

REMARKABLE PASSAGES

IN THE LIFE OF

WILLIAM KIFFIN:

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, AND EDITED FROM THE
Original Manuscript,

WITH

NOTES AND ADDITIONS,

By **WILLIAM ORME.**

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William Kiffin
Aged 50, 1667.

*From an original Painting,
in the Possession of the Rev. Richard Frost, Dunmow.*

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INTRODUCTION.

THE original manuscript from which the following Memoirs are printed, was communicated to me some time ago, by the Rev. Richard Frost of Dunmow, in Essex, a lineal descendant of Mr. Kiffin. I was requested to examine it with care, and if I deemed it worthy of publicity, to print it; with such notes and additions as I might be able to communicate, in further illustration of the character of Kiffin, or of the interesting period in which he lived. The task I readily undertook, and ought to have executed it at least a year ago. The chief circumstance which delayed the publication, was my discovering that, though the entire manuscript had not been printed before, considerable use had been made of it, by Noble, in his *Memoirs of the Protectorate House of Cromwell* — by Wilson, in his *History of the Dissenting Churches of London*, and by Ivimey, in his *History of the Baptists*. Still, as these works, from their extent or peculiar nature, are limited in their circulation, I thought the worthy Non-conformist ought to appear by himself, and to be allowed to tell his story in his own way.

The appearance of “Peveril of the Peak,”¹ confirmed my determination to publish. The attentive reader of that work, who may deign to cast his eye over the following pages, must be struck with various points of resemblance between its puritanical hero, Major Bridgenorth, and the honest and venerable William Kiffin. Both belonged to the same class of religious professors — both made considerable fortunes during the period of civil dudgeon [unrest] — both exercised their talents in the field, and their gifts in the church — and both were the subjects of heavy domestic misfortunes — involved in religious persecution, or in the calamities of political intrigue. Here, however, I must stop. Bridgenorth is a caricature, the creature of fiction, and designed to ridicule either the profession, or the weaknesses of religious persons. Kiffin is a real character; possessing, if it is true, a few peculiarities; but embodying the substantial excellences of Christianity, which the author of the Scottish Novels seems little capable of estimating.

In this last production, indeed; there is a greater tone of moderation in regard to religion than in some of his former works. There is an admission that “his Puritan is faintly traced to his Cameronian”² — a poor apology for his unrighteous treatment of the patriotic and persecuted Covenanters. There is little generosity or justice in merely misrepresenting the persons of one religious profession in a smaller degree than those of another. An honest man who is called a knave will not be satisfied by hearing his friend called a fool. The author of Peveril still considers “hypocrisy and enthusiasm” (terms in the vocabulary of the world for the religion of the bible) as fit food for ridicule and satire. “Yet,” he says, “I am sensible of the difficulty of holding fanaticism up to laughter or abhorrence, without using colouring which may give offence to the sincerely worthy and religious. Many things are lawful which we are taught are not convenient; and there are many tones of feeling which are too respectable to be insulted, though we do not altogether sympathize with them.” If this is not a testimony of homage to truth, it is at least a deference to public feeling: and every step in the return to right thinking and acting ought to be acknowledged with approval.

It will not be supposed that I have published this small performance for the purpose of illustrating the Novel; or that I have the vanity to expect that it will to any considerable degree, counteract the tendency of that clever, and in many respects, mischievous work. It may, however, contribute a little to a better understanding of the times; and, also to show that, in the large body of persons baptized by the names of Bridgenorth, and Solsgrace, and Simon Canter, there was a greater portion of principle, of loyalty, and of common sense, than they have frequently been supposed to possess.

¹ *Peveril of the Peak* (1823), a novel by Sir Walter Scott. It takes place about 1678, centering on the Popish Plot. — WHG

² *Cameronian*: follower of Richard Cameron (Covenanter) (1648?-1680), a leader of the militant Presbyterians, known as *Covenanters*, who resisted attempts by the Stuart monarchs to control the Church of Scotland. — WHG

There is some reason to believe that an extensive change in the public opinion respecting the nature of genuine religion, has been silently operating for a considerable time. All the talents are obviously not on the side of infidelity and irreligion. The faith of Christ is not entirely limited to the vulgar and the wretched. It has been adopted in all its peculiarities, and manifested in all its decision,³ by men of the highest order of intellect, and of the most brilliant parts. It is not so convenient as it once was, to decry seriousness as fanaticism, and religious zeal as madness. It is discovered that a Christian may be a gentleman; and that sourness and grimace have as little connexion with godliness as levity and profaneness.

This change in the public mind appears among other things, in the increased respect which is shown to puritanical writings — puritanical characters — and to what may be called the puritanical age of English history. Even Oliver Cromwell has ceased to be regarded merely as a hypocrite and a villain; and has found historians and apologists not only among Dissenters and Whigs, but among Churchmen and Tories. The interesting memoirs of various individuals who lived and acted through that age of turmoil and excitement, have dissipated much of the ignorance and prejudice which long prevailed on all sides. The account of Colonel Hutchinson, by his learned and accomplished lady, illustrates those religious views and feelings which obtained among the higher class of the Non-conforming Community; and it clearly demonstrates that even among the regicides⁴ themselves, there were men actuated by something else than the love of plunder and blood. The memoirs of the virtuous and cultivated Evelyn have rendered an important service to the church and the cavaliers. Among the latter class, there were evidently better men than Sir Geoffrey — men who feared God as well as honoured the king; and who rendered more valuable services to the exiled monarch than his merry and dissipated companions.

The “Remarkable Passages in the Life of Kiffin” make no pretensions to equality with the charming effusions of conjugal attachment, or those of the classical and scientific courtier referred to above. They reveal, however, the sentiments and general conduct of another class of persons — the merchants and yeomanry⁵ of England, who were the principal actors and sufferers during the civil wars and the following period. Kiffin I apprehend to be a tolerably accurate *facsimile* of this numerous body — long respectable for its moral worth, its industrious habits, and its enterprising spirit.

I readily grant that during the period in which he lived, there were many false pretenders, not a few wild enthusiasts, and some who made gain by godliness. So there are still. Religion was then also too associated with contention about things that were trifling, and sometimes even absurd. It was too clothed in cant phrases,⁶ expressed in demure countenances, and exhibited in affectations of dress and manners. These things we neither justify nor applaud. They did not belong exclusively to religious persons. There were then political quacks and nostrums as well as religious ones. There was court and country cant, low and vulgar enough, as well as religious cant. Every age has its peculiar vocabulary; its favourite idioms. In many of these things, we do not sympathize with the men of the seventeenth century; nor will the men of the twentieth perhaps sympathize with us. Many of the Puritans would have been singular and eccentric characters, though they had not adopted a religious profession. The fruit partook of the nature of the stock, as well as of the graft; though, as far as its bad qualities are concerned, the latter has improperly received the exclusive blame.

³ *Decision*: the trait of resoluteness as evidenced by firmness of character or purpose.

⁴ *Regicide*: the act of killing a king. Charles I was executed under Cromwell, head of Puritan and Presbyterian factions. They opposed the Royalists, and sought to end Charles' persecution and tyranny, in a Civil War. But his execution horrified the nation and the world. It caused revulsion at religious fanaticism; hence the term *puritanical*. — WHG

⁵ *Yeomanry*: owners of small farms; small freeholders who cultivated their own land.

⁶ *Cant*: patter; social banter; stock phrases or jargon used among a particular group of people.

They have very generally been reproached for their real or affected austerity and moroseness. They have been represented as a race of cynics, who waged war with all the harmless pleasantries of life, who deemed it a sin to taste the cup of earthly joy, and who were incapable of relishing the sweets of society, the refinements of science, or the charms of literature. To some of them, part of this representation might perhaps justly apply. And it would be foolish to deny that there was then a general stiffness and severity, perhaps a portion of harshness in the features which made up the religious character. Without alleging that religion is a serious thing, and that in every religious character, this will be a prominent feature, it ought to be remembered that the circumstances in which the Puritans were placed, naturally deepened this feeling. The state of the country was long unsettled. Its government was either exercising an arbitrary and despotic power (of which they were the principal objects); or fighting for its existence; or entirely overthrown, and everything reduced to anarchy. The people were often called to extraordinary exertion, exposed to imminent danger, or required to make the most costly and painful sacrifices. Mirth and festivity would then have been unsuitable and unseemly. Men do not usually sport on the brink of a precipice, or while surrounded by the desolations of a plague or a volcano. Religion was necessary as a source of enjoyment, and a principle of action. What, in more favoured circumstances, is resorted to for occasional comfort and direction — as an auxiliary to other things — was then the consolation,⁷ and often the only prop of human life. It was not assumed as a badge, or worn as a garment; but constituted the element in which they lived and moved. It was their life, their business, and their hope.

Of nothing is the writer of these pages more strongly convinced than that the design and tendency of the gospel are to make those who receive it *happy*. This is the revealed affirmation respecting: its object. Its sublime discovery of the infinitely perfect and amiable character of God — its statements respecting the sacrifice and mediation of Christ as the ground of hope, and the means of pardon and healing to the guilty — the elevating influence of the spirit which it communicates — and the grandeur of that hope which it inspires, and of which it furnishes so sure a foundation — all prove how admirably adapted it is to relieve the heart from sorrow, and to produce “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Perhaps many of the religious persons of whom we are speaking did not fully enter into this idea of Christianity, or at least experience its full influence. It was counteracted by slight mistakes, as well as by external circumstances. The attention of many of them, as well as of many religious people still, was too much fixed on themselves, and too little on the heavenly discovery. They thought of their sin, rather than of its pardon; of the disease, more than of the remedy; of the rebellion of man more than of the amnesty of God. They dwelt on the Divine holiness and justice *apart from*, rather than in *combination with* mercy and kindness; and regarded suffering more in the light of punishment, than of salutary restraint and merciful correction. Still, they knew the blessedness of peace with God, and of victory over the world. Their self-denial and crucifixions were never unconnected with hope. He must be very incapable of estimating happiness, who does not regard with satisfaction, the composure, the firmness, the resignation, and religious comfort of William Kiffin as exhibited in these Memorandums. And I do not desire to envy the feelings of that man who can read the account of his grandsons without exclaiming — “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his.”

I am aware of the great difficulty of persuading a person who knows nothing of the peculiar enjoyments which belong to a life of hope and conformity to the will of God — that the noiseless, purifying, and I add, *rational* bliss of religion, is far preferable to the intoxicating and short-lived joys of this world. By such, the merry cavalier will always be preferred to the solemn Puritan; and the dashing, swearing Sir Geoffrey, will have many more admirers than the grave and virtuous Bridgnorth. Nothing less than the power of the great Teacher himself can convince men of the

⁷ Originally *solatium*: that which alleviates or compensates for suffering or loss; a compensation.

truth and importance of his own declaration — ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again: but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.’”

The Puritans were not unamiable men in their own families, and among their friends; the lives of many of them, which have been published, clearly evince this. Their religion regulated, but did not extinguish their natural feelings. In many instances it must have improved and refined them. It did not perhaps convert a rustic into a gentleman, or a man of rugged dispositions into the most amiable or gentle of mortals; but it would teach the former to give “an answer with meekness and fear,” and the latter to cultivate the condescension and gentleness of Christ. It moderated their love of the world; but it also taught them not to neglect their business, and to provide things honestly in the sight of all men. If they despised the glare of wealth, and did not trust in riches, then they enjoyed with thankfulness the substantial comforts which a merciful Providence afforded them, or endured with patience the ills of poverty. It raised them above the petty ambition of titles and places; but it also animated and ennobled their patriotism. Their virtue was not to be bribed, their vigilance was not to be laid asleep, and their courage was not to be daunted when the liberties of their country were in danger. With them, “lives and fortunes” were not the unmeaning words of vaunting courtiers, but the ready sacrifice of men to whom life was nothing, except in connection with religion; and fortune was a bauble, unless enjoyed in an inheritance of freedom.

The length and ardour of the devotional exercises for which the Puritans were distinguished, have frequently been the subjects of ridicule and misrepresentation. These also, in some measure, arose out of the circumstances in which they were placed. They were often under the necessity of meeting in the most secret manner, and at the most inconvenient seasons. Of this the following narrative will furnish some illustrations. Thus situated, they were glad when they did assemble, to enjoy as long as possible each other’s society, and fellowship with their God. What would now be reckoned weariness was then rest and refreshment. When the state of the country allowed for their meeting in a more regular and public manner, the habit of long services had been formed, and they did not know how to shorten them. Even then, the numerous and momentous changes which were passing over them, kept up the alarm and excitement of their spirits, and stimulated the ardour of their devotion.

But why should an apology be necessary for spending considerable portions of time in the service of the Creator? Is it because religious people now feel it to be a drudgery? Or because sinful creatures have discovered that it is no longer necessary? When we hear of Parliament spending twelve or fourteen hours at a sitting; in discussing the business of the country, it excites our approval. When we read that the same body occasionally spent half that time, during a period of fearful agitation, in fasting and prayer before the God of Heaven, it perhaps excites a smile. Should it do so? An address of three or four hours to men, is regarded as a proof of earnestness, or a display of genius. A prayer to God which lasts one hour, would be denounced as fanaticism and hypocrisy. For the enthusiasm of patriotism or genius, a ready apology is always found; but the warmth and decision of religion, experience no quarter in the world. For this, however much a genuine Christian may deplore it, he will not be very solicitous. He will remember, “If they called the master of the house Beelzebub, much more those of his household.”

The religious people of that age were remarkable for tracing and acknowledging the hand of God in all their affairs. It must be admitted that the habit of referring all things to the superintending and ever watchful care of an infinite Being, may degenerate into superstition and silliness. On the other hand, the abuse of the maxim, “that the Almighty acts not by partial but by general laws,” produces a species of practical Atheism. It is often forgotten that the idea of a *universal*, includes that of a *particular* Providence; and the man who rejects the latter from his creed, cannot be

considered a firm believer in the former. Divine greatness comprehends attention to all that we deem little, as well as to all that we reckon great.

These observations will apply to all periods and circumstances; although in extraordinary and difficult times, more occasions for remarking the singular interpositions of Providence occur. When hair-breadth escapes are frequently made — when the principle of faith seems to be often rewarded with success — when the mighty are brought down from their thrones, and men of low estate are exalted — when the fall or establishment of a government depends on the issue of a debate, or the event of a battle, men must be utterly regardless of God and religion, who do not familiarise their minds with the displays of His power and sovereignty. In such persons as Col. Hutchinson and Kiffin — from the various fortunes that befell them — attention to the leadings of Providence became a kind of faculty. “They heard a voice, men could not hear; they saw a hand, men could not see.” re Act 22.9

The frequent use of certain Scriptural phrases and theological terms, gives a quaintness to the style, and an appearance of affectation to the writers and professors of the puritanical period, which repel many from seeking an acquaintance with them; and from the days of Hudibras, have furnished great store of mirth and ludicrous association to the triflers and would-be wits of the country. Grace, faith, election, perseverance, experience, godliness, and such words, in every varied combination, perpetually occur in the conversations and works of the men of that generation. The words themselves are good, though they may have been employed with unnecessary frequency; but it is doubtful whether any other terms in the language would convey with equal propriety, the force of those ideas which they intended to express by them. They certainly savour of the theological school to which the persons chiefly belonged; but they also show the nature of those religious feelings and expectations which, as guilty creatures, they derive entirely from the unconditional mercy of the Most High.

A celebrated Essayist writes, as if he were almost ashamed of the phraseology referred to, because it happens to be repulsive to men of taste. But if the words employed are the correct signs of ideas peculiar to the revealed science of salvation, why should they be so cautiously avoided? Every system of philosophy has its appropriate phraseology; every science has its nomenclature. A truly philosophic mind will conquer its aversion to what it may consider a barbarous dialect, for the sake of the sentiment which is clothed in it. If this hardihood is not possessed, no change of diction will produce the love or the enjoyment of truth. As there is no royal road to astronomy; neither is there any pathway to the kingdom of heaven, appropriated to men of taste. Such persons are no doubt offended at the vehicle; but it is chiefly on account of what it conveys. The cup may indeed sometimes be rude and disgusting; but were it made of gold, and fashioned with the most intricate workmanship, while it contained what is regarded as a nauseous potion, it would be repelled. No human covering will ever render palatable the medicine of Christianity. The offence of the cross is not so much in the language in which it is represented, as in the unsightliness of the object itself. A musical amateur feels a natural repugnance to the nasal twang of the conventicle; but he would not love the songs of Sion themselves, even if set to the music of Handel. For *faith*, we may substitute *persuasion* — for *grace*, we may say *favour* — and for *godliness*, we may use *piety*. — Still the world will either mistake the nature of true religion by this appearance of softening it down, or retain its hatred, and give it a new direction.

It is impossible to study the Bible closely for a considerable time without adopting unconsciously a liberal portion of its phraseology. This perhaps partly accounts for the superabundance of Scriptural language in the conversation of the Puritans. That Book, which is now resorted to by many, only when they happen to lose a friend, or to be afflicted with disease, or are trembling at the approach of death — was the daily and hourly companion of such men as Kiffin. They were quite familiar with its contents. This appeared in the ease with which they recurred to its statements, and the ability with which they defended its doctrines and precepts on all occasions.

Introduction by William Orme

Hence its language became interwoven with their own. What would now be mere affectation, or reckoned profane and improper, was then constant and approved practice. It was their classic, whose idioms supplied them with phrases. Its history furnished them with examples of heroism and devotedness in the cause of God and their country. Its poetry furnished them with songs which soothed their grief, and animated their ardour. It supplied their “word” in the day of battle, and lightened their countenances on the scaffold, and at the block.

I ought to apologise for detaining the reader so long from the document itself, which has occasioned these remarks. I am far from thinking that the Puritans had no considerable faults or blemishes; or that many things belonging to them ought to be imitated. Even their failings, however, generally leaned to the side of virtue; and both as Christians, and as Patriots, their memories ought to be cherished with respect. Kiffin, and his grandsons, found the gospel to be the power of God to salvation while they lived — and experienced its strong consolations when they came to die. It will be well if every reader of this volume would be a partaker of the same principles, do equal justice to their influence, and obtain at last their glorious and interminable results.

With the manuscript I have used little freedom. I have divided it into chapters and paragraphs — corrected the orthography and punctuation — and occasionally altered a word, and changed the order of a sentence. The sentiments have been left entirely untouched, and the language altered as little as possible. — The Notes and Additions are of a very miscellaneous nature. They contain short notices of a number of the individuals mentioned in the manuscript; illustrations of some of the events; and all the additional information respecting Kiffin himself, which was within my reach.

KIFFIN'S MEMOIRS.

CHAPTER 1. KIFFIN'S EARLY EXPERIENCES.

His design in writing this Work — Escape from the plague — Is bound Apprentice — Runs away from his Master — Returns in consequence of hearing Mr. Foxley — Hears Mr. Norton — His great distress of mind — Hears Mr. Davenport — His further perplexities respecting grace and conviction — Hears Mr. Moulin — Meditates on the Scriptures, and reads religious books — Profits by the preaching of John Goodwin — Forms an acquaintance with other young men — Obtains comfort.

It was one of the charges which God gave his people of old, that those many great providences which they were made partakers of, might be left by them to their children, to the end that they might, from generation to generation, be more engaged to cling to the Lord. I have therefore thought it my duty, to leave behind me some account of those many footsteps of his grace and goodness towards me (now being arrived at old age, and by the many weaknesses and distempers which attend me, have cause to judge my time is not likely to be long in this world) — if it may contribute anything towards the provoking of your hearts to love, fear, and obey that God who will never fail nor forsake those who trust in him.

The first eminent providence I observed from the Lord towards me, was in the year 1625, when that great plague was in the city of London,⁸ which 'swept away my relations; and being myself but nine years of age, left me with six plague sores upon my body. Nothing but death was looked for by all who were about me; but it pleased God, of his great goodness, to restore me. Being left in the hands of such friends as remained alive, I was taken care of by them; although they sought their own advantage, by possessing themselves of what was left me — of which, as they afterwards failed in business, I never enjoyed but very little.

In the year 1629, I was put apprentice to a lowly calling, in which I continued till the year 1631, without any sense of the great deliverance I had obtained from the hand of God. At this time, being then at the age of fifteen years, I began to consider the condition I was in as to my outward estate, and became quite melancholy. One morning very early, I went away from my master, although without any just cause given by him. Wandering up and down the streets, .and passing by St. Antholins's church, I saw people going in, which made me return and go in also. Mr. Foxley was then preaching on the fifth commandment, and showing the duty of servants to masters; which made me greatly wonder, as thinking he had known me, and only preached to me. It had that effect of making me immediately return home to my master, without my going away being observed by any. This sermon dwelt very much on my thoughts, and provoked in me a desire to hear some of them they called Puritan Ministers.

A little after this, I heard Mr. Norton, who preached at the same place in the morning, on that text, Isaiah 57.21, "There is no peace for the wicked, says my God." He showed what true peace was, and that no man could obtain it without an interest in Jesus Christ. This sermon made a very great impression on my heart; being convinced that I did not have that peace. How to obtain an interest in Jesus Christ I knew not, which occasioned great perplexity of mind. I saw myself every day more and more sinful and vile: —I could not pray; I could not believe in Jesus Christ. I thought myself shut up in unbelief. And although I desired to mourn under the sense of my sins, yet I saw there was no suitable proportion of sorrow to that evil nature which I found working strongly in my soul.

As the only thing I could do in those circumstances, I took up resolutions to attend the most powerful preaching, which accordingly I did. By this means I found some relief, many times from seeing a possibility that, notwithstanding my sinful state, I might at last obtain mercy. I resolved also to leave sin; but although to will was present sometimes, yet how to perform, I had no power.

⁸ An estimated 40,000 Londoners died of the plague in 1625. — WHG

It pleased God, after some time, that I heard Mr. Davenport, in Coleman Street. He preached on that text, 1John 1.7, “And the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses us from all sin.” He showed the efficacy of the blood of Christ both to pardon and to cleanse from sin; and answered many objections which the unbelieving heart of man brings against that full satisfaction which Jesus Christ had made for sinners. I found many of them were such as I had made in my own heart; and as the sense of unworthiness, and willingness to be better before I would come to Christ for life, with many others of the like kind. This sermon was of great use to my soul. I thought I found my heart greatly close with the riches and freeness of grace which God held forth to poor sinners. I found my fears to vanish, and my heart filled with love to Jesus Christ. I saw sin viler than ever, and felt my heart more abhorring it.

Soon after, I heard Mr. Norton speak on that text, Luke 1.69, “And has raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David;” from which he showed that Jesus Christ was mightily accomplished with power and ability to save his people. My faith was exceedingly strengthened in the fulness of that satisfaction which Jesus Christ had given to the Father for sinners, and I was enabled to believe my interest in it. Then I found some ability to pray and to meditate on the riches of this grace; so that I could say with David, “When I awake, I am still with you.” I found the power of inbred corruption scatter, and my heart set on fire with holy love to Christ.

Being young, and knowing little of the deceits of my own heart, I thought I should never find the power and strength of sin and corruption rise in me anymore. I wondered much when I heard ancient Christians complain so much of the strength of sin, that they found daily in their souls. In this frame of peace and rest, I continued for nearly three months, rejoicing in the grace of God. And I was ready to say that, by his favour, he had made my mountain so strong that I would never be moved.

But a new storm began to arise in my soul. For under the comfort and peace I enjoyed, I thought the power of inbred corruption had been so broken within me, that it would never prevail over me anymore. I began to find my confidence in God abate, and my comforts to lessen, and the motions of sin to revive with greater strength than ever. In every duty I performed, my heart was so carnal that it was a burden to me; and because of this, I was a burden to myself. My comforts were gone, and in all the duties of religion, I was like a man who had no strength; yet I dared not omit the performance of any. Still, I had some secret hopes that the Lord would not utterly cast me off in displeasure; although my fears were stronger than my hopes. I was daily questioning whether all that formerly was enjoyed, might be anymore than such a taste of the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, as those had enjoyed who nevertheless fell away. Heb. 6.4-5.

Many weeks I continued in this great distress, keeping all things to myself; being ashamed to open my state to any. At last, being in the company of some Christians who were talking about the least measure of true grace; I understood they concluded that the least measure of true grace, was to know that a man *had* grace. (Although, indeed, this was my own mistake of them.). I quickly drew this conclusion, without any further examination, that I then had no grace. I was thus confirmed in my former dark thoughts, that all my enjoyments were but mere flashes, which greatly increased the sorrow and distress of my soul. Surely if the Lord had not been gracious to relieve me, in a little time, I must have sunk under the burden.

It pleased his Divine Majesty to give me seasonable relief about a week after this. Having an opportunity, I went to hear Mr. Moulin, who preached at the church by London Stone.⁹ It being a preparation sermon for the Sacrament, he laid this down for a truth, at the beginning of his discourse, that to prepare a man for the right receiving of the Sacrament, it was absolutely necessary that he should have grace; and the least measure of grace was sufficient. He then fell

⁹ London Stone is a historic landmark; an irregular block of limestone, that is a remnant of a much larger object that stood for centuries on the south side of Cannon street, possibly of Roman origin. – WHG

upon that question, What the least measure of grace was? Before he gave a positive answer to the question, he proved that for a man to know he had grace, could *not* be the least measure, but a very *large* degree of grace — it being a reflex act of faith. He then gave several characteristics of the least measure of true grace. I greatly wondered within myself, to hear him fall upon that which so much and particularly concerned me. I also found some small beginnings of those signs of true grace, which he laid down, in my own soul. This wonderfully relieved my hopes again; God being pleased to give me some strength to depend upon his grace, more than I had received for many weeks before. My resolutions were thus strengthened to follow God, and to wait upon him in every duty, whatever his pleasure might be towards me at the last.

It also pleased God to greatly encourage me, from two passages of Scripture which were brought to my thoughts with great power: Isaiah 30.18 “Therefore the Lord will wait, that he may be gracious to you; and therefore he will be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all those who wait for him.” Meditation on these words filled me with astonishment, — that the great God of heaven and earth should reckon himself exalted to show mercy to poor sinners; and to encourage such to wait, and not be discouraged: from this consideration, that he was a God of judgment, and knew the fittest season to give what a poor soul waited for.

Also that text was very useful to me: Isaiah 1.10, — “Who *is* among you that fears the Lord, that obeys the voice of his servant, that walks in darkness, and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” It pleased God greatly to bless to me the reading of Mr. Thomas Goodwin’s book on that subject. By means of these Scriptures, God delivered me from those temptations, of casting off waiting upon God in the use of all means, which formerly had attended me. But yet I was ready to run to my own righteousness; I mean to an expectation of something in myself by which I might get greater victory over sin, and more love to God and his ways, before I would believe in Christ for pardon.

Under these thoughts, and being diligent in hearing the best and ablest Ministers, I still found them pressing the necessity of deep humiliation by the law, as the only way God took to the conversion of a sinner. I was also more convinced of it by-reading Mr. Hooker’s book of “The Soul’s Preparation for Christ;” which made me conclude that never having those deep convictions, there was reason to question the truth of the work of grace in my soul. Those thoughts dwelt very long with me (by this time, having arrived at the age of 17 years); but still they engaged me to make a further search into my own heart, and to neglect no opportunity of hearing the word, by means of which I found many supports from the Lord.

About the latter end of 1632, it pleased God to bring to London, Mr. John Goodwin, whose ministry I attended, upon finding it very profitable to me. Coming to deliver his judgment about the way of God’s dealings in the converting of sinners; he showed that the terrors of the law were not of necessity to be preached to prepare the soul for Christ; but rather, in the nature and tendency of them, they drove the soul farther from Christ. He also answered very many objections and Scriptures brought by others, to the contrary. This was of great use to me, so far as to satisfy me that God had not tied himself to any one way of converting a sinner; but according to his own pleasure, took several ways to bring a soul to Jesus Christ. I had for some time seen the want of Christ, as he alone by whom I must expect pardon; and also had seen the worth and excellences that were in him above all other objects; which caused my soul to rest upon and trust in him.

About that time I began to be acquainted with several young men who diligently attended on the means of grace. It pleased God to make known much of himself and his grace to them. And being apprentices as well as myself, they had no opportunity to converse, but on the Lord’s days. It was our constant practice to attend the morning lecture, which began at six o’clock, both at Cornhill and Christ Church. We also appointed to meet together an hour before service, to spend it in

prayer, and in communicating to each other what experience we had revived from the Lord; or else repeat some sermon which we had heard before.

After a little time, we also read some portion of Scripture, and spoke from it what it pleased God to enable us. I found very great advantage in this, and by degrees, arrived at some small measure of knowledge. I found the study of the Scriptures very pleasant and delightful to me, to which I attended as it pleased God to give me an opportunity.

CHAPTER 2. KIFFIN'S RELIGIOUS CHANGES.

Studies the Nonconformist Controversy — Becomes a Dissenter — Exercises his gifts — Remarkable adventure with a Blacksmith — Imprisoned for preaching — Conduct of Judge Mallet — Singular preservation while in prison — Interview with Lord Brook — Delivered from prison by the impeachment of the Judge — Cured of a severe illness by Dr. Trigg — Generosity of the Doctor.

Mr. Davenport, Mr. Hooker, and several other ministers, leaving the kingdom about this time, because they could not conform, I was put upon the examination of the reasons for their conduct. To this end, I furnished myself with all the books and manuscripts I could get. Upon perusing these, I found, comparing what I read with the Scriptures, that God was always very jealous of his worship, and had left many examples of his severity on those who had added anything to it. Of this we are furnished with examples, in the cases of Nadab and Abihu; and of Uzza, who was struck dead for touching the ark. Yet being myself very weak, and finding many able ministers that *did* conform, I applied myself for satisfaction to those I judged most able. But I found that instead of satisfying me, they rather despised my youthful years, showing more passion than reason. Although some years after, those very men in the synod, condemned the same things, as unlawful, which they were offended with me for desiring satisfaction in.

Finding myself greatly disappointed of what I had hoped I might have received from them, I was more provoked to beg earnestly of God to direct me; and searched more closely the Scriptures, in which I received much satisfaction — being much helped by hearing Mr. Glover, who went to New England, and Mr. Burroughs, who a while after went to Holland.

Sometime after, I joined myself to an Independent congregation, with a resolution, as soon as it pleased God to open a way, to go to New England; now having arrived at the age of 22 years. But the providence of God prevented me; and soon after, it pleased God to provide for me a suitable yoke-fellow, who was one with me in judgment, and joined to the same congregation.

It then being the heat of the Bishops' severities, we were forced to meet very early in the morning, and to continue together till night. At the desire of the church, I improved among them, those small abilities God was pleased to give me; and although many times our meetings were disturbed, yet I was generally kept out of the hands of the persecutors. But meeting one Lord's day at a house on Tower-hill, upon coming out, several rude persons were about the door; and many stones were flung at me which did me no hurt — only one fell upon my eye, but without any great prejudice; so I escaped out of their hands. About a year after, I was sent for by a poor man, a smith, who lived in Nightingale Lane, who lay very sick. When I came to him, he was wasted almost to skin and bones. He asked me if I knew him? I answered I did not. He replied that he knew me; for he was the man that disturbed our meeting at Tower-hill, and gathered the people together to stone me. At that time, he said, he was as strong a man, he thought, as most men were; but he went home from that place and fell ill; and had wasted in his body to what I now saw him. He entreated me if I had any compassion for such a vile wretch, that I would pray with him, which accordingly I did; — but he died that day. Looking at this as a remarkable providence, I think it not amiss to record it.

Not long after, the parliament began to sit; but before any difference arose between the king and them, being at a meeting in Southwark, I was taken and carried before some Justices of the Peace. The Assizes¹⁰ being next day, I was bound to answer there. Judge Mallet sitting as judge, I was committed to the White Lyon prison. Here I remained a prisoner till the judge returned home from riding the circuit out of Kent. While I was there, by the malice of a prisoner whose chamber was under mine, the prisoners in the common gaol were incensed against me, to do me a mischief; and as they themselves told me, to take away my life. Several of them had been condemned, but had obtained a reprieve; and others were in prison for great robberies. Accordingly, on a Lord's-

¹⁰ Assizes: the county courts of England.

day, in the evening, several of them came up to my chamber, my door being open, and only myself, my wife, a maid servant, and child in the room. One *Jackson*, a noted rogue, came before them, having a great truncheon in his Hand. He asked me what company I had there? To whom I replied that I had none but what he saw. Having on my table some Spanish tobacco which a friend had left me, I asked him if he would accept it. Looking wistfully at me, and several others of his company being behind him in the room, he took it and thanked me. I also asked him if he and the rest would drink, which they did. Then this *Jackson* turned to them, and bid them go out of the room, and he bid me farewell and went away.

The man's chamber — the one who had set them on me — being under mine, these men finding the door shut, endeavoured to break it open. Hearing this, I went down and asked them what they meant to do? *Jackson* told me that this was the man who had engaged them to knock me on the head; but they would do his work for him, although they would be hanged the next day. But at last, through much entreaty, they were persuaded to desist. This was a signal providence of God to me, to preserve me from such bloody men.

But my neighbour, who set them on me, not effecting his end, had prepared a charge against me to deliver to Judge Mallet upon his return, which accordingly he did. In this charge, he set forth that several persons coming to my chamber, I had preached treasonable words against the king. This charge was very false, as God knows. My wife and friends applied themselves to the Judge to take bail, which he refused. Upon this I went with my keeper to speak with my Lord Brooke, who told me he would speak to the Judge in my behalf. He was then going into the house of Lords. A little time after, he came out while I was standing in the Court of Requests, and told me he had been speaking with the Judge, but could prevail nothing. The Judge told him he had a very high charge against me, and waited only the leisure of the house to acquaint them with it. I told my Lord, I was not conscious to myself of any such thing in the least. My Lord told me he would do the utmost he could for me, when he heard what it was.

In the meantime, while I stayed expecting further trouble, unknown to me several men were at the bar of the House of Commons as witnesses against the said Judge, for encouraging a petition during the assizes at Maidstone in his last sitting. The Commons having heard this, they esteemed what he had done to be of dangerous consequence. While I stood in the Court of Requests, expecting to hear what the Judge had to charge against me, the house of Commons passed through to the house of Lords; and there they charged the said Judge, who was that day committed to the tower, and I was released of my imprisonment — Mallet exhibiting no charge against me. Thus it pleased God to deliver me out of the hands of malicious men; causing the rage of men to praise him, and the remnant of it he restrained.

It pleased God, near about this time, to visit me with a great and sore fit of sickness; all my friends gave me over as a dying man. My physicians also thought the same. But by the persuasion of a friend who was well-acquainted with Doctor Trigg, my wife was prevailed on to go to him. Coming to me, he told my wife I was in a dangerous condition, and that he would not meddle with me; but through very many earnest persuasions, he did undertake me. My other physicians having given me over, it pleased God to bless the means used for my restoration. At that time, my friends and my wife's friends concluded that my judgment and practices in religion, differing from the nation, I would be undone, and my children fall to their care. They therefore kept what I should have had, in their own hands. My wife's friends also kept what portion I should have had with her, which put me to many straits.

It was near three months that Dr. Trigg had me in hand; coming many times twice a day, and generally once every day; but he would take nothing either for his coming, or for his medicine at the time; but he told my wife he would take it altogether, when I was well. My wife has often told me that when she has gone to him for me, in the time of my sickness, she has seen some come to him in a coach, and offer him two twenty-shilling pieces of gold to go with them to visit a sick

person, which he has refused; in regard, many people were at his house waiting upon him. At the same time, he has left the people at his house to wait for him, while he has come to me to observe the working of my fits.

When it pleased God to restore me to some strength, I was not a little troubled to consider that, surely, I had a very large score to pay the Doctor; and how to pay it I did not know. I was very loath to borrow, not knowing how to pay it back; and when to get my money out of the hands of my friends, I did not know. But in this the Lord was exceedingly good to me. For although the hearts of my friends were shut up against me, it pleased God to deal with me in this, far beyond my thoughts. For, desiring to know from the doctor what I owed him, he told me he would have no more than a French crown. I thought he jested with me; but he told me he would have no more. What would move him to take so small an amount, I do not know. It seems exceedingly wonderful to me, that a man who was a stranger, with whom I never spoke before in all my life, should show this kindness to me. Since then he has told me he was never so engaged to study the saving of the life of any man, as he was of mine. This providence I looked at to be very great to me at that time; and it greatly encouraged me to cling to the Lord in the discharge of my duty: that word being made good, "Trust in the Lord, and do good, and truly you shall be fed."

CHAPTER 3. KIFFIN'S BUSINESS ADVENTURES.

Carries out an adventure to Holland — Returns and spends the profits — Engages a young man to go out for him again — Avoids Public Places, and buying Public Lands — Enjoyed no favours from the Parliament or the Protector — Is apprehended by Monk ¹¹ before the restoration — -Delivered by the interference of the Lord Mayor.

It pleased God, after I was raised up, to provide some employment for me. In the year 1613 I went over into Holland with some small commodities which I found good profit by. But on coming home again, I was greatly pressed by the people with whom I was a member, to continue with them. This I did, omitting the opportunity of proceeding in that trade, and instead, spending my time chiefly in studying the word of God; until I had spent most part of what I had got. My wife also diligently employed herself to get what she could, that we might eat our own bread, and not be burdensome to any. In the latter end of the year 1645, seeing no way of subsistence, and that I was likely to be reduced to a very low condition in the world; and being acquainted with a young man who was a member of the same congregation — who walked very soberly, although he also had but little in the world — I discoursed with him about his going over to Holland; which I found him willing to do.

He took with him the commodity that I first went over with, and found profitable; and although our stock was very little, it pleased God to so bless our endeavours that, from scores of pounds, he brought it to many hundreds and thousands of pounds: giving me more of this world than I ever could have thought to have enjoyed. By this means, I was enabled to improve the small talent God gave me, without being burdensome to any. I was able to give without receiving, which, I bless the Lord, he has in some measure given me a heart to do.

While others, under the present sad differences, ruined their estates by public places and public lands, I stood in no need of the first (to wit, public places of profit); and I was always wary of meddling with public lands, which, by the good providence of God, proved very advantageous to me, as will be related more particularly hereafter.

Only one thing I think it necessary to mention, to lessen some aspersions that have been cast on me — that I raised my estate by obtaining orders to bring in prohibited goods. This, it was said, I obtained from the Long Parliament, and from the Protector, which was a scandal upon me; for I never received any but such as was common to all other men.

The first order I obtained was when the Act of Navigation was made, prohibiting all goods of the growth or manufacture of the place, to be brought in, but by English Shipping. As there were but five weeks between the making of that Act, and its coming to execution, I had, with many others, before the making of the Act, shipped several parcels of goods, which were liable to be seized by that Act if they came in after the time limited there. The winds continuing very cross, our ships could not come in within the time. Several other merchants and I petitioned that, in case those goods should not come in, the penalty of the Act might not be executed. Accordingly, coming after it took place, the Council of State ordered, that all who could make an oath that their goods were shipped before, should have them notwithstanding the Act. So as many as could, had their goods (and I also had mine) upon making that oath. This was all the orders I had, which every man in my condition obtained as well as I.

When the first war between England and Holland broke out, the Hollanders had, by connivance with the Swedes and Danes, bought up all the pitch, tar, hemp, and cordage, to prevent the Parliament from being able to supply their fleet. In consequence, the Council of State ordered that all merchants who would bring in any of the said goods, would have liberty to bring in any other

¹¹ George Monck, 1st Duke of Albemarle, KG (1608-1670); a key figure on both sides of the English Civil War, as well as the Restoration of the monarchy to King Charles II in 1660.

sorts of prohibited goods, proportionate to the above. So every man who went for the said order, had it; and by means of that, the Parliament was furnished with all things belonging to shipping during that war. I, with many others, took that liberty and enjoyed its benefits, on the terms that the said order expressed. These were not given as an act of *favour*, but of *State*. Other orders besides these two, I never had from the Parliament; and I did not obtain any from the Protector; nor did I desire any. — But whatever I had, was in common with all men. I rather give some account of this, to satisfy all hereafter, that whatever estate God has blest me with, has been by His hand on my lawful employment.

Passing by many things, I will now give some account of those several providences of God, which have watched over me for good, since his Majesty's return. At that time, I considered that I had many enemies, and therefore could expect to meet with very hard dealings from men who envied my estate. But that God, who has given me occasion to trust in him ever since I lay upon my mother's breast, and has carried me along under many changes of my life, has wonderfully wrought for me, and preserved me by his grace to this moment. I will mention only one thing: — A little before the Restoration,¹² upon General Monk's coming to London, he took up his quarters near my house; and a few days after, I was seized with several others, by soldiers at midnight, and carried to the guard at St Paul's. The next day, it was rumoured in the city of the great quantity of Arms taken, which was in our possession. Seeing we were citizens, and not soldiers under his command, we thought it convenient to write a letter to my Lord Mayor, Sir Thomas Almin, signifying the scandal that was upon us — indeed, having no Arms in any of our houses, except those which were ordinary for housekeepers — praying that matters might be looked into, and that we might not be detained from our callings, and kept prisoners without cause. My Lord Mayor was pleased to order the letter to be read at the Common Council, who, being satisfied of our innocence, sent some officers of their own to the General, that we might be released, and the Arms taken from us restored, which accordingly was done.

¹² After his father's death, Charles II was proclaimed king of England by the Scots. He traveled to Scotland to raise an army. In 1651, Charles invaded England but was defeated by Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester. Charles escaped. After Cromwell's death in 1658, Cromwell's son Richard proved ineffectual; and the public resented the strict Puritanism of England's military rulers. In 1660, in what is known as THE ENGLISH RESTORATION, General George Monck met with Charles, and arranged to restore him in exchange for a promise of amnesty and religious toleration for his former enemies. On May 25, 1660, Charles landed at Dover. Four days later, he entered London in triumph. — WHG

CHAPTER 4. KIFFIN'S POLITICAL HAZARD

Apprehended on a charge of Treason — Brought before Monk — Committed to Prison — Examined by Chief Justice Foster — Defends himself to his Lordship's satisfaction — Exposes the Forgery of the Letter which occasioned his being apprehended — Opposes the Hamburgh Company — Is examined by the House of Commons — Is brought before the King in Council — Is honourably dismissed — Enjoys the favour of the King and Lord Clarendon.

After the return of his Majesty, I remained in quiet for about six months; till it pleased God to take away by death, the Princess of Orange.¹³ A plot was then laid, which if it had taken effect, would have cost me the loss of life and estate.

A letter was forged as if it came from Taunton, directed to this effect: — That the Princess of Orange now being dead, they were ready to put their design into execution; — that according to my promise, I would provide, and send down, powder, match, and bullet, etc., for they believed the promise that one of them would chase a thousand. Deu 32.30

This was the substance of the said letter. Upon which, I was seized on a Saturday at midnight, and carried to the guard at Whitehall. None were allowed to speak with me, and I continued all next day under many taunts and threats of the soldiers. On the Lord's day evening, I was sent before General Monk, and several others of the Council, who read the said letter to me. They even charged me, that I must be guilty of those things in the said letter. To whom I replied that I knew not so much as the name of the man mentioned in the letter, by whom it was said to be written; and I abhorred even entertaining any thoughts of doing anything which might be to the disturbance of the peace of the kingdom.

After the examination, I was put into the hands of the soldiers, to take care of me, and ordered to be sent next day to the Lord Chief Justice Foster, to be examined. I was strictly watched by them all that night, in an inn in King's Street, to where they carried me.

Under this dispensation, I found many supports from God; and knowing my own innocence, did not doubt the Lord would one way or other work for my deliverance. The next day, I was carried in a coach to Sergeant's Inn to be examined. Soldiers being about the coach, occasioned a great concourse of people, who inquired what was the matter; some crying out traitors, rogues, hang them all.

On coming to my Lord Chief Justice, I was strictly examined by him about the said letter; to which, when I had returned an answer, I told his Lordship, that I did not doubt that his Lordship took more pleasure to clear an innocent man than to condemn a guilty one; and therefore prayed him that I might have liberty to speak for myself, and I doubted not but my innocence would appear. He returned me for an answer, that I should speak freely what I could.

I told him there were some things in the letter itself which might give satisfaction that it was a mere forgery. For first, the letter states the rise of the execution of this plot from the death of the Princess of Orange, and yet it was dated at Taunton three days before she died. To which my Lord replied — It was a considerable observation; and looking at the date of the letter to be so indeed, said that might be but a mistake in the date, yet the letter might be true.

To which I answered, I would leave that to his Honour's consideration. But there was one thing more, which, with submission to his Lordship's judgment, could be no mistake: that was, that there could be no letter written from London to Taunton, and an answer to it from Taunton, from the time of the death of the Princess of Orange, to the time I was seized. For I told him, his

¹³ Mary, Princess of Orange, was the eldest daughter of King Charles I. She was married to William II of Orange, when she was only 9-years-old, in 1641. Two days before her husband's death in 1650, Mary gave birth to a son, William III of Orange, who later became king of England, Scotland, and Ireland. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Mary departed for celebrations in London, where she fell ill with smallpox and died.

Lordship knew the Princess died on the Monday night, and no letter could give advice of it by post till the next night; and no answer could be given to that letter till the next Monday morning; while I was seized the Saturday night after her death, which must be before any post came in.

Upon this, my Lord looking very steadfastly at the Lieutenant Colonel, whose prisoner I was, the said Lieutenant Colonel desired my Lord to give me the oaths. My Lord replied to him in great anger that he would *not*. And that things had come to a fine pass, when a Lord Chief Justice must be taught by a soldier what to do. Telling him it was a *trapan* (snare); my Lord then directed his speech to me, and told me he was satisfied I was abused, and that if I could find out the author of the said letter, he would punish him; and discharged me.

Mr. Henry Jesse and Mr. Crape were mentioned with me in the letter from Taunton, and they were both examined and discharged also. Thus God worked for my deliverance, and ensnared those who contrived this letter in the work of their hands, while we escaped like a bird out of the net of die fowler: having great cause to praise His holy name.

A little after this, being at meeting on a Lord's-day, in Shoreditch, we were apprehended and carried before Sir Thomas Bide, and by him I was committed to the new prison, with several others: but having continued there about four days, I was released by him.

It pleased God, after this, to give me some time of respite; but by the providence of God, I was called to manage another affair that might have exposed me to ruin.

The Hamburgh Company, endeavouring very much at this time to get themselves established, obtained a proclamation from the King, that none might trade into the places of Holland and Germany with any Woolen manufactures, except those that were of this company. This occasioned several merchants of Exeter and other places in the West, to write to their parliament men, to prevent that proceeding, as greatly obstructing their trade; and signifying to them that I was able to inform them about the matter.

Being sent for that day the business was to be heard in a grand Committee of the House of Commons, I accordingly went, and having spoken with several of the members, they desired me to be present at the hearing. I told them that by reason of my circumstances in other respects, I was in no way fit to appear in it. But I would offer my reasons against it to them more privately. They desired me to be present at the hearing, however, which I complied with. Being present accordingly, one of the members stood up, and desired Mr. Chairman to call me, to know what information I could give the Committee in that matter. Which accordingly I did, and was afterwards commanded to appear that same day a week later.

After several debates, the Committee reported to the House, their opinions against the Hamburgh Company; and the House of Commons ordered several of their members to apply themselves to his Majesty, to beseech his Majesty to call in the proclamation. But the King, before he would do it, ordered to hear it himself in Council, and a summons was sent to me to be present.

Several of the Company, glorying that they would have me in the Gatehouse that night — I did myself think they might prevail, being men of interest, and myself so inconsiderable. But although man thought evil, God brought it about for good. For, being before the King, and highly charged for speaking against his Majesty's prerogative; and being asked by the Council, what I had to say against it? — I replied that I did not know I had said anything *against* his Majesty's prerogative; nor had I come there to offer any such thing. But being commanded by the House of Commons, to offer my reasons why the confining of the shipping out of woolen manufactures to the Hamburgh Company was prejudicial to the kingdom, I had accordingly done so. And if his Majesty pleased, I would offer those reasons there — I was ready to do it — otherwise I had nothing to say in the matter.

It pleased God as to order it, that several members of the House of Commons were there at the same time, and declared how prejudicial the confinement of the trade was to the merchants and clothiers of their counties. His Majesty was pleased to refer the further hearing of it to the next Council, also commanding me to be present.

At this meeting of the Council, several of the Company laid many charges and great reflections upon me, of what I had said in former times. To whom I replied that, in all the recent times, I had only concerned myself in my own calling; — having not advanced my estate, either by public titles, or public places; and what I had offered to his Majesty, and his most honourable Council, was in obedience to his Majesty's commands: being those things which I thought were for the good and advantage of the kingdom. But if his Majesty thought otherwise, I desired humbly to submit to his Majesty's great wisdom in this.

It pleased God to so order things, that his Majesty and Council were so far satisfied as to recall his proclamation; and this opportunity, by which my enemies thought to get so great an advantage upon me, proved greatly to my good. It occasioned his Majesty and the Council to have a good opinion of me. And although my Lord Arlington has told me that in every list brought him of disaffected persons, fit to be secured, I was always in one of them; yet the King would not believe anything against me. My Lord Chancellor also, the Earl of Clarendon, was very much my friend.

CHAPTER 5. KIFFIN'S DANGERS FROM BUCKINGHAM

Apprehended at midnight by the Duke's orders — Examined at York house — Curious conversation with Buckingham — Committed to the care of an Officer — Writes the Lord Chancellor — His case brought before the Privy Council — Discharged without paying fees — Waits on the Chancellor — Discovers that Buckingham had lodged a charge against him to the Council — By advice of the Chancellor, applies to the King — Is allowed to return home — Sent for by Sir Richard Brown — His house searched by soldiers — Carried to the guard at the Exchange — Dismissed by Sir Thomas Player — Conclusion of this part of his Memoirs.

About a year after this, I met with another great trial, in which nothing less than my life was struck at. About midnight, I was seized by Mr. Wickham, one of the Messengers of the Council, by order of the Duke of Buckingham, and delivered by him into the hands of one Mr. Clifford, a gentleman belonging to the Duke. Many others were seized at that time also.

Being carried to York house, I remained there, under the charge of soldiers, till the next night; when the Duke of Buckingham came, with several others. Being called before them, the Duke charged me with hiring two men to kill the King, and with saying that, if they would not do it, I would do it myself. But he further told me that if I would confess the truth, care would be taken by him that I would not suffer. I was greatly amazed at this charge, and returned this answer to him — that I would rather he charged it against me, than I give the least entertainment of it — even so much as in my thoughts. For I thank God, I abhorred it from my soul, towards the meanest in the kingdom, much more towards his Majesty. I further told him that he could not be looked upon to be his Majesty's friend, who would speak one word for saving the life of any man, who was in his wits (right mind), who would intend any such thing. The Duke told me, he knew I could speak well enough for myself, having spoken so often as I had done before the Council; but what he had charged me with would be proved by two witnesses. And so he ordered Clifford to deliver me to the soldiers, and not to allow any to speak with me.

Being strictly kept by the soldiers till the rest were examined, whose charges, it seems, were not so high as mine, I had some consternation upon me, although I knew my own innocency. But it pleased the Lord, whose care and goodness had been extended towards me in all difficulties to that day, greatly to revive me: bringing that Scripture, with great power upon my soul — “Fear not, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God: I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you, yes I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness.” — Isaiah 41.10. I was so greatly quieted in my own heart, that my fears vanished; and I was made willing to wait upon whatever the pleasure of God would be towards me in this matter.

About two hours after, when all were examined and several sent to the Gatehouse — at the request of Mr. Wickham, the Messenger of the Duke, that I might be his prisoner, it was accordingly so ordered. There I went to bed and slept quietly.

The next day, my Lady Ranelagh came to visit me, to whom I gave an account of what the Duke charged me with. She advised me to write a letter to my Lord Chancellor, to acquaint him with my present condition, and she would carry it to my Lord herself. This accordingly I did, and that Lady delivered it into his own hands. Having read it, he told her that there was nothing of those things before them in the Council, and promised that the next Council day he would acquaint the King and Council with it.

Accordingly he did so, and the letter which I sent to his Lordship, was read before the King and Council. It was then asked the Secretaries of State, whether they had received any charge against me? Who both answered that they had not. Upon which, an order was presently passed for my discharge, without paying of fees. The Messenger at whose house I was, attended the Council to hear the issue, — and being more my friend than I could have expected, brought me word of the said order; and having obtained it that night, he immediately discharged me.

I thought that storm had now been over; and that I was hereby delivered out of the hands of unreasonable men: Understanding, however, the kindness which my Lord Chancellor had done me, I went the next morning to his house, to acknowledge my thankfulness to him. While I stayed without, there went in the Lord Chief Justice Bridgeman, Sir Geoffrey Palmer, his Majesty's Attorney General, Sir Henry Finch, Solicitor-General, and Sir Richard Brown.

After a little while I was called in to my Lord, they being all present. My Lord asked me how I came to be there, and whether I was not a prisoner? I told his Lordship I had been a prisoner, but had come to return His Honour thanks for his favour in presenting my case to his Majesty, by means of which I had been released. He asked me how it came that I was released? I told him by order of the King and Council. He demanded of me, Where that order was? I told him, the original was in messenger's hands, but I had a copy of it, which showed him. He told me indeed there was such an order passed, but that last night the Duke of Buckingham came and brought his charge, and there was an order for continuing me in the messenger's hands. And therefore I must return and render myself a prisoner again. All he could do for me, he said, was that I should have a fair and speedy trial. I thanked his Lordship, and told him I was very willing to do so, knowing my own innocence. He then wished me to go to the back stairs, at White Hall and speak with one of the King's Pages, who attended there; and tell him I came from him, and desire him to acquaint the King I was there; and if I could satisfy the King to take bail, it was well.

Accordingly I went presently, not knowing what the issue of this thing might be. But his Majesty having gone out, I returned to the city, and carried up two sufficient citizens with me to tender as bail, if it was demanded, and hastened up again. And as the providence of God ordered it, just as the King came back, the Chancellor had come to wait upon the King. Having sent in my name, I was ordered to come in to the King; but at the door was remanded back again. Having stayed about an hour outside, a messenger came again, and told me the King commanded him to let me know that I might go home; and asked if I had a messenger with me. I told him I had not. He said if I had, he had orders that he should discharge me; but that I must be ready at all times to come when his Majesty sent for me, which I promised I would.

Thus the Lord, by his own hand, worked for my full deliverance from that charge, and I had cause to think it was by means of the Chancellor. For the Page who brought me the first message, told me the King seemed to be very angry with me. This great deliverance was rather of wonder to all who heard of it; for many who were seized at the same time, whose charges were not so high as mine, were kept in the Gatehouse more than six months; although nothing ever came by way of charge against them, from the time of their commitment, till they were released.

After this, I was sent for by Sir Richard Brown to come to him, which I did immediately. He demanded of me where I had been that summer. I told him at London chiefly, but my family was at a kinsman's house in Hertfordshire, where sometimes I had been myself. He demanded if I had not engaged those people with whom I walked, to enter into a covenant against the government? I told him the end of our meeting was only to edify each other, as we were able, in matters, of religion; and not to meddle with anything which was prejudicial to the government. He told me there was someone present who would witness it. I replied that I knew there was no such thing. Then he told me he would further examine the witness, and seeing I came voluntarily to him, upon his sending for me, I might go home till I heard further from him; but I heard no more of that matter afterwards.

About six o'clock one evening, about the same time, a guard being kept at the exchange, a party of soldiers came to my house. They searched all my papers, and perused them, but found nothing. Looking, however, under my man's desk, they saw a book which they supposed was hidden there. And indeed so it was, by my man, without my knowledge. This they readily snatched up, crying now they had found something indeed; but when they had looked into it, they found it was a book

Reynard the Fox,¹⁴ which it seems my man used to read. When they saw their error, they laid it down again, and carried me away to the guard at the Exchange.

Sir Thomas Player being the chief commander there, asked me several questions. To whom I returned an answer. He told me he had a special order to secure me; but if I would pass my word to be forthcoming when I was sent for, he would let me go home. I told him I would always be ready at any time. So I returned home again in the matter of an hour's time.

Afterwards, to this time, I never heard more of anything laid to my charge; but I have since, through the Lord's goodness, been in my habitation in peace, enjoying the comfort of my relations, and what it has pleased God to give me of the things of this world.

What befell me afterwards, was on account of meeting for the worship of God, in which I found the same hand of Providence in delivering me. Many other things I might have noted, but being of the like nature with what I have already done, I omit. And for the several trials which have attended me, from those with whom I have walked, I intend particularly to set them down by themselves. They are things peculiarly relating to the congregation with whom I have walked for more than fifty years. If any improvement may be made of what I have truly related of the several ways of God towards me, in the course of my life, I will have my end in leaving them.

You may hereby see that it is not in vain to follow God in the way of duty; and to enquire after the knowledge of Jesus Christ early: for "those who find him, find life, and obtain favour from the Lord." Whoever walks in the ways of God "shall dwell safely, and be quiet from the fear of evil." This, to the praise of God, I can say I have experienced, and I would not for ten thousand worlds, if I knew my heart, but have tasted of the gracious goings of God in my younger days.

Being now sensible of the decays of nature, and the great inability that attends me thereby to do service for Jesus Christ, the counsel I would leave with you is this: First, have a care of your hearts, that they not be taken with the vanities of this present evil world. Your temptations may be more than mine were in my younger days; in regard, your enjoyment of the world is much more. Yet consider that it is an evil requital to the Lord for the mercies shown to your father; that what God has given him, and has been left by him to you, should be used to sin against that God who has freely given it. Oh! Do not let that which your father has received as mercy from God be so used, that at last, it may prove a curse to you.

I have often prayed from the hands of God, that you may have another portion than the world in this life: that Christ may be your portion, and that your younger years may be spent in looking after that one necessary thing. This has been the desire of my soul to God for you. I well know outward mercies prove great snares to keep many from Christ, and call for great watchfulness over our hearts in the enjoyment of them. We are very apt to follow example; therefore we are counselled not to follow a multitude to do evil. Our Lord Christ tells us that "broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who find it." This broad way men need not be taught; the corruption of their hearts and the subtlety of Satan soon point it out.

¹⁴ Reynard the Fox is a series of medieval allegories, and German fables, dating from the 12th century. – WHG

CHAPTER 6. KIFFIN'S DOMESTIC TROUBLES.

The Death of his eldest son — His second son sent abroad — Poisoned at Venice — Prosecuted by informers — Death of his wife — Prosecuted for fifteen meetings — Escapes the fine — Suspected of being connected with Lord Russell — His son-in-law tried for his life — A trap laid for him — Introduction to the account of the death of his Grandsons.

It being several years since I wrote my former experiences of the gracious dealings of God towards me, I hope it may not be unprofitable to give some further account of it.

It pleased God to take to himself, out of this world, my eldest son, which was no small affliction to me and my dear wife. The sense of it greatly pressed me down with more than ordinary sorrow: he being a young man of about twenty years of age, whose obedience to his parents, and forwardness in the ways of God, were such as made him very amiable in the eyes of all who knew him. In the midst of my great distress, it pleased the Lord to support me, from that blessed word brought to my mind, Mat. 20.15, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil because I am good?" These words quieted my heart with a free submission to his will, being well satisfied that it was for his great advantage, and voice to me to be more humble and watchful over my own ways.

My other eldest son, then living, being but weakly, and desiring to travel, I sent him with the Captain of a ship, who was my acquaintance, who went for Aleppo. And fearing that in his voyage and travels he might be in danger to be corrupted in his judgment, by those of the Popish religion, I sent a young minister with him to prevent anything of that kind. But I was greatly deceived; for the minister that went in the ship with him, left him and the ship at Leghorn, and travelled himself to Rome; by which means I was, to my sorrow, disappointed. On my son's returning home, he was, by a Popish Priest, poisoned at Venice. Being too forward in discoursing with him about religion, the priest showed his revenge by sending him out of the world. I forbear mentioning the minister's name, he being yet alive. I desire the Lord may not lay this sin to his charge.

It pleased the Lord, some time afterwards, to permit the laws to be put in execution with severity against dissenters. Being taken at a meeting, I was prosecuted for forty pounds, which I deposited in the hands of the officer. Finding some errors in the proceedings, and at the trial, I prosecuted and overthrew the informers, although it cost me thirty pounds to recover my forty pounds again. But it had this advantage, that many poor men who were prosecuted upon the same account were hereby relieved, the informers fearing to proceed against them.

It pleased the Lord, some time after, to take to himself my dear and faithful wife, with whom I had lived nearly forty-four years. Her tenderness to me, and faithfulness to God, were such as cannot be expressed by me. She sympathized with me in all my afflictions, and I can truly say I never heard her utter the least discontent under all the various providence that attended myself or her. But owning the hand of God in them, she was a constant encourager of me in the ways of God. Her death was to me the greatest sorrow I ever met with in this world. She departed this life, the 5th of October 1682.

Shortly after her death, I was again prosecuted by informers for fifteen meetings which amounted to three hundred pounds. They managed this so secretly, that they got the record in court for the money. But there being errors in this record, they also moved the court to mend the same (Judge Jenner sitting Judge); but some of my friends in court moved that I might be heard before it was ordered. By means of which I came to the knowledge of it, and employed able Counsel for me, who acquainted the court that the record could not be mended. After several hearings, the informers let the suit fall. Thus I was delivered out of their hands, and have been preserved from their violence ever since.

But the wise providence of God, who orders all things as he pleases, reserved yet further trials to attend me in my old age; although through His goodness he has been pleased to give me some

measure of strength to bear me up under them all; and in the sharpest of these, I have seen goodness and mercy towards me.

Soon after, the discovery of the Popish Plot came on ¹⁵ — the pretended plot of the Duke of Monmouth and the Lord Russell; at which time my house was searched, and my arms taken from me, which were no other than such as were necessary for my house. Great inquiry was made from some of those who were witnesses against my Lord Russell, whether I did not have a hand in it. But none was found to witness anything against me; nor indeed could any justly do it. I being a stranger both to the Duke and Lord Russell, not so much as knowing them by face, nor ever having been in their company.

Several persons at that time fled to Holland. Among these was Sir Thomas Armstrong. At the request of some of his friends, there was a bill of exchange remitted to him, which was pretended to be sent to him by my son-in-law, Mr. Joseph Hayes. For this, he was apprehended and tried for his life; but God, by a merciful providence, delivered him.

While I was endeavouring to help him what I could, coming to my own house about nine o'clock one night, I found a packet of letters left for me, which my servants had received about half an hour before. But who brought them, they could not tell. When I opened them, I found one directed to my Lord Chief Justice Jefferies, and another to myself. The one to myself was full of treasonous words and threats, which as soon as I saw and read, I immediately sent it to my Lord Chief Justice by a servant, for I plainly saw it was to ensnare me. But the Chief Justice not being at home, they were delivered to one of his clerks. Reading the letter which was sent me, he said he would deliver them to his master as soon as he came home. He further told my servant he thought he knew the hand. When I heard this, it was a further confirmation that they were sent upon a design. But I never heard any more of the letters, although I expected I would have been sent for about them, by my Lord Chief Justice. This storm blew over, although it proved the ruin of my son-in-law, and his wife, in a great measure.

Not long after, the King died, and James II came to the crown. The summer after his coming, the Duke of Monmouth, with a party, came over with a few armed men who landed at Lyme. A young grandson of mine, William Hewling, being at board and school in Holland, came over with him, unknown to me or any of his friends; he was only about the age of nineteen years. His eldest brother also, Benjamin Hewling, conversing with those who were under great dissatisfaction with seeing popery encouraged, and religion and liberty likely to be invaded, furnished himself with arms, and went to the said Duke. Both being taken prisoners after the fight, they were brought to Newgate [a notorious London prison], which to me was no small affliction.

It being given out, however, that the King would make only some few who were taken, examples, and that the rest, he would leave to his officers to compound for their lives — I endeavoured, with their mother, to deal with a Great Man; and agreed to give three thousand pounds for their lives. But the face of things was soon altered, so that nothing but severity could be expected. And indeed we missed the right door; for the Lord Chief Justice finding agreements made with *others*, and so little to *himself*, was more provoked to use all manner of cruelty toward the poor prisoners: so that few escaped. Among the rest, these two young men were executed.

But how graciously the Lord showed himself to them, both in their behaviours before their trials, and at their deaths, the following account will show to those who please to peruse it. I think it may be of use to leave it to you and your children, and to those who may read the same.

¹⁵ The fictitious Popish Plot alleged that the Pope wanted the King assassinated. A renegade Anglican clergyman, Titus Oates, fabricated the conspiracy. Russell, a close associate of the Duke of Monmouth, led the fight in the Commons to exclude James from the succession. In June 1683, informers accused Russell of participating in *the Rye House Plot* to murder James and Charles. He was found guilty of treason and beheaded. (*Encycl. Britannica*) – WHG

CHAPTER 7. THE HEWLINGS.

Their object in engaging with Monmouth — Dispersion of his Army — -Deliver themselves up to a Gentleman — Sent to Exeter — Put on board a frigate and carried to Newgate — State of their minds in prison — Sent down to the west to be tried — Their sister's account of their behaviour — One sent to Taunton, and the other detained at Dorchester — Particular account of Mr. William Hewling — His behaviour at death, and sympathy of the people with him. — Letter from Hannah Hewling to her mother — Account of Mr. Benjamin Hewling's death — His last letter to his mother — Kiffin's remarks.

The gracious dealings of God manifested to some in dying hours, have often been of great advantage to the living. They give them occasion to reflect on their own estate, and to look after the things of their peace before they are hidden from their eyes; and they also present great encouragement to strengthen the faith of those who have experienced the grace of God. To that end, it is thought necessary by parents especially, to preserve for their children who remain, those blessed experiences which those have had, whom God has taken to himself.

Here, therefore, is presented a true account of the admirable appearances of God towards two young men, Mr. Benjamin Hewling, who died when he was about twenty-two years of age; and Mr. William Hewling, who died before he arrived at twenty-years. They engaged with the Duke of Monmouth, as their own words were, for the English Liberties and the PROTESTANT RELIGION." For which Mr. William Hewling was executed at Lyme, the 12th of September 1685, and Mr. Benjamin Hewling, at Taunton, the 30th of the same month. However severe men were to them, yet the blessed dispensation of God to them was such as has made good his word, that "out of the mouths of babes he has ordained strength, that he may still the enemy and avenger."

After the dispersing of the Duke's army, they fled and put to sea, but were driven back again, and with the hazard of their lives, got ashore, over some dangerous rocks. They saw the country filled with soldiers; and being unwilling to fall into the hands of the rabble, and no way of defense or escape remaining to them, they surrendered themselves prisoners to a gentleman, whose house was near the place where they landed, and were from there sent to Exeter gaol, the 12th of July. Remaining here some time, their behaviour was such, that (being visited by many) it caused great respect towards them, even by those who were enemies to the cause they engaged in.

On the 27th of July, they were put on board the Swan frigate, in order to be brought up to London. Their carriage on board was such as obtained great kindness from their commander, and all the other officers of the ship. Being brought into the river, Captain Richardson came and took them into his custody, and carried them to Newgate. Great irons were put upon them, and they were put apart from each other; no liberty being allowed for the nearest relation to see them, even in the presence of a keeper, notwithstanding all endeavours and entreaties used to obtain it. Though this treatment greatly increased the grief of relations, God, who wisely orders all things for good to those for whom he intends grace and mercy, made this very restraint and hard usage, a blessed advantage to their souls, as may appear by their own words. When after great importunity and charge, some of their near relations had leave to speak a few words to them before the keeper; they replied, "They were content with the will of God, whatever it should be."

Having been in Newgate three weeks, there was an order given to carry them down into the West, in order for their trial. This being told them, they answered they were glad of it. That morning they went out of Newgate; several who beheld them, seeing them so cheerful, said that surely they had received their pardon; otherwise they could never carry it with that courage and cheerfulness. This also must be observed, that from first to last, whatever hopes they received from friends, they still thought the contrary. They were never much affected with the hopes of pardon, or cast down, or the least discouraged at the most that man could do.

Of their journey to Dorchester, the keepers that went with them have given this account: that their courage was so great, serious, and Christian, it made them admire to see and hear what they did,

from such young men. A near relation who went into the West to see the outcome of things, and to perform whatever should be necessary for them, gives the following account.

At Salisbury, the 30th of August, I had the first opportunity to converse with them, and found them in a very excellent composure of mind. They declared their experience of the grace and goodness of God to them in all their sufferings; in supporting, strengthening them, and providing for them; and in turning the hearts of all those in whose hands they had been, both at Exeter and on shipboard, to show pity and favour to them. Although they were harshly used since they came to Newgate; and now on their journey, loaded with heavy irons, and more inhumanely dealt with; it was with great cheerfulness that they professed they were better, and in a happier condition, than ever in their lives — from the sense they had of the pardoning love of God in Jesus Christ to their souls. They wholly referred themselves to their wise and gracious God, to choose for them life or death; expressing themselves thus: — “Anything that pleases God — what he sees best, so be it — we know he is able to deliver; but if not, blessed be his name; death is not terrible now, but desirable.” Mr. Benjamin Hewling particularly added: “As for the world, there is nothing in it to make it worthwhile to live, except we may be serviceable to God in it.” And afterwards he said, “Oh! God is a strong refuge; I have found him so indeed.”

The next opportunity I had was at Dorchester, where they were both carried, and remained together four days. By reason of their strict confinement, our conversation was much interrupted; but they had still the same presence and support from God — in no way discouraged at the approach of their trial, nor at the event of it, whatever it should be.

The 6th of September, Mr. Benjamin Hewling was ordered to Taunton, to be tried there. On taking my leave of him he said, “Oh! blessed be God for afflictions! I have found such happy effects from them, that I would not have been without them for all the world.”

I still remained at Dorchester to await the issue of Mr. William Hewling’s trial. After the trial, I had free access to him, and found his discourse was much filled with admirings of the grace of God in Christ, that had been manifested towards him, on calling him out of his natural state. He said, God by his Holy Spirit suddenly seized upon his heart — when he was not thinking of it, in his retired abode in Holland — as it were, secretly whispering in his heart: “Seek my face;” enabling him to answer His gracious call, and to reflect upon his own soul — showing him this evil of sin and the necessity of Christ. From that time, he had carried him on to a sensible adherence to Christ for justification and eternal life. He said he found a spring of joy and sweetness from this, beyond the comforts of the whole earth.

He further said, he could not help but admire the wonderful goodness of God, in so preparing him for what he was bringing him to — which then he had not thought of — giving him hope of eternal life, before He called him to look death in the face; so that he cheerfully resigned his life to God before he came. Having sought His guidance in the affair, he said both then and now, the cause appeared to him very glorious, notwithstanding all he had suffered in it, or what he further might: although for our sins, God had withheld those good things from us. But, he said, God carried on his blessed work on his soul *in* and *by* all his sufferings. And whatever the will of God was — life or death, he knew it would be best for him.

After he had received his sentence, and had returned to prison, he said, “I think I find my spiritual comfort increasing ever since my sentence. “There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. It is God who justifies, who shall condemn?””

When I came to him the next morning — after he had received the news that he must die the following day, and in order to it, was to be carried to Lyme that day — I found him in a more excellent, raised, and spiritual frame than before. He said he was satisfied; God had chosen best for him. “He knows what the temptations of life might have been. I might have lived and forgotten God; but now I am going where I shall sin no more — Oh! it is a blessed thing to be freed from sin

and to be with Christ — Oh! the riches of the love of God in Christ to sinners — Oh! how great were the sufferings of Christ for me; beyond all I can undergo! How great is that glory to which I am going! It will soon swallow up all our sufferings here.”

When he was at dinner, just before his going to Lyme, he dropped many abrupt expressions of his inward joy, such as these — Oh! The grace of God! The love of Christ! Oh! that blessed Supper of the Lamb! To be forever with the Lord! He further said, “When I went to Holland, you did not know what snares, sins, and miseries I might fall into, or whether we should ever meet again. But now you know where I am going, and that we shall certainly have a most joyful meeting.”

He said, pray give my particular recommendations to all my friends, with acknowledgments for all their kindnesses. I advise them all to make sure of an interest in Christ, for he is the only comfort when we come to die. One of the prisoners seemed to be troubled at the manner of the death they were to die. To whom he replied, “I bless God I am reconciled to it all.” Just as he was going to Lyme, he wrote these few lines to a friend; being barely allowed to stay so long.

“I am going to launch into eternity; I hope and trust into the arms of my blessed Redeemer, to whom I commit you and all my dear relations; my duty to my dear mother, and love to all my sisters, and the rest of my friends.

WILLIAM HEWLING.”

As they passed through the town of Dorchester to Lyme, multitudes of people beheld them with great lamentations, admiring his deportment at parting with his sister. As they passed on the road between Lyme and Dorchester, his discourse was exceedingly spiritual, as those declared who were present. He took occasion from everything to speak of the glory they were going to. Looking out on the country as he passed, he said, “This is a glorious creation; but what then is the Paradise of God to which we are going! ’tis but a few hours and we will be there, and forever with the Lord.” At Lyme, just before they went to die, reading the 14th of John, 18th verse, he said to one of his fellow sufferers, “Here is a sweet promise for us, ‘I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.’ Christ will be with us to the last.”

To one taking leave of him, said, “Farewell till we meet in heaven. Presently I shall be with Christ. Oh! I would not change conditions with any in this world; I would not stay behind for ten thousand worlds.” To another who asked him how he did now, he said, “Very well, blessed be God!” And further asking him if he could look death in the face with comfort, now that it approached so near, he said, “Yes; I bless God I can with great comfort. God has made this night a good night for me. My comforts are much increased since I left Dorchester.” Then, taking leaving of him, he said, “Farewell, I will see you no more.” To which he replied, How! see me no more!! “Yes, I hope to meet you in glory.” To another who was by him to the last, he said, “Pray remember my dear love to my brother and sister, and tell them I desire they would comfort themselves, that I have gone to Christ, and we shall quickly meet in glorious Mount Sion above.”

Afterwards, he prayed for about three-quarters of an hour, with the greatest fervency — exceedingly blessing God for Jesus Christ; adoring the riches of his grace in him — for all the glorious fruits of it towards him — praying for the peace of the church of God, and of these nations in particular — all with such eminent assistance of the Spirit of God, as convinced, astonished, and melted into pity, the hearts of all present, even the most malicious adversaries; — forcing tears and expressions of regret from them. Some saying they did not know what would become of *them* after death, but it was evident *he* was going to great happiness.

When he was just going out of the world, with a joyful countenance, he said, “Oh! Now my joy and comfort, is that I have a Christ to go to.” And so he sweetly resigned his spirit to Christ, the 12th of September 1685.

An officer who had shown so malicious a spirit as to call the prisoners devils, when he was guarding them down, was now so convinced, that he afterwards told a person of quality, that he was never so affected in his life as by his cheerful carriage and fervent prayer. It was such as he believed was never heard, especially from one so young. He said also, I believe had the Lord Chief Justice been there, he could not have let him die.

The Sheriff having given his body to be buried, although it was brought from the place of execution without any notice given, yet very many of the town, to the number of about two hundred, came to accompany it. And several young women, of the best of the town, laid him in his grave, in Lyme church yard, the 13th of September 1685. After which his sister wrote the following letter to her mother.

“Although I have nothing to acquaint my dear mother with, but what is most afflictive to sense, both as to the determination of God’s will, and as to my present apprehension concerning my brother Benjamin, still remaining; yet there is such an abundant consolation mixed in both, that I only wanted an opportunity to pay this duty. God having wrought so glorious a work on both their souls, in revealing Christ to them, that death has become their friend. My brother William having already, with the greatest joy, declared to those who were with him to the last, that he would not change conditions with any who were to remain in this world; and he desired that his relations would comfort themselves, that he has gone to Christ. My brother Benjamin expects not long to continue in this world, and is exceedingly willing to leave it when God calls, being fully satisfied that God will choose that which is best for him, and for us all. By these things, God greatly supports me, and I hope you also, my dear mother, which was, and is, my brother’s great desire. There is still some room for prayer for one; and God having so answered, though not in kind, we have encouragement still to wait on Him. Honoured mother, your dutiful daughter.”

When I came to Taunton, to Mr. Benjamin Hewling, he had received the news of his brother having gone to die with so much comfort and joy; and afterwards of the continued goodness of God in increasing it to the end. He expressed himself to this effect: — We have no cause to fear death, if the presence of God is with us. There is no evil in it; the sting being taken away. It is nothing but our ignorance of the glory which the saints pass into by death, that makes it appear dark for ourselves, or our relations. If we are in Christ, what is the world that we should desire an abode in it? It is all vain and unsatisfying; full of sin and misery. He intimated also his own cheerful expectations, soon to follow his brother.

He revealed then, and all along, great seriousness, and a sense of spiritual and eternal things — complaining of nothing in his present circumstances, but want of a place for retirement, to converse more uninterruptedly with God and his own soul. His lonely time in Newgate, he said, was the sweetest in his whole life.

He said, God had some time before struck his heart (when he thought of the hazard of his life) to some serious sense of his past life, and the great consequence of death and eternity; showing him that the only happy persons, were those who had secured their eternal states. He had also shown him the folly and madness of the ways of sin, and his own thralldom in it, with his utter inability to deliver himself; and also the necessity of Christ for salvation. He said that it was not without terror and amazement for some time, the sight of unpardoned sin, with eternity before him. But God wonderfully opened to him the riches of His free grace in Christ Jesus for poor sinners; enabling him to look to a crucified Christ alone for salvation.

He said this blessed work was in some measure carried on upon his soul, in all his business and hurries in the army; but never sprung forth so fully and sweetly till his close confinement in Newgate. There he saw Christ and all spiritual objects more clearly, and embraced them more strongly. There he experienced the blessedness of a reconciled state, the excellency of the ways of holiness, and the delightfulness of communion with God. This remained with very deep and

apparent impressions on his soul, while he frequently expressed his admiration of the grace of God towards him.

Perhaps my friends, he said, may think this summer the saddest time of my life, but I bless God, it has been the sweetest and most happy of it all. Indeed, there is nothing else worth the name of happiness. I have in vain sought satisfaction from the things of this world, but I never found it. But now I have found rest for my soul in God alone. Oh! how great is our blindness by nature that till God opens our eyes, we can see no excellency in spiritual things, but spend our precious time in pursuing shadows, and remain deaf to all the invitations of grace and the glorious offers of the gospel! How just is God in depriving us of what we so much slighted and abused! Oh! his infinite patience and goodness, that after all, he should yet sanctify any methods to bring a poor sinner to himself. Oh! electing love! Distinguishing grace! What great cause I have to admire and adore it!

What an amazing consideration, he said, is the suffering of Christ for sin, to bring us to God! His sufferings from wicked men were exceedingly great; but alas! what were these to the griefs of his soul under the infinite wrath of God. This mystery of grace and love is enough to swallow up our thoughts to all eternity.

As to his own death, he would often say, he saw no reason to expect any other. I know God is infinitely able to deliver, and I am sure he will do it, if it is for his glory and my good; in which, I bless God, I am fully satisfied. It is all my desire that he would choose for me, and then I am sure it will be best, whatever it is. For truly, unless God has some work for me to do in the world, for his service and glory, I see nothing else to make life desirable. In the present state of affairs, there is nothing to cast our eyes upon but sin, sorrow, and misery. And indeed, were things ever so according to our desires, in the present state of affairs, it is but the world still, which will never be a resting place. Heaven is the only state of rest and happiness. There we shall be perfectly freed from sin and temptation, and enjoy God without interruption forever.

Speaking of the disappointment of their expectations in the work they had undertaken, he said, with reference to the glory of God, the prosperity of the gospel, and the delivery of the people of God, we have great cause to lament it. But for that outward prosperity that would have accompanied it, it is but of small moment in itself — as it could not satisfy, so neither could it have been abiding. For at longest, death would have put an end to it all. Adding also, perhaps indeed we might have been so foolish as to have been taken with that part of it, but with the neglect of our eternal concerns; and then I am sure our present circumstances are incomparably better.

He frequently expressed great concern for the glory of God, and affection for his people — saying, “If my death may advance God’s glory, and hasten the deliverance of his people, it is enough;” and that it was a great comfort to him, to think of so great a privilege, as an interest in all their prayers.

In his converse, he particularly valued and delighted in those persons in whom he saw most holiness shining. He also manifested great pity for the souls of others — saying that the remembrance of our former vanity may well cause compassion for others who are in that state. In his converse, he prompted others to seriousness, telling them death and eternity are such weighty concerns, that they deserve the utmost intenseness of our minds. For the way to receive death cheerfully is to prepare for it seriously. And if God should be pleased to spare our lives, surely we have the same reason to be serious, and to spend our remaining days in His fear and service. He also took great care that the worship of God, which they were in a capacity to maintain there, might be duly performed, such as reading, praying, and singing psalms, in which he evidently took great delight.

For those three or four days before their deaths, when there was a general report that no more would die, he said, I don’t know what God has done beyond our expectations. If he prolongs my life, I am sure it is His — all his own; and by his grace, I will wholly devote it to him.

But the 29th of September, about ten or eleven o'clock at night, we found the deceitfulness of this report; they being then told that they must die the next morning. This was very unexpected as to the suddenness of it. But in this God glorified his power, and grace, and faithfulness, in giving suitable support and comfort by his blessed presence. Upon my coming to him at that time, I found him greatly composed. He said, though men designed to surprise, — God does and will perform his word — “to be a very present help in time of trouble.” The next morning when I saw him again, his cheerfulness and comfort were much increased: waiting for the Sheriffs, with the greatest sweetness and serenity of mind, saying, “Now the will of God is determined, to whom I have referred it, and he has chosen that which most certainly is best.”

Afterwards, with a smiling countenance, he discoursed of the glory of heaven; remarking with much delight, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses of the 22nd chapter of Revelation — “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Then he said, “Oh! what a happy state this is! Shall we be loath to go and enjoy it? Then he desired to be read to him, 2Cor. 5.1-11.

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our house which is from heaven: If so, that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in *this* tabernacle groan, being burdened: not that we would be unclothed, but clothed, that mortality might be swallowed up by life. Now he that has wrought us for the self-same thing, is God, who also has given to us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we *are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight). We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted by him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in his body, according to what he has done, whether *it be* good or bad.”

His comforts still increasing, he expressed his sweet hopes, and good assurance of his interest in this glorious inheritance, and that he was now going to the possession of it. He saw so much of this happy change, that he said death was more desirable than life; he would rather die than live any longer here. As to the manner of his death, he said, “When I have considered others under these circumstances, I have thought it very dreadful; but now God has called *me* to it. I bless God, I have quite other apprehensions of it. I can now cheerfully embrace it as an easy passage to glory; and though death separates from the enjoyment of each other here, it will be but a very short time, and then we shall meet in such enjoyments as now we cannot conceive, and forever rejoice in each other's happiness.”

Then, reading the Scriptures, and musing with himself, he intimated the great comfort God conveyed to his soul by them, saying, “O! what an invaluable treasure is this blessed Word of God in all conditions. Here is a store of strong consolation.” To someone desiring his Bible, he said — “No! this shall be my companion to the last moment of my life.” Thus praying together, reading, conversing, and meditating on heavenly things, they awaited the end.

When the Sheriff came, void of all pity and civility, he hurried them away, scarcely allowing them to take their leave of their friends; but notwithstanding this, and the doleful mourning of all around them — the joyfulness of his countenance was increased. Thus he left his prison, and thus he appeared in the sledge; where they sat over half an hour before the officers could force the horses to draw. They were greatly enraged at this, there being no visible obstruction from weight or way. But at last, the Mayor and Sheriff hauled them forwards themselves, Balaam-like, driving the horses.

When they came to the place of execution, which was surrounded with spectators; many who waited their coming with great sorrow, said that when they saw him and them, come with such cheerfulness and joy, and evidence of the presence of God with them, it made death appear with another aspect. — They first embraced each other with the greatest affection. Then two of the elder persons prayed audibly; they joined them with great seriousness. Then Benjamin desired leave of the Sheriff to pray particularly; but he would not grant it; he only asked Benjamin if he would pray for the king? He answered, “I pray for all men.” He then requested they might sing a psalm; the Sheriff told them it must be with ropes about their necks, which they cheerfully accepted; and sung with such heavenly joy and sweetness, that many present said it both broke and rejoiced their hearts. Thus, in the experience of the delightfulness of praising God on earth, he willingly closed his eyes on a vain world, to pass to that eternal employment, Sept. 30th, 1685.

All present, of all sorts, were exceedingly affected and amazed. Some officers who before had insultingly said, “Surely these persons have no thoughts of death, but will find themselves surprised by it,” said afterwards that they now saw he and they had something extraordinary within, that carried them through with such joy. Others of them said that they were so convinced of their happiness, that they would be glad to change conditions with them. All the soldiers in general, and all others, lamented exceedingly; saying that it was so sad a thing to see them so cut off, they scarcely knew how to bear it. Some of the most malicious in the place, from whom nothing but railing was expected, said (as they were carried to their graves, in Taunton churchyard, voluntarily accompanied by most in the town) that these persons had left sufficient evidence that they were now glorified saints in heaven.

A great officer in the king’s army has been often heard to say, that if you would learn to die, “Go to the young men of Taunton.” Much more was uttered by them, which showed the blessed and glorious frame of their hearts (to the glory of divine grace), but this is what occurs to memory. Mr. Benjamin Hewling, about two hours before his death, wrote the following letter to his mother, which showed the great composure of his mind.

Taunton, 30th September 1685

“HONOURED MOTHER,

“That news which I know you have a long while feared, and we expected, I must now acquaint you with, that notwithstanding the hopes you gave in your two last letters, Warrants have come down for my execution, and within these few hours I expect it to be performed. Blessed be the Almighty God, who gives comfort and support in such a day. How ought we to magnify his holy name for all his mercies, that when we were running on in a course of sin, he should stop us in our full career, and show us that Christ whom we had pierced: and out of his free grace enable us to look upon him with an eye of faith, believing him able to save to the uttermost all those who come to him. Oh! admirable long suffering and patience of God, that when we were dishonouring his name, he did not take that time to bring honour to himself by our destruction. But he does not delight in the death of a sinner, but would rather he turn to him and live. He has many ways of bringing his own to himself. Blessed be his holy name, that through affliction he has taught my heart to be in some measure conformable to his will, which works patience, and patience works experience, and experience hope, which does not make ashamed.

“I bless God, I am not ashamed of the cause for which I lay down my life, and as I have engaged in it and fought for it, so now I am going to seal it with my blood. The Lord still carry on the same cause which has been long afoot! And though we die *in* it and *for* it, I do not question that in His own due time, he will raise up other instruments, more worthy to carry it on to the glory of His name, and the advancement of his church and people. Honoured mother, I know there has been nothing left undone by you or my friends, for saving my life, for which I return many

hearty acknowledgments to yourself and them all. And it is my dying request to you, *end* them, to pardon all undutifulness and unkindness in every relation.

“Pray give my duty to my grandfather and grandmother, service to my uncles, and aunts, and my dear love to all my sisters; to every relation and friend, a particular recommendation. Pray tell them all how precious an interest in Christ is, when we come to die, and advise them never to rest in a Christless state; for if we are his, it is no matter what the world does to us. They can but kill the body, and blessed be God, the soul is out of their reach. For I question not, but their malice wishes the damnation of that, as well as the destruction of the body, which has too evidently appeared by their deceitful, flattering promises.

“I commit you all to the care and protection of God, who has promised to be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, and to supply the want of every relation. The Lord God of heaven be your comfort under these sorrows, and your refuge from the miseries we may easily foresee coming upon poor England, and the poor distressed people of God in it. The Lord carry you through this vale of tears with a resigning, submissive spirit, and at last bring you to himself in glory; where, I question not, but you will meet your dying son,

BENJAMIN HEWLING.

Only for myself, it was, and is, a great contort to me, to observe what testimony they left behind of the blessed interest they had in the Lord Jesus, and their humble and holy confidence of their eternal happiness. One thing I think necessary to observe, that at the trial of William Hewling, the Lord Chief Justice Jefferies¹⁶ was pleased in public court to tell him that his grandfather, as well as he, deserved that death which he was likely to suffer. I mention this to the end, that thereby it may be seen what an eye they had upon me for my ruin, if the Lord, who has watched over me for good, had not prevented it.

¹⁶ **George Jeffreys**, 1st Baron Jeffreys, PC (1645-1689), also known as “the Hanging Judge.” During the reign of King James II, he became Lord Chancellor. During *the fictitious Popish Plot* (prominent 1678-1681, alleging the Pope wanted the King assassinated), he was frequently on the bench. He condemned some 22 innocent men on the perjured evidence of Titus Oates, a renegade Anglican clergyman, who fabricated the conspiracy. Charles II made Jeffreys a baronet in 1681, and Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench in 1683, during the *Rye House Plot*. Jeffreys was a member of the Privy Council, and gained a reputation for severity and bias. – WHG

CHAPTER 8. KIFFIN'S PUBLIC CONDUCT.

The Court attempts to introduce Popery — The Commons opposed to it — Kiffin employs his influence among the Dissenters against it — The King nominates him to be an Alderman — Is very averse to accept the office — Takes legal advice — Gives £50 towards a City Dinner to the King — Takes the office — Arbitrary conduct of the Court — His behaviour as Alderman — Resigns the office — Concluding reflections — Address to his children.

This great storm being over, it did, in a great measure, effect that which was intended by those who raised it. For now, there appeared no difficulty in the way, but Popery might be set up, and there would be little or no stop to that design. Means were used with the Members of the House of Commons, to promise, upon the sitting of Parliament, to remove the Parliamentary test, which was the only hinderance to Roman Catholics being chosen Parliament men. They did, however, generally refuse to make any such promise; and the insolence of the Papists in their meetings, which now began to be more and more public, so much alarmed both the Ministers of the Church of England, and also all true Protestants in general; that the interest of Popery rather abated, and dissatisfaction grew.

A new project, therefore, was set afoot, to engage the Protestant Dissenters, by giving them the liberty of their meetings; and promising them equal authority in the nation with other men. But this was in the tail of it, to thereby engage them to promote removing the test; and to strengthen the Popish interest, by setting the Protestant Dissenters against the Protestants of the Church of England. This plot being carried on with all diligence, took with several Dissenters — but indeed they were but few, and generally of the meaner sort. William Penn being, indeed, the head of that party.

I thought it my duty to do all I could to prevent those Dissenters of my acquaintance, from having any hand in it; but from the sense they had of their former sufferings, and the hopes of finding all things as promised, I could not prevail.

A little after, a great temptation attended me, which was a commission from the King, to be one of the Aldermen of the city of London; as soon as I heard of it, I used all the means I could to be excused, both by some lords near the King, and also by Sir Nicholas Bailor, and Mr. Penn. But it was all in vain. I was told that they knew I had an interest that might serve the King; and although they knew my sufferings were great, in cutting off my two grandchildren, and losing their estates, yet it should be made up to me, both in their estates, and also in what honour or advantage I could reasonably desire for myself.

But I thank the Lord, those proffers were no snares to me. Being fully possessed in my judgment, that the design was the total ruin of the Protestant religion — which I hope I can say, was, and is, dearer to me than my life — I remained without accepting the office, from the time I received summons to take it, more than six weeks. The then Lord Mayor, Sir John Peake, then said in Court, that I ought to be sent to Newgate; and a few days after, I understood it was intended to put me into the Crown Office, and to proceed with all severity against me. When I heard this, I went to the ablest counsel for advice.

One of those I stated my case to, is now a Chief Judge in the nation. He told me my danger was in every way great; for if I accepted to be an Alderman, I ran the hazard of five hundred pounds. And if I did not accept, as the Judges then were, I might be fined by them, ten, twenty, or thirty thousand pounds; even what they pleased. So that I thought it better for me to run the hazard of five hundred pounds, which was certain, than be exposed to such fines as might be the ruin of myself and family.

I held off, however, taking the place of Alderman for some time after. It happened that the Aldermen then sitting, agreed to invite the King to dinner on the Lord Mayor's day, and laid down fifty pounds each Alderman, to defray the charge. This made some of them more earnest for my

holding office, and they were pleased to tell me I held off to excuse my fifty pounds. To prevent any such charge against me, I desired a friend to acquaint my Lord Mayor and the Court, that I would deposit my fifty pounds with them, which I accordingly sent them, yet delaying accepting the office. When my Lord Mayor's day came, and the dinner prepared for the King, I understood, the next day, that there had been invited to the feast, the Pope's Nuncio¹⁷ and several other Priests, who accordingly dined with them. If I had known they had been invited, I would hardly have parted with my fifty pounds towards that feast.

The next Court day, I came to the Court, and took upon me the office of Alderman. In the commission, I was also a Justice of the Peace, and one of the Lieutenancy; but I never meddled with either of those places. Neither did I interfere in any act of power in that court, touching causes between man and man; but only such things as concerned the welfare of the city and the good of the orphans, whose distressed condition called for help; although we were able to do little towards it.

We frequently had orders from the King to send to the several companies, to put great numbers of the Livery Men out of the privilege of being Livery men, and others to be put in their places. Most of those who were so turned out were Protestants of the Church of England. There has been a list of seven hundred at a time sent to be discharged, although no crime was laid to their charge. From this, all men might see to what a deplorable state this city was likely to be in, had the Lord by an eminent hand of providence not prevented it. On hearing of the preparation-making by the Prince of Orange, the several charters belonging to the companies were again returned to them, and the said Livery Men were also restored to their former liberties.

I have given this brief account of these things, that you may see how good the Lord has been, to prevent the designs then in hand to destroy both Religion and liberty. I heartily desire that both myself and all others concerned, may acknowledge the great goodness of God in this, that he may have the glory of all our delivering mercies, and that you my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren may remember them with thankful hearts. This also must be remembered, further to the praise of God towards me, that during the time of my being in the office of Alderman (my lot being, to be Alderman of the Ward of Cheap¹⁸), although I was a stranger to most of the Ward, yet I found so much respect from them as could not be expected by me. Having been in that office about nine months, I was discharged of it to my very great satisfaction.

I leave these several providences and mercies behind me, that you may consider them. I have tasted of the goodness of God, and his favour towards me from my youth; it being now sixty years since it pleased the Lord to give me a taste of his rich grace and mercy in Jesus Christ. Although my unprofitableness under these mercies and providences that have attended me, have been very great, they are not to be looked upon as products of chance; as many treat the experiences and deliverances, which they receive from God in the course of their lives. Rather, these are fruits of the care and goodness which God is please to show to his poor people. While in this world, there is no design hatched against them for their ruin, that they are not rescued from it by the special care and providence of God. I may say, by experience, if the Lord had not been my help, many a time I would have been swallowed up quickly.

I leave these few experiences with you, desiring the Lord to bless you, and to bless them to you. Above all, I pray for you, that you may in a special manner look after the great concerns of your souls — to know God and Jesus Christ is eternal life. Endeavour to be diligent. Inquire after, and

¹⁷ *Nuncio*: a papal ambassador; in this instance, it was Count Ferdinand D'Adda. – WHG

¹⁸ The City of London was divided into sections known as wards. Each ward (25 total) consisted of a group of parishes. *Cheap* was the old English word for "Market." This Ward was on the great East-West route connecting the Tower, symbol of Royal power, with the Guildhall, the seat of civic government, and St Paul's Cathedral, the City's oldest place of worship. – WHG

be established in the great doctrines of the gospel, which are of absolute necessity to salvation. I must expect every day to leave this world; having lived in it much longer than I expected, and now being in the seventy seventh year of my age. Yet I do not know what my eyes may see before my change — The world is full of confusions — the last times are upon us. The signs of them are very visible. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many in religion grows cold. God is, by his providence, shaking the earth under our feet. There is no sure foundation of rest and peace but only in Jesus Christ; to whose grace I commend you.

NOTES AND ADDITIONS BY ORME.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1.

Note 1. *In 1625, being nine years of age* — p. 2.

From this it would appear that Mr. Kiffin was born about the year 1616. His parents seem to have been in respectable circumstances, but he gives no account of them. One *Maur. Kyffin.* was the author of "*The Blessedness of Bryttaine*" 4to. Lond. 1588: but whether he was related to our Kiffin, I cannot say. In the year referred to by Kiffin, the plague raged exceedingly in London. It was the first year of Charles II who, in consequence of the plague, was under the necessity of moving the Parliament from London to Oxford.

Note 2. *I was made apprentice to a mean calling* — p. 2.

His master was the noted John Lilburn, who made a considerable figure during the civil wars. He was a Porter Brewer, and Cooper, in London; but afterwards obtained a Colonel's Commission in the Parliamentary Army. He was fined, whipped, and imprisoned by the Star Chamber, fought against Charles, opposed the Long Parliament, and resisted the power of Cromwell; by whom he was tried and banished. "He," says Anthony Wood, "being naturally a great trouble-world in all the variety of governments, became a hodge-podge of religion, the chief ringleader of the levellers, a great proposal maker, and modeller of state, and publisher of several seditious pamphlets." Towards the end of his life, "he fell into the acquaintance of the Quakers, and became one of them, and settled at Eltham in Kent, where he died, Aug. 29, 1657." Judge Jenkins said of him, "If the world was emptied of all but John Lilburn, Lilburn would quarrel with John, and John with Lilburn." — Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. p. 101.

Note 3. *Mr. Thomas Foxley* — p. 3.

Mr. Foxley was a learned and zealous puritan, and one of the many excellent men who suffered most severely from the persecuting spirit of Archbishop Laud. He was closely imprisoned for twenty months, without knowing his crime; and his wife and four small children were reduced to extreme wretchedness. He was set at liberty by the Long Parliament, and was one of the witnesses against Laud at his trial. — Brooks *Puritans*, vol. ii. p. 497.

Note 4. *Mr. John Norton* — p. 3.

Mr. Norton was born at Stortford in Hertfordshire, in the year 1606. He was educated at Cambridge. Disapproving of the constitution of the Church of England, and not being able to enjoy religious liberty in his own country, he went to New England in 1635, where he was honoured to be long and extensively useful. He was the author of the *first* Latin work produced in America — "*Responsio ad Apolonium*," 1648 — A Defence of the Congregational System, in reply to Apolonius, a Dutch Presbyterian. Mr. Norton was a profound and elegant classical scholar, and an eloquent preacher. He died in 1663. — Mather's *Magnalia*, Book III. p. 52.

Note 5. *Mr. John Davenport* — p. 4.

Mr. Davenport was another of the Non-Conformist Ministers, who took refuge in New England. He was many years Minister of the Colony at Newhaven, and afterwards succeeded Mr. Cotton, at Boston, where he died in 1670. He appears to have been an excellent Christian, a laborious scholar, and a successful Minister of Jesus Christ. — *Magnalia*, Book III. p. 51.

Note 6. *Many weeks I continued in this great distress* — p. 7.

The Christian reader will discover a considerable resemblance between the early experience of Mr. Kiffin, and that of the celebrated author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Both suffered great distress of mind, and the conversation of others overheard, produced important impressions on both. Some persons may think the notice of such minute circumstances trifling. But nothing is trifling

which has an influence on the formation of character. Independently of the fact that God often blesses the most seemingly accidental occurrence, to promote the spiritual benefit of an individual. As Mr. Foster justly observed, "Most persons can recollect some few sentences, or conversations, which perhaps made so deep an impression in some instances; they can scarcely tell why they have been recalled thousands of times, while all the rest have been forgotten; or they can advert to some striking incident, coming in aid of instruction, or being of itself a forcible instruction, which they seem even now to see as clearly as when it happened, and of which they will retain a perfect idea to the end of life." — Foster's *Essays*, p. 16.

Note 7. *Mr. Moulin* — p. 7.

This person I suppose, was Mr. Lewis Du Moulin, the son of Peter Du Moulin, a French Protestant Minister. He was made Professor of History at Cambridge, by the Parliamentary Commissioners; but was ejected at the Restoration: He was the writer of a considerable number of books: The title page of one of them, he had to change five times, to escape the censors of the press. If I may judge from the title of another, he must have been a high and injudicious Calvinist. What a pity he did not change both the title and the subject? "Moral reflections on the number of the elect; proving plainly from Scripture evidence, that not one in a hundred thousand, nay probably not one in a million, from Adam down to our times, shall be saved!" What a foolish opinion! He died in 1680.

Note 8. *Dr. Thomas Goodwin* — p. 9.

Thomas Goodwin was an eminently learned and devoted man. His numerous writings reveal the depth of his acquaintance with the Scriptures, and his anxiety to be useful. The work which was of service to Kiffin, contains many judicious observations under a paradoxical title — "The child of light walking in darkness." I am disposed to think that the passage, Isaiah 1.10, relates not to the subject of spiritual desertion, but to the dark visitations of Providence. Goodwin is the person who conversed with Cromwell on his deathbed; and if the conversation is correctly reported, comforted him, by a very improper view of the perseverance of the saints.

This conversation, which has so often been quoted as a proof of the fanaticism of Oliver's chaplains, is remarkably like a conversation between the Earl of Morton — who made so considerable a figure in Scotland during the reigns of Mary and James — and John Durie, and Walter Balcanquel, two of the ministers of Edinburgh. Morton was condemned to be executed, whether justly or unjustly, does not concern the present matter. Previously to his execution, he was visited in prison by the above ministers, to whom "he expressed much apprehension that the justice of God would descend upon one who had been so great a sinner." To this the minister replied, "Be of good courage, and even in respect to the justice of God, be assured that your sins will not be laid to your charge, and that is because God is just; for the justice of God will not permit him to take twice payment for one thing; as we know that in the common dealings of men, he that is a just man will not crave payment of that for which he has already been satisfied; and therefore, seeing that Christ has already satisfied for our sins, and paid God for the uttermost farthing, he could crave of us, he cannot lay our sin to our charge, being satisfied in Christ, so that his justice will not suffer Him to take payment twice for one thing." To this he answered, "Truly this is very good."¹⁹ If this conversation is correctly reported, it shows that fanaticism has not been confined to the chaplains of the enthusiastic Protector. The statements of Durie and Balcanquel are as gross misapplications of the doctrine of the atonement, as that of Goodwin is of the doctrine of Christian perseverance, I think it probable, however, that we have an incorrect report of *both* conversations, and that things are omitted which would place the views of the ministers in a very different, or at least less objectionable light.

¹⁹ Cook's Hist. of the Ch. of Scot. Vol. I. p. 317, note.

Note 9. *Mr. Thomas Hooker.*

Thomas Hooker was another of the divines who fled from England to take refuge in America. It is much to be regretted, that the work referred to by Kiffin, and the doctrine of preparation for Christ, are so much calculated to obscure the way of salvation, and to lead the mind of enquirers more to something about themselves, than to the finished work of the Redeemer, and the freeness of forgiveness through his blood. The apostles invariably preached Christ, in all the fulness of his blessings, and pressed the immediate reception of them on all who listened to their preaching. Hooker became the first minister of Hertford, in New England, and is regarded to this day with the utmost respect in the colony. Dr. Dwight calls him the "The Father of New England;" and says, "he was the wisest of all those distinguished colonists, who had a peculiar influence on the early concerns of this country." — Dwight's Travels, Vol. I. p. 204-6.

Note 10. *Mr. John Goodwin* — p. 10.

I am much inclined to think that the character of this celebrated person has not received impartial justice. That he entertained some mistaken views, both of religion and politics, is undoubted; but he possessed no ordinary portion of strength and originality of mind, a large measure of disinterested zeal, and a capacity for usefulness which was exceeded by few of his contemporaries. The judiciousness of his preaching appears from Kiffin's account of it, and several of his works will amply repay the labour of repeated perusal. The preceding part of this note was written before the publication of Mr. Jackson's "Life of Goodwin." That work fully confirms the opinion I have expressed. Goodwin was one of the earliest and most enlightened friends of civil and religious liberty, and suffered much on their account. Mr. Jackson, however, might have defended his hero without showing so much displeasure at other persons who are introduced in various ways in his work. It is a book which contains some curious research and information. Disraeli, in his recent work, has honoured John Goodwin as one of Cromwell's chaplains; a post which he never held. After narrowly escaping with his life at the Restoration, Goodwin died in 1665.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2.

Note 11. *Kiffin's religious changes* — p. 13.

It is somewhat singular, that Mr. Kiffin gives no account of his becoming a Baptist. This event is said to have taken place about the year 1638. He soon appeared as a leading and very active member of that body; and for more than half a century, was pastor of a Baptist church which met in Devonshire Square. With a zeal characteristic of a new convert, he boldly and openly avowed his faith, when it must have exposed him to considerable danger. His name appears at the top of the list of subscribers to the Confession of Faith, published by the seven Baptist Churches in London, in 1644.

Determined to contend for the faith, as well as to publish it, he several times engaged in those public disputes, or polemical battles, which were then frequently held. In these contests of words, the skill and prowess of the combatants were exerted to the utmost. Judges declared the laws of the combat, and regulated the onset and the defence. — The people applauded or hooted, as they happened to be moved; and the battle was generally a draw, in which both sides claimed the victory. The age of Kiffin was in fact the age of theological chivalry, in which the most devoted homage was professed to truth, and the most heroic sacrifices cheerfully made to promote its interests.

One of these meetings, for disputing the rights of infant baptism, was held at Southwark, on the 17th of October 1642; in which the combatant on the one side was the redoubtable Daniel Featley; and on the other, a Scotchman, and William Kiffin. Of this curious rencounter, Featley published an account in a 4to volume entitled, "The Dippers Dipt, or the Anabaptists ducked and plunged over head and ears, at a disputation in Southwark," 1645. Those who would judge the modesty of the age, have only to consult the engraved title of this ridiculous work. In the volume itself, the

boasting and unfairness of Featley are more prominent than the strength of his argument. After having, according to his own account, “so stunned the venturesome Scotchman with a blow, that he gave in and spoke no more for a good space; he introduces his other antagonist, of whom he says, “This Cufin is said to be one of the first that subscribed the Anabaptist Confessions.” How he got rid of Cufin, he does not tell us. But after having “blankt” one or two more besides the Scotchman, we are informed that,

“The result of the conference was, *first*, the Knights, Ladies and Gentlemen,” (mark the chivalrous language of the victor) “give the Doctor great thanks.”

“Secondly, three of the antagonists went away discontented; the fourth seemed in part satisfied, and desired a second meeting. But the next day, conferring with the rest of that sect, he altered his resolution; and neither he nor any of that sect, ever since that day, troubled the Doctor, or any other minister of the borough with a second challenge. *Finis*.”

Kiffin was neither finished nor discouraged by this alleged discomfiture; for he had the temerity afterwards to challenge that far-famed calumniator, Gangrene Edwards, in the following curious letter.

“Sir,

“You stand as one professing yourself to be instructed by Christ, with abilities from God to throw down error; and therefore, to that end you preach every third day. May it therefore please you, and those who employ you in that work, to give them leave, whom you so brand, as to publicly object against what you say when your sermon is ended, as you declare yourself. And we hope it will be an increase of further light to all who fear God, and put a large advantage into your hands, if you have the truth on your side, to cause it to shine with more evidence; and I hope we will do it with moderation, as becomes Christians. Yours,

WILLIAM KIFFIN.”

It does not appear that the Presbyterian champion took up the glove, which was thus handsomely thrown down; but it afforded him a most desirable opportunity for defaming his opponent. This he accordingly did as follows:

“Another of these fellows, who counts himself inferior to none of the rest of his seduced brethren, one whose name is Will. Kiffin, sometime servant to a brewer, whose name is John Lilburn; this man has now become a pretended preacher, and to that end has, by his enticing words, seduced and gathered a schismatic rabble of deluded children, servants, and people, without either parents’ or masters’ consent. This truth is known by some of a near relation to me, whose giddy-headed children and servants are his poor slavish proselytes.

“For a further manifestation of him, in a pamphlet called *the Confession of Faith of the seven Anabaptistical Churches*, he is there written first, as metropolitan of that fraternity. I could relate, if time would permit, somewhat of my dealings with him, in which he appeared to me to be a mountebank.”²⁰ — GANGRENA, Part I. p. 6.

The same writer furnishes us with a curious account of a scene at Kiffin’s meeting-house, which I insert as a further illustration of the state of the times.

“I was informed for certain, from the testimony of an honest godly man, who would not tell an untruth for ten thousand pounds, who was also an ear witness: that at Kiffin the Anabaptist’s church, when their exercises were finished, a paper was given in to know a reason why they met every first day of the week, according to the custom of the nations? And why about nine o’clock, according to the custom of the nations? And why they preached and prayed so long, according

²⁰ *Mountebank*: a flamboyant deceiver; one who attracts customers with tricks or jokes.

to the custom of the nations? At the same time also a woman spoke in that church, and some cried, *speak out*. Upon which Kiffin told the church that he would relate the whole matter, which was: — That this woman being sick, she sent for him. Coming to her, he prayed and anointed her with oil upon her breast and stomach; but yet she did not mend upon it. Upon which she again sent for him. Remembering the words of the apostle, *that it was the elders of the church*, he took with him his brother Patience, and so they prayed over her, and anointed her with oil, and she was raised up, and desired that thanks might be given to God for it.” — GANGRENA, Part II. p. 44.

There is probably some caricature in this account; but Kiffin was certainly a firm believer in the ordinance of anointing with oil. For in the life of Hansard Knollys, a baptist minister, edited, I believe, by Mr. Kiffin. we have an account of a similar affair in the case of Knollys himself.

“Soon after I was set at liberty,” he says, “at the Sessions in the Old Bailey, God made me his prisoner, by a sharp and painful distemper in my bowels, which brought me near to my grave. But in time of my greatest extremity, God remembered mercy, and restored my life from death. No tongue can express my pains; yet God gave me much patience, in which I possessed my soul. Two learned, well-practised, and judicious doctors of medicine, had daily visited me, and consulted my cure several days together, and I was fully persuaded that they did what they possibly could to effect a cure, and knew also that God did not succeed their honest and faithful endeavours with his blessing. I resolved to take no more medicine; but would apply that holy ordinance of God, appointed by Jesus Christ, the great Physician of value, James 5.14, 15. I got Mr. Kiffin, and Mr. Vavasor Powel, who prayed over me, and anointed me with oil in the name of the Lord, and the Lord heard their prayer and healed me.”

It appears from Whiston’s Memoirs (who was himself a believer in the ordinance of anointing), that the practice was frequently observed among the Baptist Churches, during the early period of the last century. These and similar facts, afford curious illustrations of the weakness and eccentricities of the human intellect. Kiffin and many of his friends were evidently shrewd, strong-minded men; and yet it is plain, they had a considerable portion of enthusiasm or credulity in their religion. Let them not be scoffed at as visionary fanatics on that account. Even the mind of Johnson was tinctured with superstition; and those who can find apologies for the passports to eternity, furnished by a Romish Confessor, or repose with confidence on the last services of any human priest, are not entitled to scowl with contempt at the weakness of Major Bridgenorth, or his party.

Note 12. *Those very men in the Synod* — p. 14.

He refers to the Westminster Assembly. Almost all the persons who composed this body were originally Conformists. They adopted their nonconforming principles gradually; and many of them were driven farther than they would ever have gone from the church, by the conduct of its leaders, and the treatment they experienced from government.

Note 13. *Mr. Glover* — p. 14.

I can find no account of any minister of this name, who went to New England. No such person appears in Mather’s lists, where it ought to be, had Mr. Glover gone to America. Calamy mentions Mr. Hugh Glover, who was ejected from Finchingfield, in Essex: perhaps this was the person referred to by Kiffin.

Note 14. *Mr. Burroughs* — p. 14.

This was Jeremiah Burroughs, one of the dissenting brethren in the Westminster Assembly, who died in 1646, before its conclusion; and whom Granger describes as “a man of learning, candour, and modesty, and of an exemplary and irreproachable life.” — BIOG. HIST. vol. II. p. 193.

Note 15. *Lord Brooke* — p. 18.

Lord Brooke was one of the most active and distinguished leaders of a turbulent period. As a Dissenter himself, he naturally befriended the Dissenters, and afforded them the shelter of his influence and authority. In parliament, he advocated by his eloquence, those rights which, by his bravery, he defended in the field, and for which he sacrificed his life. He also employed his pen to promote the same cause. If I may judge from his discourse on the nature of Episcopacy, he possessed a considerable measure of learning and acuteness, as well as a bold and energetic mind. He commences his attack on the Episcopal order, by a fearless avowal of his object, "I aim not at *words*, but *things*; not loving to fight with shadows. It is not the look; much less the name of a Bishop, that I fear, or quarrel with; it is his nature, his office, that displeases me." He concludes it by a prediction which was soon verified. "Yet but for a little while — for I am confident that within a *few years*, if not *months*, if not *days*, the God of peace and truth will deliver his church of this heavy yoke from which, with the Litany, give me leave to conclude, 'Good Lord deliver us.'" This was published in 1641; in 1646 the Bishops fell.

Note 16. *Mallet was that day committed to the tower* — p. 19.

The conduct of Judge Mallet, on various occasions, appears to have rendered him very obnoxious to the Parliament. On the 24th of November 1645, an ordinance was passed, for disabling Heath, Crawley, Forrester, Weston, and Mallet, from being Judges, as if they were dead. — WHITELOCKE, p. 188.

Note 17. *Dr. Trigg* — p. 20.

Of this benevolent physician, I can give no account. Sewell, in his *History of the Quakers*, mentions one Hannah Trigg, daughter of Timothy Trigg, one of that people, who was very cruelly used, and died in prison in 1664. Perhaps Kiffin's Doctor was this person, and one of that friendly people. This remarkable passage in the life of Kiffin is not unlike an occurrence in the life of the late Mr. Scott, the Commentator, of which he gives the following account: —

"I had frequent attacks of sickness; and after a long and dangerous illness, which had occasioned heavy additional expenses, my wife, who was seldom disposed to distrust Providence, lamented to me the increase of our debts, as the medical charges amounted to above £10. It was my turn, on this occasion, to be the stronger in faith; and I answered confidently, 'Now observe, if the Lord does not, in some way, send us an additional supply to meet this expense, which it was not in our power to avoid.' I had at the time, no idea of any source from which this additional supply was to be derived. But in the afternoon of the same day, when I was visiting my people, Mr. Higgins, jun. called at my house, and left a paper which he said, when I had filled up the blanks, would entitle me to £10, from the sum of money left for the relief of poor clergymen."

"The remarks which I would make upon this incident," says Mr. Scott, jun. "are the following: that whatever may be thought of it, the fact no doubt happened as here related: — that my father was not disposed to expect *extraordinary* interpositions of Providence, nor to make a display of them when they appeared to take place: that it is by no means uncommon for good men, of the most sober minds, circumstanced as he was, to meet with such occurrences, this form, one among many means of rendering their scanty supplies a source of greater enjoyment than the more ample provision of their richer brethren, frequently proves. And finally, I believe *every* careful observer will find remarkable *coincidences* in the course of events, which he will feel it right to note, as subjects of grateful remembrance to himself, whether he deems it proper to communicate them to others or not. 'Whoever is wise will ponder these things: and they will understand the loving kindness of the Lord.'" — SCOTT'S LIFE, p. 114-115.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3.

Note 18. *Public places and public lands* — p. 23

The prudence and policy of Kiffin appear in his endeavouring to avoid all connection with political posts, during the changing period in which he lived. He was, however, variously employed, both by the Parliament and the Protector, as the following notices will show:

On the 17th of January 1648, an order of Parliament was issued “for Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Knollys, upon the petition of the Ipswich men, to go there to preach.” — (WHITELOCKE, p. 363.) During the Protectorate, he was employed to write to his own party in Ireland, and to recommend them to live peaceably, and submit to the civil magistrates. His services on that occasion were acknowledged by Henry Cromwell. — (Thurloe.) These employments, however, were not of a civil nature; but Kiffin was engaged in the most opposite kinds of service.

He was trusted by Parliament, in 1647, to be an assessor of the taxes, to be raised in the county of Middlesex. — (Noble, vol. ii p. 454.) In 1654, he was a Captain in the Militia; and in 1659, he was a Lieut. Colonel. On one occasion too, the Parliament voted him fifty pounds for the service (evidently of a military nature) in which he had been engaged. — WHITELOCKE, p. 440.

I insert these additional particulars, which have been gleaned from various quarters, not to contradict the text: for Kiffin was a person of undoubted veracity; but to show that he was very much respected by the several parties which held the supreme government of the country. It was a very common thing during the civil convulsions, and the commonwealth, for persons to be both soldiers and preachers. These vocations are certainly not very congruous; their combination, at that time, was sometimes the effect of choice — at others, of necessity. None of the above statements infer that Kiffin’s employments were of a lucrative nature.

Note 19. *Passing by many other things* — p. 26.

Kiffin’s troubles during the Protectorate were probably few, as he then enjoyed the protection of persons in power; but he was not altogether exempted from molestation. An attempt was made to prosecute him under the Act for punishing blasphemies and heresies. Of this affair, Crosby gives the following account: —

“Another, who was prosecuted by the force of this ordinance, was the Rev. Mr. William Kiffin, pastor of a Baptized congregation in the city of London. He was convened before the Lord Mayor at Guildhall, on Thursday the 12th of July 1655, and there charged with the breach of this ordinance, for preaching *that the baptism of infants is unlawful*: But the Lord Mayor being busy, the execution of the penalty in the act upon him was referred till the Monday following.”

The author of “The spirit of persecution again broke loose,” makes the following observations on the Justices’ partiality with respect to their management of the prosecutions against Mr. Bidle and Mr. Kiffin.

“Mr. Bidle,” he says, “must be sent for by a warrant, Mr. Kiffin by summons of a messenger; “Mr. Bidle must be committed by one Justice *without* a mittimus,²¹ and by one Justice *with* a mittimus; but Mr. Kiffin must not be proceeded against upon the same ordinance without two Justices; he must have three or four days space given him; the other must be sent to prison in such haste, that a mittimus could not be writ to be sent with him, but it must be sent after him. And in the passages, he says, at Mr. Kiffin’s prosecution, you may note further, that my Lord Mayor asked the prosecutors, why they did not prosecute Mr. Kiffin sooner, seeing they knew of this ordinance and Mr. Kiffin’s practice long ago. To which they answered that they thought the ordinance had been made null and void, till the other day they perceived one was committed

²¹ *Mittimus*: a warrant to send someone to prison.

to prison upon it. What made you think, said my Lord, that it was void? There is no time set when it should expire. True, said the prosecutors, but there is the Instrument of government that says, 'That whoever professes faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, and discipline publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but protected in the profession of the faith and exercise of the religion, etc. and all acts and ordinances to the contrary are to be esteemed null and void.' Would any man think that the Lord Mayor of London should be ignorant of the fundamentals in the government? Surely those who slight one part of the government, then chiefest, would make void all, if they could or dared." — Crosby's *Baptists*, Vol. I. p. 215-216.

Note 20. *We thought it convenient to write a letter to the Lord Mayor* — p. 27.

This letter was afterwards published, as will be noticed in a subsequent page. The conduct of Monk about that time, was not only deceitful, but very arbitrary. He had reason to believe that all his offences would soon be covered by royal favour, which made him disregard whatever treatment he pursued to the citizens of London. Horace Walpole says, in promoting the Restoration, "he only furnished a hand to the heart of the nation." A heart he certainly could *not* have furnished. The hypocrisy of Cromwell has been often execrated, while that of Monk has been praised or excused, because it was that of a royalist. The reader will find some excellent remarks on the dissimulation, ambition, and covetousness of Monk, in Brodie's *History of the British Empire*, vol. iv. pp. 467, 486 — a work which contains much accurate information respecting the reign of Charles I and the Commonwealth; and which combats very successfully the infidelity, and political misstatements of Hume. ²²

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4.

Note 21. *Mr. Henry Jesse* — p. 32.

Mr. Jesse was one of the first and most respectable of the Baptist Ministers in England. He was originally pastor of the Independent Church, of which Kiffin was a member; and changed his sentiments sometime after Kiffin left it. He remained minister of St. George's Church long after he was a baptist. He was a man of very considerable learning and eminent piety. He raised three hundred pounds to assist the poor Jews at Jerusalem, then in great distress; and used all his influence to procure liberty for the Jews to reside and trade in England. He died in 1671. Crosby's HIST. OF BAPT. Vol. 1. 307-322. Of Mr. Crape, mentioned along with Mr. Jesse, I know nothing. I apprehend he was not a minister.

Note 22. *Lord Arlington* — p. 36.

He was sometime Secretary of State, and Lord Chamberlain to Charles II. He was one of the celebrated *junta*, known by the name of the *Cabal*,²³ from which many of the infamous proceedings of that wretched reign originated. They persuaded Charles, that he and the people did not have a common interest, and advised him to shut up his Exchequer, which ruined many. Arlington was a man of wit, but without principle, which rendered him the fitter for the posts which he enjoyed in a profligate court. The Duke of York, afterwards James II, when reading Nuremberg, "On the difference of things temporal and eternal," said to Bishop Burnet, that if Arlington would read that book, he would not meddle in so many affairs as he did." I am not sure that *reading* a book on such a subject would produce that effect; but certainly the enlightened belief of the difference between the glories of time and those of eternity, would greatly diminish the spirit of ambition, and the love of political intrigue.

²² David Hume (1711-1776), Scottish philosopher. Orme probably refers here to Hume's *History of England*, covering the Anglo-Saxon period, to the Glorious Revolution of 1688. — WHG

²³ *Cabal* is an acronym for the five Privy Councillors of King Charles II, 1668-1674: Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. — WHG

Note 23. *It occasioned His Majesty and the Council to have a good opinion of me* — p, 36.

Of Kiffin's influence at Court, various instances are recorded. The following narrated by Crosby also shows the dreadful state of the times, when twelve persons were in danger of being put to death, for quietly assembling to worship God. Their preservation is ascribed to Mr. Kiffin's representation to the Court.

“There were twelve persons, ten men and two women, all Baptists, who had been taken at their meeting in or near Ailsbury; and having been legally convicted of the same three months before, were now brought before the bench of justices at their Quarter-sessions; and there required either to conform themselves to the Church of England, and take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, or to abjure the realms as this law directed; and were assured, that if they refused to do either of these, the sentence of death should be passed against them. However, that there might be some show of clemency, they gave them till the afternoon to consider it. Mr. Farrow, one of the justices of that county, who lived at Ailsbury, was the principal agent in this prosecution: and the better to carry on his malicious design, he was this day made their chairman. Several of the justices left the bench, either being ashamed of these rigorous proceedings, or afraid of the consequences of such severity. But Farrow and three or four more continued, and were resolved to push on this matter.

“When the prisoners were again brought forth, they all declared that they could neither conform to the Church of England, nor abjure their native country and relations, and therefore must throw themselves on the mercy of the Court. Upon this, they were by virtue of the afore-cited law, declared guilty of felony, and the sentence of death accordingly passed on them, and they were remitted back to gaol, till their execution. The men were, Stephen Dagnal, minister; — Ellit, a teacher; William Whitchurch, a glover and deacon of their congregation; Thomas Hill, a linen-draper; William Welch, a tallow-chandler; Thomas Monk, a farmer; — Brandon, a shoemaker; and three more, whose names I cannot obtain. The women were, Mary Jackman, a widow who had six children; and Ann Turner, spinster.

“The sentence was no sooner passed against them, but the officers were sent to their several houses, to seize their goods, and whatever effects of theirs could be found: which order was executed immediately, and great havoc made of what little possessions they had. The rest of the Dissenters who lived in that town were not a little alarmed at this proceeding, and expected it would quickly come to their turns, to be treated in the same manner. These therefore shut up their shops also; who being the greatest part of the inhabitants, it put a great stop to commerce, and struck the whole town with great horror and surprise. Brandon, one of the condemned persons, was prevailed upon by the tears and earnest entreaties of his wife, to make a recantation, and take the oaths; but he presently found such horror and distress in his mind for what he had done, as exceeded all his former fears of death, or grief for his family. He voluntarily returned to the prison again, declared with the greatest signs of grief and trouble, his repentance of what he had done, and there continued with his companions, resolving to die with them in defence of that cause he had so shamefully renounced.

“Thomas Monk, son to him of that name, among the condemned, upon the passing of the sentence, immediately took horse for London, where he applied himself to Mr. William Kiffin, a man of great note among the Baptists, and one who had as great an interest at court as any of that profession, and particularly with Chancellor Hide. When he had revealed the whole matter to him, they went with great expedition to Hide, and entreated him to lay their case before his Majesty, which he readily did. The king seemed very much surprised that any of his subjects should be put to death for their religion only, and enquired whether there was any law in force that justified such proceedings. When he was satisfied about this, he promised his pardon, and gave orders to the Lord Chancellor accordingly. But when they considered that the form of passing a pardon would require some time, and that those who had so hastily passed a sentence

of death might also be as rash in the execution of it; they renewed their suit to his Majesty, that an immediate reprieve might be granted, which his Majesty as graciously complied with; and it was immediately given to the said Thomas Monk, who thereupon made all possible haste down again to Ailsbury.

“When he reported the success he had met with at Court, and produced his Majesty’s reprieve, it was not more joyful to his friends, than surprising to his persecutors; and this put some stop to the violence of their proceedings in those parts.

“However, the condemned persons were continued close prisoners till the next assizes, and then the judge brought down his Majesty’s pardon with him, and they were all set at liberty again.”

— CROSBY’S BAPT. Vol. II. p. 181-185.

Note 24. *The Earl of Clarendon was very much my friend* — p. 36.

Clarendon has been dignified with the title of “The Chancellor of human nature.” How far he deserved this designation will not be generally agreed. He was undoubtedly a man of talents, and in many respects, a man of integrity. He loved his country, and he loved his Sovereign, whose exile he shared, and whose ingratitude he experienced. He had no great liking for popery, but a still greater dislike for the Dissenters. A more accurate knowledge of human nature would have moderated many of his measures, and convinced him of the folly of hoping to please the profligate Charles, to satisfy the country, and to maintain the approval of his conscience. His name is identified with the “History of the Rebellion;” a work which has done more than any other to perpetuate the hatred of Presbyterians, and to fix disgrace on the glorious and finally successful struggle for British liberty.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5.

Note 25. *The Duke of Buckingham* — p. 37.

The character of this gay, witty, and profligate nobleman has been so admirably depicted in the recent Novel, that it would be presumptuous of me to say much respecting it. I cannot, however, resist quoting Granger’s accurate portrait —

“He was a man of the most whimsical caprice, was the admiration and the jest of the reign of Charles the Second. He was the alchemist, and the philosopher; the fiddler and the poet; the mimic and the statesman. How shall I sketch the portrait of one who had such a variety of faces, or draw him in miniature, who was of so *great*, and at the same time, of so *little* a character.”

Horace Walpole’s account of him seems to have been studied by the Novelist; it is even more severe than that of Granger. —

“When this extraordinary man, with the figure and genius of Alcibiades,²⁴ could equally charm the presbyterian Fairfax, and the dissolute Charles; when he alike ridiculed that witty King, and his solemn Chancellor; when he plotted the ruin of his country with a *cabal* of bad ministers; or equally unprincipled, supported its cause with bad patriots — one laments that such parts should have been devoid of every virtue. But when Alcibiades turns chemist, when he is a real bubble, and a visionary miser; when ambition is but a frolic; when the worst designs are for the most foolish ends; contempt extinguishes all reflections on his character.” — Walpole’s Noble Authors, vol. ii. p. 77.

The situation into which Kiffin was brought, looks extremely like some maneuver of the Duke. Here an individual is charged with the highest crime against the state; — threatened and cajoled to confess it; — and then, after some further intriguing, is allowed to return home, and hears nothing more of the affair. This is very like prosecuting some bad design for some foolish end.

²⁴ Alcibiades: Athenian statesman and general in the Peloponnesian War (c. 450-404 BC).

Pope's admirable lines on the wretched death of this wretched sinner, may properly conclude this note.

“In the worst Inn's worst room, with mat half hung,
The floors of plaister, and the Walls of dung.
On once a flockbed, but repair'd with straw,
With tape-ty'd curtains never meant to draw
The George and Garter dangling from that bed
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
Great *Villers* lies. Alas! how chang'd from him,
That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!
Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove.
The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and Love;
Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring
Of mimic statesmen, and their merry King.
No wit to flatter, left of all his store;
No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.
There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame, this Lord of useless thousand ends.”

Alexander Pope's Epistle to Lord Bathurst (1733)

Note 26. *Mr. Clifford, a gentleman belonging to the Duke* — p. 37.

The person who is thus humbly described as a retainer of Buckingham's, became afterwards the well-known Lord Clifford, the first member of the *cabal* ministry. He was originally the son of a country gentleman of Devonshire, and commanded a regiment in the Army of Charles I in his first expedition against the Scots. Afterwards he was accounted by contemporaries, says Wood, “a young man of very unsettled head, or of a roving, shattered brain.” Being chosen a Member of Parliament after the Restoration, he distinguished himself by defending all the King's measures; for which he was Knighted; and after filling various posts with more advantage to himself than to the country, he was raised to the peerage. He was a concealed Catholic, and a man of an intriguing impetuous spirit.

Note 27. *Lady Ranelagh* — p. 39.

Of this noble friend of Kiffin, I can obtain no account, further than she appears to have been a Dissenter, and a Member of Daniel Burgess' Church in London. Among that man's works is a “Funeral Sermon for the Countess of Ranelagh.”

Note 28. *I intend particularly to set them down by themselves* — p. 45.

Mr. Kiffin left a MS. of this description, but I understand it has been lost. He was, however, known as an *author*, as well as a merchant, a preacher, and a soldier. Of his works, which are all small, and now scarcely to be met with, the reader will accept the following imperfect notices: —

1. *A Letter to Mr. Edwards, about publicly objecting to his Sermons: by W. Kiffin*, — 12mo. 1644. This is a defence of himself against the detraction, published by Edwards, in his *Gangrena*, of which an account is given in the NOTES TO CHAPTER 2.

2. *A Remonstrance of the Grounds of the Anabaptist's Separation*, — 4to. 1645. To this pamphlet, a very curious and violent answer was returned, under the following title: — “A Looking-glass for the Anabaptists, and the rest of the Separatists: wherein they may clearly behold a brief confutation of a certain unlicensed scandalous pamphlet, entitled, The Remonstrance of the Anabaptists, by way of Vindication of their Separation. The Impertinencies, Incongruities, Non-consequences, Falsities, and Obstinacy of *William Kiffin*, the Author and Grand Ringleader of that seduced sect, are discovered and laid open to the view of every indifferent-eyed reader, that will

not shut his eyes against the truth. With certain queries vindicated from Anabaptistical glosses, together with others propounded for the information and conviction, (if possible) Reformation of the said William Kiffin, and his Proselytes. By *Josiah Ricraft*, a Well Willer to the Truth," — 4to. 1645. This curious pamphlet contains a number of queries, with answers by Kiffin, and Ricraft's replies. The author was a Merchant in London — a Presbyterian — and evidently full of violence and conceit.

3. "A Declaration concerning the public dispute which should have been in the public Meeting-House of Aldermanbury, the 3d. of this instant month of December; concerning Infants' Baptism. Together with some of the arguments which should have been propounded and urged by some of those that are falsely called Anabaptists, which should then have disputed, — viz. by Ben. Coxe, Hansard Knollys, William Kiffin, 4to. 1645." Of this pamphlet, Kiffin was only one of the authors. The dispute, it appears, never took place. Crosby gives an account of another of these public contests in which Kiffin was engaged, and of which the Baptists seem to have been very fond at this period. It happened at Coventry, while he was there preaching by order from the Parliament. — Dr. Grew and Dr. Bryan were on the side of the Paedobaptists, and Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Knollys on the other. Crosby says, candidly, "It was managed with good temper and great moderation; both sides claimed the victory, and parted good friends." He adds, very naturally, "all granted that the Baptists came off with great reputation." — Vol. iii. p. 5.

4. *A Discourse between Captain Kiffin, and Dr. Chamberlain, about imposition of hands* — 4to. 1654. Dr. Chamberlain and Kiffin appear to have had a public dispute on this subject also; of which this pamphlet contains an account. The title shows the rank Kiffin then held in the City Militia. The following article shows that he was advanced still higher.

5. "A Letter to the Lord Mayor, by Lieut.-Col. Kiffin, Captain Gasfright, Captain Hewling, and Lieut. Somes, touching the seizing of their persons" — fol. 1659. This letter relates to his seizure by Monk, of which he gives some account in page 26. Captain Hewling was I suppose his son-in-law, and father to the two unfortunate young men of whom the grandfather speaks so fully.

Kiffin was abused, about this time, in a small pamphlet, under the following title- — "The life and approaching death of William Kiffin, extracted out of the Visitation Book, by a Church Member." — 4to. p. 5. 1659. He is there represented as having been "a bounden servant of a Glover," which was probably after his connection with Lilburn the Brewer. He is also called "a Lieut.-Col. in the Militia."

6. *A sober Discourse of Right to Church Communion* — 12mo. This work was written in reply to the celebrated John Bunyan. Its object is to show the unlawfulness of admitting any to the Lord's Supper, but baptised adults. Kiffin was what is called a *strict*, and Bunyan a *free*, Communion Baptist.

Besides these productions, he assisted as has already been noted, in forming the Confessions of Faith, drawn up and published by the Baptists. To the edition of 1650 is added, "Heart bleedings for Professors' Abominations; or a Faithful General Epistle, presented to all who have known the way of truth; forewarning them to flee security and careless walking," etc. — 4to. To this letter, the name of Kiffin and a number of others are subscribed.

He wrote a Preface to the Life of Mr. Hansard Knollys, in which he continues the writer's account of himself, down to his death. He also wrote a Preface to "The sufficiency of the Spirit's Teaching without Human Learning, by Samuel How, Cobler, Pastor of a Christian Church in London." How's Sermon is far from being contemptible. The text, 2Peter 3.16, was furnished him by John Goodwin, who also condescended to be a hearer.

When done, Mr. Goodwin was asked by How's friends what he thought? He replied — "You have made a calf and danced about it." They demanded in what they had made a calf? To which no reply was given. The cobbler could not get his Sermon printed in London; it was therefore sent to

Holland. But the demand became so great, that the eighth edition now lies before me. As Kiffin's Preface is not long, I quote it for the reader's satisfaction.

“Having been acquainted with this author before his death, and tasted that Spirit of Light which God had more than ordinary poured put on him; by which he was enabled to minister seasonable words to the refreshing of many weary souls: and also to contend against those corruptions and inventions which men have brought into the worship of God, raging like the mighty waters against all the servants of God who opposed them in the same. I mean the power which ruled in that day, of the weight of whose persecutions this author, while he lived, had his share; and when he died, they would not allow him what they called a Christian burial; therefore his friends were obliged to lay his body in the high way, of whom, I may say, the world was not worthy. My intent in writing this is not to commend the author, but to set in your view the design of the following Discourse; the bent of which is to advance the teachings of the Spirit of Christ, in the unfolding of the mystery of the gospel to the hearts of men, as the only revealer of that glory of truth to the soul, which will change from glory to glory into its own likeness — a truth much opposed by men of corrupt minds in this day. And therefore it becomes all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, to stand upon their watch, and be earnestly begging of the Father of Lights, that the Spirit may help them to judge things that differ, and may lead them into straight paths, ‘testing all things, and holding fast that which is good.’ You will find in this Tract the spirit of the author strongly and zealously contending for the advancement of the Spirit of Christ; and if you meet with any words in it that may seem harsh against that which men advance, let it not be an offence to you, but test whether it is agreeable to the form of sound words or not. I will not detain you any longer, but my desire to the Lord is that all Israel may more and more know the truth as it is in Jesus; shining as the sun, more to their perfect clearness; knowing the night is far past, and the day near approaching: so that we may walk as the children of the light, waiting for the glorious appearing of him who will come, and not tarry.

Yours, in the love of Christ.”

W. KIFFIN

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6.

Note 29. *Sir Thomas Armstrong* — p. 52.

Sir Thomas Armstrong met with a hard fate. He was seized at Leyden, and brought over in great haste to England. There he was sentenced to die by Jefferies, on a former sentence of outlawry, which was executed within six days. Burnet says,

“His carriage, during his imprisonment, and at his death, was far beyond what could have been imagined. He turned himself wholly to the thoughts of God, and of another state; and was praying continually. He rejoiced that he was brought to die in such a manner. He said, it was scarce possible for him to have been awakened into a due sense of his sins by any other method. His pride and his resentments were then so entirely conquered, that one who saw him said to me, that it was not easy to think it was the same person whom he had formerly known. He received the sacrament, and died in so good a temper, with so much quiet in his mind, and so serene a deportment, that we have scarce known in our time, a more eminent instance of the grace and mercy of God.” — BURNET'S OWN TIMES, Vol. II. p. 418; 12mo. edit.

Note 30. *It proved the ruin of my Son-in-law* — p. 53.

Burnet's account of Hayes' trial is interesting, and corroborates the statement of Kiffin.

“The other trial was of more importance to the Court. In Armstrong's pocket, when he was taken, a letter was found written by Hayes, a banker in London, directed to another name, which was believed a feigned one. In it, credit was given him upon Hayes' correspondent in Holland for money. He was desired not to be too lavish; and he was promised that he would be supplied as

he needed it. Here was an abetting of a man outlawed for treason. Many pains were taken on Hayes, both by persuasion and threatening, to induce him to reveal that whole cabal of men, that, it seemed joined in a common purse to supply those who had fled beyond the sea on account of the plot. And they hoped to know all Monmouth's friends, and either to have attainted them,²⁵ or at least to have fined them severely for it. But Hayes showed a fidelity and courage far beyond what could have been expected from such a man: so he was brought to trial. He made a strong defence. The letter was not exactly like his handwriting. It was not addressed to Armstrong, but to another person from whom he perhaps had it. No entry was made of it in his books; nor of any sum paid upon it. But his main defence was that a banker examined into no person's concerns; and therefore when money or good security was brought to him, he gave bills of exchange, or letters of credit, as they were desired. Jefferies pressed the Jury, in his impetuous way, to find Hayes guilty of high treason because — though there was not a witness against Hayes, but only presumptions appeared upon the proof — yet Jefferies said it was proved by two witnesses, that the letter was found in Armstrong's pocket; and that was sufficient, the rest appearing by circumstances. The little difference between the writing in the letter and his ordinary hand, was said to be only a feint to hide it, which made him even more guilty: he required the jury to bring him in guilty. And he said that the king's life and safety depended upon this trial; so that, if they did not do it, they exposed the king to a new Rye-plot;²⁶ with other extravagancies with which his fury prompted him. But a jury of merchants could not be worked up to this pitch. So he was acquitted, which mortified the Court a little; for they had reckoned that now juries were to be only a point of form in a trial, and that they were always to find bills as they were directed." — Vol. II. p. 446.

Note 31. *I endeavoured to deal with a Great Man* — p. 54.

Who the person was to whom Kiffin offered three thousand pounds for the lives of his Grandsons, it is impossible to ascertain with certainty. Many were bought off by large sums, which ruined themselves or families, which were given to the Officers of State, or of the army; and especially to Jefferies. The account of his "Campaign in the West," as his bloody and infamous proceedings were called, is among the most sickening details of British history. The following short view of it, extracted from Hume, conveys only a moderate idea of the cruelty of this inhuman judge.

"The violent Jefferies succeeded after some interval, and showed the people that the rigors of law might equal, if not exceed, the ravages of military tyranny. This man, who wantoned in cruelty^ had already given a specimen of his character in many trials where he presided; and he now set out with a savage joy, as to a full harvest of death and destruction. He began at Dorchester; and thirty rebels being arraigned, he exhorted them, but in vain» to save him, by their free confession, the trouble of trying them: and when twenty-nine were found guilty, he ordered them, as an additional punishment of their disobedience, to be led to immediate execution.

"Most of the other prisoners, terrified with this example, pleaded guilty; and no less than two hundred and ninety-two received sentence at Dorchester. Of these, eighty were executed. Exeter was the next stage of his cruelty; two hundred and forty-three were there tried, of whom a great number were condemned and executed. He also opened his commission at Taunton and Wells; and everywhere carried consternation along with him. The juries were so struck with his menaces, that they gave their verdict with precipitation; and many innocent persons, it is said, were involved with the guilty. And, on the whole, besides those who were butchered by the military commanders, two hundred and fifty-one are computed to have fallen by the hand of

²⁵ *Attaint*: to condemn by attainder, a sentence pronounced without trial or due process.

²⁶ Referring to the Rye House Plot of 1683, an alleged plan to assassinate King Charles II, and his brother James, Duke of York (heir to the throne).

justice. The whole country was strewed with the heads and limbs of traitors. Every village, almost, beheld the dead carcass of a wretched inhabitant. And all the rigors of justice, unabated by any appearance of clemency, were fully displayed to the people, by the inhuman Jefferies. On his return, he was immediately, for those eminent services, created a peer; and was soon after vested with the dignity of Chancellor. It is pretended, however, with some appearance of authority, that the king was displeased with these cruelties, and put a stop to them by order, as soon as proper information of them was conveyed to him." — Vol. VIII. p. 168.

There is reason to doubt the accuracy of the opinion expressed in the last sentence. The bloody disposition of Jefferies seems to have been *encouraged* rather than *opposed* by his iron-hearted master. When Jefferies was afterwards prisoner in the tower, he complained to Dr. Scott of his hard treatment. "I was hated," he said, "by the kingdom, for doing so much in the west, and I was ill received by the king, for not doing more." James' conduct toward his unhappy brother Monmouth, clearly shows that he possessed neither natural affection nor royal clemency. "In ordering him to be brought into his presence, under sentence of death, he made one exception," says Dr. Welwood, "to a general rule observed invariably by Kings, never to allow a criminal under sentence of death, the sight of his Prince's face, without a design to pardon him." To witness with satisfaction the grief, and to insult the misfortunes of a brother, betray a heart capable of exulting in the military butcheries of Kirk, and the legal murders of Jefferies.

Note 32. *The Duke of Monmouth came over.* — p. 53,

Monmouth's Rebellion, as it is commonly termed, was one of the most ill-timed and most disastrous efforts for the restoration of British liberty.

With three small ships, and about a hundred and fifty men, the Duke landed in the west of England, with the parliament sitting. A romantic kind of invasion, and scarce paralleled in history: yet with this handful of men, and the common people that joined him, without arms, provisions, martial discipline, money, or any one place of strength to retire to in case of accidents, this brave unfortunate man bid fair for a crown. And if his ill fate had not placed a battalion of Dumbarton's regiment in his way, he would in all probability have surprised the king's army in their camp, and perhaps at that single blow, decided the Fortune of England at once. Yet this attempt may be said to have paved the way for a nobler change in the throne, by leaving king James at liberty, through this success, to act without control, what at length tumbled him down.

"Monmouth paid the price of his rebellion with his blood. A little pocket-book was taken with him, and delivered to King James. It contained infallible proofs, in his own hand, of his intentions upon the crown. There are a great many dark passages in it, and some clear enough. Perhaps it had been to James' honour to have committed it to the flames, as Julius Caesar is said to have done on a like occasion.

"Monmouth seemed to be born for a better fate; for the first part of his life was all sunshine, though the rest was clouded. He was brave, generous, affable, and extremely handsome; constant in his friendships, true to his word, and an utter enemy to all sorts of cruelty. He was easy in his nature, and fond of popular applause, which led him insensibly into all his misfortunes. But whatever might be the hidden designs of some working heads he embark'd with, his own were noble, and chiefly aimed at the good of his country, though he was mistaken in the means to attain it. Ambitious he was, but not to the degree of aspiring to the crown, till after his landing in the West. And even then, he was passive rather than active in assuming the title of king. It was importunity alone that prevailed with him to make that step. And he was inflexible, till he was told that the only way to provide against the ruin of those who might come to his assistance in case he failed in the attempt, was to declare himself king — that they might be sheltered by the statute made in the reign of Henry VII, in favour of those who would obey a king *de facto*. Those who advised him, had different ends in it. Some would render the breach

between King James and him irreconcilable, and thereby pave a way for a Commonwealth, in playing them against one another. Others, to prevent a possibility of his being reconciled to King James, by the merit of delivering up those who would join him. This was a thought unworthy of that nice sincerity he had shown in all the former conduct of his life.

“In his latter years he used to complain of the little care that had been taken of his education; and in his disgrace, he endeavoured to make up that want, by applying himself to study, in which he made, in a short time, no inconsiderable progress. He took the occasion of his afflictions to inform his mind, and to recollect and amend the errors of youth. It was not strange that he should be tainted with them, being brought up in all the pleasures of a luxurious court.

“The Duke, when he was brought prisoner to King James’s presence, made the humblest submissions for his life; and it is a mystery what could move King James to see him, when he had no mind to pardon him. But the manner of his death, three days after, did more than acquit him of any meanness of spirit in desiring to live, since he died with the greatest constancy and tranquility of mind, and such as became a Christian, a philosopher, and a soldier.” —WELWOOD’S MEMOIRS, pp. 170-175.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7.

Note 33. *The Hewlings* — p. 55.

Everything relating to these very interesting young men must gratify the reader. Noble gives the following particulars relating to them: —

“These two amiable, but unfortunate gentlemen, of the name of Hewling, were the only sons of Mr. Benjamin Hewling, a Turkey Merchant of good fortune in London, who happily for himself, died before them. They were, after their father’s death, most carefully brought up by a tender mother, and their maternal grandfather, Mr. William Kiffin — who, though very advanced in years, as well as his wife, survived them both. The Hewlings and Kiffins were Protestant Dissenters, and the latter (if not the former) were Anabaptists.

“Mr. Benjamin Hewling, the eldest brother, made great progress in learning, was well skilled in mathematics and other parts of philosophy, and was some time in Holland to perfect himself in these and other studies. When the Duke of Monmouth came into England, and laid claim to a crown to which he had not a shadow of a right, Mr. Hewling — whose zeal for the Protestant interest led him to depose King James as a Papist — joined his standard, upon any terms whatever. The Duke gave him a troop of horse, with which he distinguished himself in several skirmishes; and as ill chance would have it, he was dispatched with a detachment of his own troop and two more, to Mynhead, in Somersetshire, to fetch cannon to the army. He returned at the very time that the Duke of Monmouth was routed at Sedgmore, which he in vain endeavoured to prevent. The loss of the battle is thought to be greatly owing to his absence with so considerable a part of the horse, and the most resolute of the army.

“Mr. William Hewling was educated with an equal care to his brother, and was also sent into Holland for improvement; he returned from there with the Duke of Monmouth, and also enlisted under his banner. He bore the rank of Lieutenant of Foot at the battle of Sedgmore, where he, as well as his brother, behaved with distinguished gallantry.

“Of all the unhappy victims that died in the West, none were more pitied than these two brothers — their youth, their beauty, their being the only sons of their mother, and she a widow; their extraordinary piety, resignation, even excessive joy at their approaching fate, made all men look up with horror at a throne, which, instead of being a throne of mercy, was that not only of severe justice, but of excessive cruelty; for they were flattered with life, though not even one (which was earnestly desired) was saved. They were treated with the greatest inhumanity, and even shameful barbarity.

“The people, as if to reflect upon their sovereign’s flintiness of heart, strove as to who should most express their pity and regard for them while living, and when dead. The body of the youngest was deposited in Lyme churchyard, attended by two hundred persons, and accompanied by some of the most fashionable young women in the town —though it was the day following his untimely death, and no invitation or preparation was made. And most of the inhabitants of Taunton, also accompanied the remains of William, to the church in that place, where his remains were deposited. This was wonderful, when we recollect the horrid butchery that must present itself everywhere to those under the unfeeling tyrant; and that several of the dreadful objects died only for affording comfort to those who had been in arms.

“The dignity and acquiescence in God’s Providence under their misfortunes, and the cruelty of their deaths, made a great impression upon all sober men, and the outrages committed in the West, more than anything, contributed to overturn the throne of a tyrant, which he had discoloured with the blood of so many of his subjects, to gratify an insatiable cruelty.” — NOBLE, Vol. II, p. 443-448.

Their characters are thus drawn in the New Martyrology: —

“They were both of very sweet and obliging tempers, as has appeared in their history; it being a very hard matter for their worst enemies, once they knew them well, not to honour and love them. Mr. Benjamin, the elder, reconciled the *lamb* and the *lion* exactly. In the field, he seemed made only for war; and anywhere else, for nothing but love. Without flattery, he deserved to be called a very *fine man*, of a lovely proportion, extremely well made, so handsome a man, and good an air, as perhaps few in England exceeded him.

“The younger, Mr. William, was somewhat taller, and more slender, his face fresh and lively as his spirit, being master of an extraordinary vivacity and briskness of temper. Both of them were virtuous, pious, and courageous, far above their years. And indeed, they seemed to be men too soon, one of them not being twenty, the eldest but twenty-two, when they died; verifying that common observation, *that whatever is perfect sooner than ordinary, generally has a shorter period prefixed to it than what is more base and ignoble.*” — p. 117.

The two following original letters to their sister, written while they were in Holland, will show their very affectionate disposition; and that Mr. William Hewling’s mind had been decidedly turned to religion before his melancholy imprisonment and condemnation.

“DEAR SISTER,

“I have waited with impatience, for this opportunity of conveying to you my thanks for your kind letter, and for the variety of news it was freighted with. Your joy for my safe arrival, and sorrow for my absence, testify no more than what I always conceived of my sister’s love, having before received such strong proofs of her affection toward me. There need be no other arguments to convince me that they are real, and still continue the same, than your saying they are so. And I am assured you entertain as kind thoughts of my love toward you, and the sincerity of it, and without any difficulty will think me as I am in reality,

Your affectionate brother,
Ben. Hewling.

AMSTERDAM, 3d April 1683.

TUTPHAES, 18th March 1685.

“DEAR SISTER,

“I have received yours of the 10th instant, filled with fresh tokens of the constant affection of my dear sister, and her ardent zeal for the well-being of her poor unworthy brother. For dear, dear sister, I will never be in a capacity to render suitable acknowledgments to these several

obligations laid on me. I find, by your kind letter, your joy for those few convictions that God in his infinite mercy has been pleased to work on my soul. For dear sister, I cannot but esteem it an infinite mercy, and a miracle of love, that God should put the least stop to my career in sin, when I have gone on without bounds, and have sinned so dissolutely against such light, and against such calls and former convictions that I have had. Others, abundantly better than I, have been cut off, and sent to their place, while I am yet spared. This is a mercy never to be esteemed enough. I bless God I have found, since these convictions, that He has been pleased to give me more backwardness to sin, and a little more love to holiness. But on the other side, I find myself very hard, and dead, and proud, and too apt to relish the things of this world; and I find the devil very busy to turn me out of the way, putting all manner of evil thoughts into my heart, which is too apt and ready to take with the least temptation.

“Dear sister, I do desire you, and also all my friends, to pray to God, that he would, in his infinite mercy, subdue my hard and proud heart; that he would regulate my affections, and enlighten my blind understanding; that he would by his Holy Spirit, convince me, first of sin — that I may see it as it is, really vile and destructive, and the greatest enemy to mankind; that I may see it so as to loath, and detest, and hate it; that I may see it so as to repent of it, and that with repentance never to be repented of; — and then, that he would convince me of righteousness, of the fulness of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the fulness of his satisfaction for sin, that I may be so convinced of it as to go out of myself to it — that I may esteem all things as dross and dung compared with it — that I may take up the yoke of the Lord Jesus, and be a true and faithful servant to him — -that I may follow him fully, never looking back, but be continually pressing forward to the mark of the high calling, knowing that my labour shall not be in vain. Dear sister, finding my heart so dull, so hard, and so little inclinable to these things, I cannot but renew my entreaty, that my friends would pray to God for me, if He, who is the great changer of hearts, who has the words of eternal life, would work this great and glorious change in me, — that where he has begun a good work, he would perfect it, — that I may live as a monument of his infinite mercy, and that I may ever bless and praise his holy name, which I hope will ever be the practice of, Dear Sister,

Your most affectionate brother.
WM. HEWLING,

Pray my duty to mother, with
love to brother, and sisters,
duty to grandfather, service
to uncles and aunts, and the
rest of friends.”

Note 34. *Captain Richardson* — p. 57.

This Gaoler-in-Chief was worthy of the Judge whose barbarous sentences he in part executed. When he brought down the Hewlings and some other gentlemen to Dorchester to be tried, drinking with another gaoler, he said, “Come brother, here’s to our good health; this is our time to make our fortunes — now we must lay aside all humanity, for no compassion is to be shown to these dogs.” — WESTERN MARTYROLOGY, p. 224.

Note 35. *A near relation has gone into the West* — p. 58.

The near relation who was with these interesting young men, was their sister, Hannah Hewling. She did everything that was possible to save their lives, as well as to comfort them when they were appointed to die. She presented a petition to the King on behalf of her brothers, and was introduced for this purpose by Lord Churchill, afterwards Duke of Marlborough. While they waited in the antechamber for admittance, standing near the mantlepiece, Lord Churchill assured her of his most hearty wishes of success to her petition: — “but, Madam,” he said, “I dare not

flatter you with any such hopes, for that marble is as capable of feeling compassion as the King's heart." This is very characteristic of the utter insensibility of James II.

She also applied to Jefferies, but could not prevail, probably for the reason assigned by her grandfather in his Memoirs. It has been said in most of the accounts which have been published, that Jefferies always treated Hannah Hewling according to his usual custom, with the greatest brutality. But this is not correct, for he always treated her with the greatest politeness and respect. This, however, does not much soften the horror of his general character. Jefferies had a relation, from whose fortune he had formed great expectations; and as this relation was an intimate acquaintance of the Hewlings. He exerted himself very warmly with Jefferies in their behalf. He repeatedly protested to the Chief Justice, that the continuance of his friendship, together with every benefit he might hope would result from it, depended entirely upon his using every endeavour to save the Hewlings. Jefferies protested he did this; with what sincerity, God only knows; but he always declared the King was inexorable. — NOBLE'S MEMOIRS, Vol. II. p. 451-3

Miss Hewling, some time after the melancholy death of her brothers, became the wife of Major Richard Cromwell, the grandson of the Protector Oliver, by Henry, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Noble's account of her is curious, but evidently written under the influence of strong prejudice against a Dissenter. —

"The misfortunes her family" he says, "experienced from the severity of James II, and the fanaticism of her religious tenets, set her mind against the established form, and led her into some unwarrantable warmth. Instead of copying the example of her husband's mother, she set herself openly against the establishment, turned out the clergyman that had long been resident in the family; and entertained, in his stead, a Baptist Minister. Not content with this, she endeavoured to gain proselytes to her opinions; all which led Mr. Cromwell into such pecuniary inconveniences as obliged him, soon after their marriage, to part with the Abbey of Spinney. It does not appear, however, that she brought over her husband to desert the established church." — NOBLE'S MEMOIRS, Vol. I. p. 210.

All this has been said of many as well as of Mrs. Cromwell, and in most instances, with very little truth. It does not appear clearly how the lady's conduct could ruin her husband's estate. She was a kind sister; she appears to have been a sensible woman; and from an original letter of hers, now before me, she seems to have been a good mother, and an obedient wife. As it shows a little of the religious character of the writer, and also informs us of the very humble employment of the Lord Protector of England's grandson, I will quote part of it for the reader's amusement. It is addressed to her sisters; and appears to have been written when she was recovering from an attack of ague [severe feverish chills]. Her child also had been ill, and was under the care of his aunts.

LONDON, March 19, 1689.

"MY DEAR SISTERS,

"The good news you sent me in your last was very reviving to me. It was beyond my expectation to hear of the so sudden removal of his distemper. My great work now is thankfulness, which is indeed too great for an evil heart, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray for it, for each other. I should be even more thankful, from my present feelings, for what He did. I find myself very weak; and can but admire how God has continued his (the child's) strength so much through it. I have had five fits, which held me much about the length his did. I greatly long to see my dear lamb; but cannot be willing to venture him yet on such a journey: and I am sensible that the loss of your kind and pleasant company will be very mournful to him.

I have little news to send. The Parliament are taking the attainder of my Lord Russell. So I hope they will soon proceed to the rest. There are many regiments preparing to go to the relief of poor Ireland, which is in great distress. I suppose you hear that my aunt Kiffin is very dangerously ill

at Enfield. My brother Frank has an office in a regiment for Ireland, if he will be so wise as to keep it.

I have made my scroll very tedious, but must yet add, that it is Mr. Cromwell's order, that Betty Gally go to market with the butter, and with John no more, except at washings. He would have Harry go to Cambridge and enquire the price of hay, and send him word; and whether there are any who are willing to buy all he can spare, and pay ready money. He would also know in what forwardness all his business is. I am forced to trouble you with these things, which I hope you will excuse, from your obliged and affectionate sister,

H. CROMWELL,

For Mrs. Rebekah Hewling, at Henry
Cromwell's, Esq. Spinney Abbey
near Newmarket.

Major Cromwell died of a fever in Spain, in 1711, when serving under Lord Galway. Mrs. Cromwell died in 1731. They had a family of ten children, several of whom survived them. Oliver Cromwell, Esq., lately deceased, and who published the valuable *Memoirs of the Protector*, was descended from this branch of the family.

Note 36. *Mr. Benjamin Hewling, about two hours before his death, wrote the following letter to his mother — p. 79.*

The original letter which Kiffin has copied into his Memoirs, is in my possession. It affords a remarkable proof of the composure of Hewling's mind, as expressed in it. It is written in a bold and steady hand, betraying not the least symptom of agitation or tremulousness. Were it not for the information contained in it of his near approaching death, it might be supposed he had written it at his desk.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

Note 37. *A new project was set afoot to engage the Protestant Dissenters — p. 84.*

The object of this scheme was to favour the Roman Catholics, not the Dissenters. Its pretence, however, was to extend toleration, or liberty of conscience, to all. Many of the Dissenters saw this; and while they naturally availed themselves of the liberty offered, they objected to the principle on which it was bestowed — the right of the king to dispense with the execution of the laws. They differed among themselves about the best mode of acknowledging the favour which was offered them. The following is part of Neal's account of this affair, which corroborates Kiffin's MS.

“In pursuance of these declarations, the dissenters of all sorts were not only set at liberty, but admitted to serve in offices of profit and trust. November 6, the king sent an order to the Lord Mayor of London, to dispense with the Quakers taking oaths, or at least, not to fine them if they refused to serve, by which means a door was opened to the Roman Catholics, and to all others, to bear offices in the state, without a legal qualification. Several witnesses were presented to the king upon this occasion, from the companies in the city of London, from the corporations in the country, and even from the clergy themselves, thanking his majesty for his declaration for liberty of conscience, and his promise to support the Church of England, as by law established, assuring him of their endeavours to choose such members for the next parliament, as should give it a more legal sanction.

“The several denominations of Dissenters also were no less thankful for their liberty, and addressed his majesty in higher strains than some of their elder and more cautious ministers approved. Mr. Baxter, Mr. Stretton, and a great many others, refused to join in them; and bishop Burnet admits that few concurred in those addresses, and that the persons who presented them were mean and inconsiderable. When there was a general meeting of the ministers to consider

their behaviour in this crisis, and two messengers from court waited to carry back the result of the debate, Mr. Howe delivered his opinion against the dispensing power,²⁷ and against everything that might contribute assistance to the Papists, to enable them to subvert the Protestant religion. Another minister stood up, and declared that he apprehended their recent sufferings had been occasioned more by their firm adherence to the constitution, than by their differing from the establishment; and therefore, if the king expected they should give up the constitution and declare for the dispensing power, he would rather, for his part, lose his liberty, and return to his former bondage. In conclusion, Mr. Howe, in summing up the whole debate, signified to the courtiers, that they were in general of the same opinion. Mr. Coke adds, that to his knowledge the Dissenters both dreaded and detested the dispensing power; and their steadiness in this crisis was a noble stand by a number of men who subsisted only by the royal favour, which ought not to have been so soon forgotten.

“Though the Court was a little disappointed in their expectations from the Dissenters, they put the best face they could on the affair, and received such addresses as were presented with high commendation. The first who went up were the London Anabaptists, who say that ‘the sense of this invaluable favour and benefit derived to us from your royal clemency, compels us to prostrate ourselves at your majesty’s feet, with the tender of our most humble thanks for that peace and liberty which both we, and all other Dissenters from the national church, now enjoy.’”

— Vol. v. pp. 33, 34.²⁸

It appears from Kiffin’s account, that all the Baptists did not agree in these addresses. He not only opposed them himself, but did all he could to prevent his brethren appearing on the side of the court. Mr. Ivimey tells us that their address was presented on Thursday, March 23, 1687, by Mr. Coke, and four or five more of that society, through the Earl of Sunderland. The disinterested conduct of the Dissenters on this occasion, who made common cause with the church against the Catholics, when the liberties of their country were in danger of destruction, was forgotten after the Revolution.

“The clergy,” says Bishop Burnet (speaking of the Comprehension Act²⁹) “began now to show an implacable hatred to the non-conformists, and seemed to wish for an occasion to renew old severities against them. But wise and good men very much applauded the quieting of the nation by the toleration. It seemed to be suitable, both to the spirit of the Christian religion, and to the interest of the nation. It was thought very unreasonable that, while we were complaining of the cruelty of the Church of Rome, we should fall into such practices among ourselves; chiefly, while we were engaging in a war, in the progress of which we would need the united strength of the whole nation.”

NEAL’S reflections on their conduct, though severe, were certainly not unjust, nor uncalled for.

“This was the last fruitless attempt for a comprehension of Dissenters within the establishment; and such was the ungrateful return, that these stubborn churchmen made to those who had assisted them in their distress! For it ought to stand upon record, that the Church of England had been twice rescued from the most imminent danger, by men for whose satisfaction they would not move a pin, nor abate a ceremony; first in the year 1660, when the Presbyterians restored the King and Constitution, without making any terms for themselves; and now again at the Revolution, when the church fled for succour to a Presbyterian prince, and was delivered by an army of fourteen thousand Hollanders, of the same principles with the English Dissenters;

²⁷ *Dispensing power*: The king claimed to have the power to dispense with the law in particular cases, as in the Hales case (1686); he then placed Roman Catholics on the bench of magistrates, endangering Protestant liberties. – WHG

²⁸ Daniel Neal, *History of the Puritans*, 1837 ed., vol. III, pp. 282-283. – WHG

²⁹ The Comprehension and Toleration Act of 1689; granted freedom of worship to Nonconformists, such as Baptists and Congregationalists. Nonconformists and Catholics were still denied political office. – WHG

and how uncivilly those troops were afterward used, is too ungrateful a piece of history to remember.” Vol. v. pp. 84, 85. [1837 ed., Vol. III, pp. 324-5]

Note 38. *William Penn being the head of that party* — p. 84.

The influence of Penn in the Court of James II, as well as his love of liberty, and his sufferings on account of it, are well known. No doubt can be entertained of his sincerity and disinterestedness in leading the party which acknowledged James’s tolerating conduct on the occasion referred to by Kiffin. His speech to the king, when he presented the address from the Quakers, is very excellent; and on the supposition of his majesty’s sincerity, very appropriate. I copy it from Sewell’s *History of the Quakers*, (p. 606) as worthy of remembrance, for its liberal and enlightened sentiments, and its manly avowal of them. ’••

“May it please the King,

“It was the saying of our blessed Lord to the captious Jews, in case of tribute, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s. As this distinction ought to be observed by all men, in the conduct of their lives, so the king has given us an illustrious example in his own person, that excites us to it. For while HE was a subject, he gave *Caesar* his tribute; and now that he is a Caesar, he gives God his due; *viz.* the sovereignty over conscience. It would be a great shame then, for any Englishman who pretends to Christianity, not to give God his due. By this grace, he has relieved his distressed subjects from their cruel sufferings, and raised to himself a new and lasting empire, by adding their affections to their duty. And we pray God to continue the king in this noble resolution; for he is now upon a principle, that has good nature, Christianity, and the goodness of civil society on its side — a security beyond all the little arts of government.

“I would not have any think that we came here to fill the gazette with our thanks: but as our *sufferings* would have moved stones to compassion, so we would be harder if we were not moved to *gratitude*.

“Now, since the king’s mercy and goodness have reached us throughout the kingdom of England and Principality of Wales, our general assembly from all those parts met at London, about our *church affairs*, has appointed us to wait upon the king, with our humble thanks, and me to deliver them; which I do by this address, with all the affection and respect of a dutiful subject.”

James received this speech, and the accompanying address, with all the grace of which he was capable, and replied (with how little sincerity was soon shown) as follows.

“GENTLEMEN,

“I thank you for your address. Some of you know, I am sure Mr. Penn you do, that it was always my principle, that conscience ought not to be forced; and that all men ought to have the liberty of their consciences. And what I have promised in my declaration, I will continue to perform, as long as I live; and I hope before I die to settle it so, that after ages shall have no reason to alter it.”

Note 39. *A commission from the King to be one of the Aldermen of the City* — p. 86.

Kiffin does not mention his interview with James on this occasion. A short account of it is given by Mr. Luson, one of his family, and is preserved by Noble.

“Kiffin was personally known both to Charles and James; and when the latter of these princes, after having arbitrarily deprived the city of the old charter, determined to put many of the dissenters into the magistracy; under the rose, he sent for Kiffin to attend him at Court. When he went there in obedience to the king’s command, he found many lords and gentlemen. The king immediately came up to him, and addressed him with all the little grace he was master of. He talked of ‘his favour to the dissenters,’ in the court style of the season, and concluded with

telling Kiffin, 'he had put him down as an alderman in his new charter.' 'Sire,' replied Kiffin, 'I am a very old man, and have withdrawn myself from all kinds of business for some years past, and am incapable of doing any service in such an affair, to your majesty or the city — Besides, Sir,' the old man went on, fixing his eyes steadfastly upon the king, while the tears ran down his cheeks, 'the death of my grandsons, gave a wound to my heart, which is still bleeding, and never will close, but in the grave!'"

"The king was deeply struck by the manner, the freedom, and the spirit of this unexpected rebuke. A total silence ensued, while the galled countenance of James seemed to shrink from the horrid remembrance. In a minute or two, however, he recovered himself enough to say, 'Mr. Kiffin, I shall find a balsam for that sore,' and immediately turned about to a lord in waiting.

"A stroke equally unexpected, and equally deserved, this unfeeling monarch received at an extraordinary council, which he called soon after the landing of the Prince of Orange; when amidst the silent company, he applied himself to the Earl of Bedford, father to the executed Lord Russell, saying, 'My lord, you are a good man, and have great influence; you can do much for me at this time;' to which the Earl replied, 'I am an old man, and can do but little;' then added with a sigh, 'I once had a son, who could now have been very serviceable to your majesty;' which words, says Echard, struck the king half dead with silence and confusion.'

"It is said that king Charles at one time, when much in want of money, sent to Mr. Kiffin, requesting the loan of *forty-thousand pounds*, Kiffin excused himself by declaring that he did not have such a sum; but that if it would be of service to his majesty, he would present him with ten thousand. It was accepted of course; and Kiffin used to say that by giving ten, he had saved thirty thousand. This perhaps partly accounts for the favour which he enjoyed at court." — CROSBY, Vol. III. p. 4.

Note 40. Mr. Kiffin appears after this to have lived in quietness, and the enjoyment of much respect. I know little more of him, except the following anecdote, illustrative of his wealth, and his truly Christian benevolence.

"When the French Protestants were driven to England for refuge, William Kiffin received into his protection, a numerous French family of considerable rank. He fitted up and furnished a house of his own for their reception, provided them with servants, and entirely maintained them at his own expense, in a manner which bore some proportion to their rank in France. And when this family afterwards recovered some part of their ruined fortune, he would not diminish it a single shilling, by taking any retribution for the services he had done them. Such were the *city patriots* of those times!" — NOBLE, Vol. II. p. 357.

He died on the 29th of December 1701, in the 86th year of his age; "being great among the Baptists, and accepted by the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed." He was buried in Bunhill-Fields, and a tombstone erected over his grave, on which was the inscription (following page), given in Strype's edition of Stow's *Survey of London*. The third line ["(And an Anabaptist Preacher)"] is evidently Strype's own insertion. ³⁰

³⁰ The Baptist Confession of 1644, signed by Kiffin, has this disclaimer at the top, concerning the label "anabaptist": 'commonly (but unjustly) called anabaptists.' — WHG

Notes by William Orme

WILLIAM KIFFIN

Eldest Son of William Kiffin of London, Merchant,
(And an Anabaptist Preacher)
Died in the Lord, August the 31st, 1669,
In the 21st year of his age.

Also,

PRISCILLA LIDDEL

Wife of Robert Liddel,
And Daughter of William Kiffin,
Who fell asleep in the Lord, March 15, 1679,
Aged 24.

And

HANNA, late Wife of William Kiffin,
And Mother to the above-named William and Priscilla,
Who fell asleep in the Lord, the 6th of October, 1682,
In the 67th year of her age.

And

HARRY KIFFIN

Son of the above-said William Kiffin,
Dec. 8, 1698, aged 44.

Also,

HENRIETTA, late Wife of John Catcher,
Aug. 15, 1698, Aged 22.

And

WILLIAM KIFFIN, the Elder,
Of London, Merchant,
Husband to the above-said Hanna,
And Father to the above-said William, Harry, and Priscilla,
Dec. 29, 1701,
In the 86th year of his age.