

T H E
E P I S T L E
F R O M T H E
Y E A R L Y - M E E T I N G
I N
L O N D O N,

Held by Adjournments, from the 8th of the Sixth
Month 1778, to the 13th of the same, inclusive.

To the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of Friends
in GREAT-BRITAIN, IRELAND, and elsewhere.

DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

WE salute you in a sense of that pure and powerful love which, through our Lord Jesus Christ, hath been mercifully renewed to us in this our large and solemn assembly, to the help and refreshment of our spirits in transacting the affairs of the Church, which have been conducted in the fellowship of the Gospel, and under a deep engagement of mind for the whole flock and family, that all may be sincerely concerned, and truly enabled, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, in lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, and endeavouring to “keep the
“unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

The Salutation.

Ephes. iv. 3.

The amount of Friends sufferings brought in this year, from the counties in England and Wales, being principally for tithes, and those called church-rates, is four thousand five hundred and ninety-one pounds; and those from Ireland, one thousand six hundred and seventy-seven pounds.

Account of Sufferings.

£ 31,340.

By accounts received from the several quarterly-meetings in England, and by epistles from Wales, North-Britain, Ireland, Holland, New-England, New-York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, we are acquainted that love and unity are generally preserved

preserved in the churches ; and that a considerable number hath been added to the society, by conviction, in various parts. We are also informed, that the difficulties and distresses of our friends in America have been, and still continue to be, great in divers provinces.

Job v. 6.

“ Affliction,” it is said, “ cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.” Let the present calamities, therefore, awfully impress every mind, and lead us seriously to reflect, both on the many mercies we, with our fellow-subjects, have long and largely enjoyed, and the distressing prospect now before us ; that all may individually turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart, and, in a sense of our own nothingness and unworthiness, abide in humble prostration of Spirit before him, that he may vouchsafe to forgive our offences, to renew his covenant of peace with us, and enable us to walk as lights in the world ; and by our savoury conversation and exemplary conduct, to lead the tender enquirer into the life of righteousness and true holiness.

We also tenderly intreat, that none who have received a sense of Divine Visitation may either rest contented with a bare conviction, or satisfy themselves with having been enabled to make some advances in the way to life and salvation, concluding they have sufficiently attained, that they are already made whole, and that all is safe and well with them ; for such may be assured, they have suffered loss, though they see it not ; and if they so continue, will, at best, settle in a state of weakness, dwarfishness, and danger. Let not any therefore sit as at ease in Zion ; but let all arise, and with zeal and fervency press daily forward, following on to know the Lord, and acknowledging him in all their ways, that he may direct their paths ; lest, like the backsliders in Israel, they fall in the wilderness, and never obtain an inheritance in the promised land.

Had every one in profession with us been duly careful to live in subjection to the principle of Truth, those afflicting occasions of sorrow and of censure, which arise from an inordinate pursuit of the profits, the pleasures of the world, and the pride of life, might have been prevented. An extension of trade and business beyond the bounds of prudence, justice, and propriety, and the limitations of God's Holy Witness in the conscience, cannot obtain that divine blessing which alone maketh truly rich, and adds no sorrow : therefore it is not to be wondered at, if the hazardous adventures of the covetous and imprudent should terminate in their failure, the grief of their friends, the hurt of their connections, and reproach of their profession.

Experience

Experience hath abundantly verified that just and striking reflection in Holy Writ: "They that will be rich fall into
 "temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts,
 "which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love
 "of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted
 "after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves
 "through with many sorrows." 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

Being painfully affected with some recent instances of this nature, we earnestly exhort, that friends, in the districts of their respective monthly-meetings, be watchful over one another in love, and particularly caution such as appear in danger of launching beyond their depth, by entering into concerns too extensive, or too numerous for their abilities to discharge with punctuality and honour: and where dealing with any such is found requisite, we intreat you, brethren, have no respect to persons in judgment; yet, as the apostle Jude directs, "On some have compassion,
 "making a difference," according to the diversity of cases. But if any wilfully proceed against the advice or admonition of friends, let them in due time be dealt with as the discipline of the society requires. Jude ver. 22.

And we further most tenderly exhort, that all be warned against spending their time, and the substance in their hands, unprofitably, by resorting to places of vain, irreligious, and dissipating entertainment; also, against high and expensive living, or an affectation of pomp and figure: by which unwarrantable and unbecoming practices, many have been reduced to the want of a piece of bread; beside the loss they have sustained in credit and character, and the distress and anxiety of mind which are the certain consequences of such misconduct.

The sacred writings inform us, Christ "died for all, that they
 "which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but
 "unto him who died for them." To live unto him, we must live and walk in his Spirit, observe his precepts, and follow his example in the way of humility, moderation, and self-denial; otherwise, we cannot be his followers. "If any man," saith he,
 "will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his
 "cross daily, and follow me." 2 Cor. v. 15.
Luke ix. 23.

A professional belief in Christ, and of the doctrines of the gospel, may denominate us Christians; but to be Christians indeed, we must be indued with the spirit and nature of Christianity. "He is not a Jew," saith the apostle, "who is one outwardly;"
 "neither is he a true Christian who is only one outwardly;
 "for, in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth, nor un-
 "circumcision, but a new creature"—"If any man be in Christ,
 "he is a new creature." Consequently, no man is in reality
 any Rom. ii. 28.
Gal. vi. 15.
2 Cor. v. 17.

