

To M. S.

“Birmingham, 4th mo. 30th, 1830.

Express my affectionate remembrance to A. F. To her this is a mournful bereavement; but what can we do better for ourselves and others, in the day of trouble, than in the exercise of humble, though firm confidence in prayer, to cherish hope! O! had we been a rightly praying people, surely so much declension had not spread among us. May there be, through a rising generation, a revival of true spiritual mindedness.

My long confinement, at Coventry, under the kindest possible care, has left me somewhat reduced; but, through all, I was passive like a weaned child, and even cheerful and thankful. Ah! dear M. this was nature subdued; and now, at a lengthened out day, my heart's most earnest desire is to live near to the subjecting power by which this is effected; the power, if I understand aright, of the cross of Christ.

MARY CAPPER.”

TO THE SAME.

“7th mo. 26th, 1830.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

Do accept a short but grateful acknowledgement of thy friendly communication, with the instructive memoir accompanying it. O! that I may die the death of the faithful, and that my end may be like his; may my close be calm, lowly and peaceful; but even this it is best to leave to a faithful, just and wise Creator. Death has not always been disarmed of terrors, even to the upright, and I wish to leave it to the Lord; to whom I desire to resign soul and body, with all that I have and all that I am. Lowly obedience

has consolations in this life, and the bright beams of hope sometimes break forth out of darkness; so the safe path is perseverance. Dear John Pumphrey called this morning; he is a pleasant picture of old age.

To K. B.

Birmingham, 9th mo. 14th, 1830.

In these places there has been great stripping; elders and standard-bearers have been taken from this scene of trial and probation; some of their successors have turned from the narrow path, and by imprudent marriages and other deviations, have defrauded their own souls, and mingled their cup of life with many bitters; added to which, I consider it a serious wrong to children's children.

If the Good Shepherd were not enduringly merciful, what indeed should we do? but when the sorrowing heart is humbled, in the house of sore bondage and in the land of captivity, where the cruel enemy of all good has carried them, then if they cry unto the Lord like captive Israel, O! then, in pity, heavenly mercy delivereth them out of their distresses. Some circumstances have very seriously affected me; for although my view of mercy is large, yet it bows down my soul to see mercies received and lightly esteemed. But let me turn to a brighter prospect. There are, I hope, not a few, within the borders of our own religious Society, who prize their privileges, and who have the heart-humbling, tendering belief of the forgiveness of sins, and sanctification from sin, through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. These, with my own soul, watch unto prayer, enduring hardship, as soldiers engaged in combat.”

MARY CAPPER.”

TO THE SAME.

"Birmingham, 2nd mo. 14th, 1831.

My much-loved niece! perhaps never being in more sweet union than at this day; having our senses exercised to discern good and evil, through that measure of mercy which has not left us to perish in ignorance or unbelief. Since I last wrote to thee, I have been almost a prisoner, from debility and loss of appetite. I was nearly ready to conclude that the remaining springs of natural life were gently wearing away; but a childlike, cheerful confidence kept my spirit calm and undisturbed. O! what shall I say of the free mercy that thus sustains me in lively faith and hope; not for any dedication or faithfulness in me. Ah! no; I am a poor weak child, an unprofitable servant, if ever I have done ought of service in our holy Saviour's house. Mercy is my only plea for favour here, and for acceptance hereafter. Again my bodily vigour is a little revived; it is the great Creator's will, so may it be to his gracious purpose. I dare not foster a will of my own, knowing that I am weak and blind. The religious prospect of your kinsman James Backhouse, his affectionate mother, his dear bereft children, are subjects of much interest; but all centers in the will of God. We may rest in gospel promises, whatever is given up for the sake of fulfilling this requiring; but what could be the happiness of a Christian in disobedience, though possessed of houses, lands and kindred; yea, of all that this world could give?"

TO THE SAME.

"Birmingham, 4th mo. 7th, 1832.

On the eleventh of this month, if my life be lengthened to that morning, I shall have seen the end of seventy-seven years. I still

feel as a child, depending upon a tender Father's daily mercies; upon Him who has taken my earthly parents to Himself, I assuredly believe. O! the goodness and mercy that follows their children, yea, I doubt not their children's children. My dear Mother was a woman of prayer, private prayer; the remembrance is precious to this day; in my early days her influence led me to bow at the footstool of mercy, at least often to retire in secret; and in some favoured seasons, I had to shed sweet tears of tenderness, arising from the desire to be good, for I was aware of evil in my heart. Who can set forth the compassion which has followed me, and does yet help, teach and comfort me! that has united me to a People whose genuine religious principles satisfy every faculty of my soul, and are my strong consolation, with hope in a Redeemer's love and power; even that He will complete his glorious work, and own me among his ransomed ones.

MARY CAPPER."

TO J. AND S. GRUBB.

"Birmingham, 5th mo. 25th, 1832.

DEAR JOHN & SARAH GRUBB,

The salutation of an old friend, if in any sort it may be in the newness of life, I seem constrained to believe, you will not reject. Many years and many events have passed, dear Sarah, since our personal intercourse with each other, and with dear friends in this place, now gathered to their rest; the remembrance arises in liveliness before me, no bitterness mingled therewith. Thou wast then engaged with dear, faithful, lowly-minded Ann Baker; in my little measure I loved you then; and I cherish the hope that, in the school of experience, my best love increases, with the increase of my union and fellowship with

the long-trying, faithful labourers, in the present day of sifting, and of deep plunges, even as in the pit of darkness, tumult and dismay. Well, dear J. & S. Grubb, is it not a marvellous mercy, that, as a people, we are not forsaken! Prophets and prophetesses are yet raised up among us. May these go on in the strength of the Lord. Accept this my poor offering of affection in the seventy-eighth year of my pilgrimage, and permit me to add, that with reverence and heart-contriting thankfulness, I acknowledge the mercy that united me to a religious people, whose genuine principles of faith in Christ Jesus, as a Mediator, a sacrifice for sin, and reconciler to God the Father, through justification and sanctification, is fully satisfying to every faculty of my soul, as the glad tidings of salvation.

Farewell, friends beloved in the fellowship of the Gospel,

MARY CAPPER."

To M. S.

"Birmingham, 6th mo. 7th, 1832.

MY KIND FRIEND,

How inexpressible is the privilege of a retired apartment, in the very midst of contention; how privileged we, as a Society are, if we keep within the limits of our religious profession.

I think that "Hancock's Principles of Peace," exemplified in the conduct of the Society in Ireland, in 1798, cannot be too attentively and generally read. Whatever may be the result of the unsettled state of nations, kings and kingdoms, there is a ruling Power, above every other power. May this be our help and our shield. Poor devoted Paris! after the destructive pestilence, follows the more destructive desolation of sword and bloodshed. O! for an interceding, praying spirit, for ourselves and for others, that a sure place of refuge may be known."

TO THE SAME.

"Birmingham, 8th mo. 16th, 1832.

I attended our Quarterly Meeting held at Shipstone; we were favoured with the company of some choice, ministering friends; John Dymond and wife, &c. &c. Shipstone is a small meeting; I profess myself a lover of society, and I think there is an advantage, especially to the young, in living more in a body together; though no earthly situation is secure from the venom of sin; nor is there a solitude which excludes a Saviour's redeeming love. I was absent longer than I had anticipated, as I felt a little bound, if I may so say, to attend the meeting still annually held at Armscot, a village not far from Tredington. I accompanied dear Sarah Lamley; she is well-known and highly esteemed among the villagers thereaway; and she seems peculiarly qualified to preach in plain, searching language to them. A very large crowded meeting there was. I was also at the small meetings at Camden, Brails, &c. The overshadowing of Mercy is to be experienced everywhere. O! how it would flow, did every heart watch and pray.

MARY CAPPER."

To C. C.

"Birmingham, 10th mo. 2nd, 1832.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am concerned to hear that thou art suffering, and I believe it will interest thy affectionate feelings, to learn, that I am again in the school of reduction, I hope not in displeasure, but for my profit and purification. What can we do better, my precious friend, than resign body, soul and spirit to the Power that formed

us, and who best knows how to fit and prepare us for a glorious inheritance.

Cloudy days and an oppressive atmosphere may be our portion, in our pilgrimage journey, and I was thinking that we may even look for boisterous gales at times; but in our case, they may only be permitted, I trust, to sweep away the chaff, leaving the substantial grain to be gathered in security.

Accept the unfeigned love of

MARY CAPPER."

To S. H.

"12th mo. 18th, 1832.

DEAR S. H.

Thou art very often in my affectionate thoughts; and this morning more especially, as my heart was tendered before the Lord, I thought of thee, with something like the interest of a Christian Mother. It is obvious that thy health is precarious, a consideration that must be trying to a young man, in the opening day of human life, with the prospect of a settlement, as to a maintenance. But, dear Samuel, the Power that mars these prospects, can provide better things, for his children and people, though seen through a glass darkly. Bear in mind, that however kind and even amiable, any may be by nature, there must be a change of heart experienced, termed in Scripture a new birth, or new spiritual creation, through the secret operation of Divine Grace in the soul. My measure of experience disposes me to feel tenderly for those in whom this work is begun, because I am aware that it must be carried forward through humiliations and close provings and searchings of heart. Nature has her strong holds; but be not discouraged though the triumph of Grace be a great work. The Divine Power is above every

other power, and can complete as well as begin that which is our sanctification. I know there are times when our faith is so weak that we can scarcely read and understand the Scriptures; this is no new thing; our prayers too may seem unavailing, and clouds of thick darkness may appear to envelope us; but we must persevere in earnest, wrestling prayer, though it may only be with sighs, and conflict unutterable. And dear Samuel, I would say, enter into no disputations.

Thy affectionate friend,

MARY CAPPER."

To ———.

"12th mo. 26th, 1832.

I seem gratefully constrained to acknowledge thy cordial Christian Salutation; how inexpressibly precious is Christian fellowship! it is a feeling which has no fellow. My heart was tendered in reading thy lines, at a time when the pure life was low, though I may thankfully say it is yet preserved. No marvel if there is a secret sense of sorrow for the too general prevalence of spiritual deadness, and for our own imperfect views of heavenly things, the ways of our God being past our finding out. But when the redeemed, sanctified soul shall be unclothed of the frail body, then shall we know as we are known, of Him who purchased salvation for us. Great and glorious is the new and living way which He has cast up for faithful believers to walk in. When pondering these things, all that is spiritually alive within me seems to be humbled and contrited, under a sense of the infinite condescension that has turned my feet into this blessed way."

MARY CAPPER."

To K. B.

“ Birmingham, 4th mo. 4th, 1833.

I do not say short and evil have been the days of my sojourn, though ignorance and folly have had their share therein. Never did I view heavenly mercy, free and pardoning Grace, brought to light by our Redeemer and Saviour, more clearly, more consolingly, than in these times of strippings, when self has not a rag to clothe itself with. I believe that those are not our most favoured moments wherein the subtlety of self can take a part; but that when the good leaven is deeply hidden, it works the designed end.”

To J. AND S. GRUBB.

“ Birmingham, 5th mo. 24th, 1833.

MY DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

Contenders for the faith, or the Truth, as it is in Jesus! still ye are called to labour, the end not being yet, when the faithful shall receive their full hire. At this time of renewed exercise, you are again fresh in my remembrance; there is fellowship in the lowly valley of humiliation, however differing in degree and circumstances.

In my solitude, may I say it with reverence, a spark of spiritual life is mercifully kept from total obscurity, though death and darkness seem, at times, to hover round me. O! the mercy that glimmers, or arises out of darkness. Surely our Heavenly Father deals gently with the feeble of the flock. I can bear my testimony to His protecting power, the internal evidence, manifested in the soul. O! how it checks, how it teaches, how it guides from childhood to the oldest age, just according to

our state, obedience opening the way to an enlargement of spiritual understanding. Marvellous are the Lord's dealings with his humbled, patient believing children. O! that there was a believing heart in every child of man; there would be no need to puzzle and bewilder the mind, in things too high for us; secret things would be left to the Lord. I am set much as a solitary one, though in the bosom of kind friends. Shall I be presumptuous if I record, with feelings of great seriousness, that my prevailing exercise in this my latter day, is secret, wrestling prayer, oft on the bended knees, in my quiet, secluded chamber. My spirit craves for more evident marks of godly simplicity among the Quakers, so called. I am one of those who mark the boasted 'March of intellect' with a jealous fear. The refinements of our day seem, in my view, to draw the mind from under the cross of Christ. According to my observation, we are not the plain, unfashionable people that, if faithful, we should be; we are too generally intermingled with the manners and maxims of the times. Everlasting Mercy can yet turn and overturn, and settle a faithful people.

Farewell, dear friends, subjoins

MARY CAPPER.”

To C. B. C.

“ Birmingham, 5th mo. 31st, 1833.

MY KINDLY AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

As I sit solitary, and contemplate the close of time, the mind being measurably free from care as to this life (which with thankfulness I may record is mercifully my allotment) the thoughts of the heart take a wide range, and I think of my fellow-probationers, in their diversified circumstances. If

there were not a heavenly pilot, through storms and clouds, what should we do? The most skilful human mariner could not steer the vessel aright, nor save her from wreck.

I think, with tender sympathy of thee, and of thy dear parents in their suffering; but there is the consoling evidence of the building being on the sure foundation, the Rock of Salvation, that cannot fail; though the body be dissolved, the redeemed soul will return to God, as a glorified spirit. There is strong consolation for the humble believer, in the unalterable mercies which are in Christ Jesus; though bereavements are permitted, and we are left to mourn, but not without hope, nor even without, at seasons, a transient view, as it were, of the glorious mansions prepared for those who have held fast their confidence in redeeming love and power, unto the end of the Christian warfare. Accept the grateful acknowledgment of the love of

Thy oft-obliged friend,

MARY CAPPER."

FROM SARAH GRUBB TO M. CAPPER.

"Stoke Newington, 6th mo. 10th, 1833.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Thy salutation of love by letter is precious to us, as the long-continued friendship thou hast evinced has always been. How encouraging it is to see those who made many sacrifices in early life, for the Truth's sake, not satisfied to rest in past experience even of the Lord's goodness, but as those who remember that 'He that thinketh he knoweth anything, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know;' and even in old age are concerned to go on learning of Him who said, 'I am meek and lowly in heart.' I am glad that thou canst so fully subscribe to the

'Anointing, which is truth and no lie;' the Unction from the Holy One, as an internal evidence, manifested in the soul. What shall we do if we suffer ourselves to be drawn from this blessed Spirit of the Saviour of men, or from the measure thereof, which is given to all for our profit! Where, but within our own hearts shall we find the Comforter and the safe Guide? Surely the holy Scriptures direct us to Christ! * * * The Scriptures came by inspiration of God; yet, in my view, the same inspiration must be with us, to give us to comprehend their spiritual meaning and application. The natural man, even though he may compare Scripture with Scripture, and acknowledge to their harmony, is nevertheless the natural or unregenerate man still, without the operation of the Spirit in his soul, even that grace which is the Divine gift to all men, and which I conceive brings all, who adhere to it, into a converted state, whether they be favoured with the inspired writings which tell of the blessed and holy Redeemer, or whether they be ignorant of them. Must it not be our experience, in order to partake of the benefit of the sufferings and death of Christ, to be brought into obedience unto righteousness? and what can do this for us but the Power of God immediately made known to us by the inward revelation thereof? In short, my dear friend, I feel alarmed in seeing that we, as a community, are in great danger of leaning to the understanding of man; and that for want of trusting in the Lord with all the heart, we are intermingling indeed with that which is not distinguished by gospel simplicity, but which has a tendency to bring us to be satisfied with many things, out of which, as a people, we were brought by a strong hand, and a stretched out arm, which delivered from the iron hand of cruel persecution, as well as from all false dependence in religion. All will not, however, thus return, either to the maxims or customs of the world, or to the beggarly elements, to be again brought into bondage; a precious seed remaineth, and will remain, however hidden, where the real life of the crucified Immanuel will be