lease on the same; those who have, it will expire on Midsummer, 1826, when it will fall into the landlord's hand. When it will be pulled down I cannot say. I see no reason for murmuring. I suppose there will be an act of parliament for all this; and time fixed for removal. I cannot live much longer, therefore, I am not concerned about the same. I thought I would just give you an item of the same.

My dear friend, I conclude with my real love and respect to you in the Lord,

S. E. PIERCE.

THE END.