

Calendar of Letters, 1742-1831.

(Continued from page 186.)

59. 1794. May 6.

From JOHN SUTCLIFF (Olney) to L. BUTTERWORTH (Evesham).

"I have consulted our people and so far as I can judge for myself there is no encouragement to visit us with the hope of obtaining assistance,"—i.e., for the cause at Evesham.

60. 1794. Aug. 12.

From ANDREW FULLER to SUTCLIFF (Olney).

The first part is largely a resumé of letter 56 (Carey to B.M.S.). Fuller has collected £300. In a further note at the close, Fuller says that he got "another hand" to write the resumé, and states that he has sent them £60—making £210 in all. Mentions death of Miss Wallis and hopeless sickness of Mrs. Fidgen.

61. 1794. Sep. 8.

From SAM. MEDLEY (Liverpool) to LAURENCE BUTTERWORTH (Evesham).

Commending "My young friend John Phillips," going to Evesham for his health, and requesting permission for him to commune with them.

62. 1794. Nov. 3.

From ABRAHAM BOOTH (London) to ———.

Re Mr. Pearce—"I cannot by any means encourage his going abroad as a missionary"—although he believes "the turn of his heart to be strongly for promoting the honour of Xt. &c." He refers to some confidential matter before the Socy. which "should be kept in the breasts of as few as possible." He has received a letter from Carey in Bengal which "contains some unpleasant things relative to the imprudence of *Mr. John Thomas*, his colleague." He fears it will discourage contributions to the Mission. "I take it that Mr. Carey has informed the Socy. of the same things." He regrets that he cannot be at the meeting at Northampton. "The Lord look upon Mr.

[? Tr]inder, and have mercy on the Church!" (perhaps a clue as to receiver?).

63. 1794. Dec. 6.

From JOHN THOMAS (Moypauldiggy) to Rev. A. BOOTH (London).

Mr. Robt. Udney and his wife drowned in the Ganges. Mr. Udney, of Malda, invited Carey and Thomas and gave them both charge of indigo works. They are busy now, therefore, but for a great part of the year they will have leisure "for other studies," when they will pursue their "original plan with more activity." "I think it is a very great thing I am getting out of debt and we both hope to become helpers of our good Socy." Mr. Carey has lost his third son. "We have plenty of this world's goods (all of us)." He expects Udney will go home early in 1796, and "He intends to make each of us a proprietor of a fourth part of the manufactory, and we shall certainly have it in our own power (I had almost said) to do as much good." He then goes on to say that spiritually "at present matters are very low with me. . . . O, for some reviving in this dearthy hole of the world." "Everything is dead and faint around us except our outward prosperity." Ram Boshoo is with Carey.

64. 1795. Mar. 21.

From D. TURNER (Abingdon) to Mr. STEADMAN (Broughton, Hants.).

Thanks for pamphlets re Indian Mission which came via Mr. Bicheno. In strong sympathy with it. Encloses some of his own pamphlets "to awaken the drowsy professors of religion." Mentions: Mary Steele, Jos. Tomkins.

65. 1795. Mar. 30.

From A. BOOTH (London) to FULLER (Kettering).

Acknowledges a packet from Fuller, and says that he submitted it to Timothy Thomas; and also to Mr. Dore, Mr. Keene, and Mr. Giles, asking for their opinion on "the deliberations of the Committee." The result of Dore, Keene and Giles' deliberations is given in full under—"It is our Opinion"—followed by 8 points, and signed by them (i.e., reproduced in this letter). In short, their "opinions" are: Carey and Thomas have cut themselves off from the Socy. by their secular employment; strongly disapprove of T.'s discharging his own debts from public funds; "the Socy. is now without a missionary at all"; and on this ground disapproves of the Committee's letter to T. and C.; they refer to "an offer

made by Mr. B." and would turn it down; they agree that another mission should be started and recommend Africa; for the avoiding of prejudice against missions take as little notice as possible of the C. and T. affair.

Booth goes on to say that he himself agrees with the above "opinions," unless "Carey has some reasons for his conduct of which I am entirely ignorant." He would be "averse to sending Mr. B. or any other person to India." He refers to the report of the Sierra Leone Director, and thinks *two* should be sent there; and agrees with a suggestion of Mr. Ryland, that if not two ministers, then one and "a private instructor or schoolmaster" might be sent. Booth hopes the Committee will be guided in its deliberations.

[This letter is an interesting revelation of the disillusionment and disappointment at home. Mr. Keene may be Robert, the precentor at Carter Lane, composer of the tune Geard; he seems to have lived at Walworth; it is not known how he was related to Robert Keen, friend of Whitefield in 1770. Mr. Giles was apparently another London layman. Was "Mr. B." Thomas Blundel of Arnesby? Pages 93-96 of the Periodical Accounts show how loyal the Committee was in public to Thomas and Carey.]

66. 1796. Apr. 25.

From J. GRIGG (Freetown, Sierra Leone) to SUTCLIFF (Olney).

Written on board just as the ship is about to leave. Thanks S. "You were the only person who thought on me." Answers an enquiry of S.'s re Paedo-baptist Mission—and says that Mr. Dawes leaves Freetown to lead in that Socy. Gives a long account of the Foulah Mission. It has failed because of alarms of a French landing. But that is all to the good, "for more unfit persons could not be found." There are constant fierce quarrellings—"one named Evans called the other a Damned Villain"—and knives were often drawn. They are all going home. Mentions a Mr. Giles, "an exceedingly good young man," amongst them. Mentions that Mr. Rodway has been ill. A "Mr. Garvin here" wishes to become a missionary. "Speak to Mr. Horne concerning him." Remembrances to Mrs. Wyke, of Northampton.

NOTE: Between the lines of this letter is written another letter to Sutcliff. "This letter was brought to me last night by Governor Dawes; it was unsealed, therefore I read it." Commends the aforementioned Garvin, who is a "Weslean." Refers to "my letter (to Fuller) from Exeter re a mission in Cornwall." States that Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Birt think "the

fields are white" there, and therefore the purpose is for Steadman and Saffery to make a two months' tour. They will be supplied in absence by Mr. Davis (late assistant at Lyme) and Mr. Franklin, "a student here." The signature is "Cordially yours—You know who." This second letter is plainly from Dr. Ryland, from the handwriting, and from the fact that Sutcliff gives the dates that he answered both "Grigg and Ryland."

[Sierra Leone was much attracting missionary thought. Two sets of negroes had been taken thither, slaves who had sided with Britain in the revolutionary war 1776-83, and others who had awhile been in Nova Scotia. Among them were some Baptist preachers, and even a Baptist church. The Sierra Leone Company was chartered in 1791 to oppose the slave trade, to establish commercial factories, to build Freetown. The second Governor was William Dawes, once of the Royal Marines, with experience of the convict settlement in Australia. Garvin was a schoolmaster sent out about 1794. The coming of Grigg and Rodway, from which the B.M.S. hoped much, led to nothing, as they soon returned. Baptist life in the colony is indigenous. The "exceedingly good young man" named Giles was in the band of Methodists which had been reporting to Dr. Coke from 1792. The one good result of Grigg and Rodway's visit was to win this William Giles to Baptist life. His career was set forth in Vol. IV. at page 333.]

67. 1797. Feb. 24.

From JOHN PALMER (Fleet St.) to Mr. STEADMAN (Broughton).

Palmer is lecturing and preaching in London (apparently collecting money). "The Londoners have no mercy on country ministers but would have them preach themselves to death." Asks Mr. Steadman to take a month at his church, as "you would not be so far off when at Northampton." Speaks of S's, possibly going to settle at Northampton, but trusts not because it is a "mixed communion"; and he adds "how you would like Bristol I know not." Refers to the death of Mrs. Timothy Thomas, and of Mr. Keene of Walworth, a deacon of Mr. Dore's. Tells of a "split" at Walworth, and some have taken an old meeting house of Wesley's, and are ministered to by Mr. Downes, whom "I baptise next week." Says a Committee has been chosen to reconsider the conditions of Village preaching. Things in London are gloomy—"There is much talk of an invasion." Mentions: Mr. Sharpe, Flint (preaching at Stennett's old church at Wild St.), Mr. Harrison (Shifnal), Mr.

Abraham Webster (Broxley), and Mr. Martin ("has received the *regnum donum* money").

[John Palmer was authorised by the Baptist Case Committee to collect for Shrewsbury in 1796; this letter shows him taking that permission liberally; he secured £172, as against Slaithwaite £76, Weston £70, Ebenezer £45, and Collingham £36. The church had been left in a sad way by William Smith, who left for Eagle Street in 1788. Palmer was ordained in April 1796 by Pearce Harrison and Steadman. The Walworth split seems to have been evanescent; but William Downes borrowed the baptistery at Worship Street in 1799 for seven converts; his later work lay at Sheffield, Truro, Kidderminster, Evesham. The Committee for Village Preaching did well; it is connected with the Home Missionary Society, the oldest of the three societies which unitedly form the Baptist Union. Palmer worked under its auspices during 1798 in the border counties of Wales and England. The next letter tells of work promoted in Devon and Cornwall.]

.68. 1797. Oct. 17.

From I. BIRT (Dock) to Mr. STEADMAN (Broughton).

Re Mr. Steadman's coming to Dock as joint-pastor with Birt. "Mr. Taylor has left me and gone to Plymouth Tabernacle." The question of *priority* of regeneration or faith need not stand in the way. The Church is in "greatest harmony," and "I now fully reckon on your coming to Dock." Birt has been on an "excursion to Cornwall"—with Mr. Gibbs to Truro. Had baptisms at Penzance.

A.P.S. says that a select committee "*unanimously agree*" to recommend S. to co-pastorate. Further states "Church at Saltash is closed on Lord's Days." Birt has another son.

69. 1797. Nov. 17.

From SAM PEARCE to Dr. RYLAND (Bristol).

P. in bad health. A very devotional letter. Sympathises deeply with Ryland in the "trials of your present situation." Mentions: Rodway (in Africa); Coxhead; and Franklin. Also P. says he is doing a "Missionary Socy. History."

A postscript asks for Ryland's copy of "Carey to Mr. Newton."

70. 1797. Nov. 21.

From Mr. J. SAFFERY (Salisbury) to STEADMAN (Broughton).

Mostly about receiving supplies of Steadman's sermons.

71. 1798. May 1.

From JOSEPH STENNETT (Bampton, Oxon.), to G. PUDNER (Fleet St.).

S. anticipates his ordination. Would like P. to be there, at Bampton. Also expects Mr. and Mrs. Benwell. "Mr. Booth is to address me, and Mr. B. Francis the people." Wishes he were nearer that he "could take a pipe and enjoy an hour's conversation." Refers to putting up a gravestone for his father at Bunhill Fields and mentions that his father was ordained in 1758, and was married forty-five years. Speaks of the terrible state of public affairs.

[This Joseph is fifth of the name, son of Samuel of Wild Street, who was son of Joseph D.D. of Wild Street, who was son of Joseph the Seventh-day man of Pinners' Hall, who was son of Edward of Wallingford. His cousin Joseph the fourth had succeeded his uncle Joseph the third, M.A., at Coate. Bampton did not rank as a separate church, and this letter suggests that cousin Joseph had died, and he was keeping up the dynasty.]

72. 1798. July 23.

From THOMAS EYRE (Launceston) to STEADMAN (Plymouth Dock).

Re Sam Fisher, of St. Stephen's ("a mile from this place"), and suggests S. goes to Mr. Lewis for his religious character, at whose meeting he has been attending. He states that he himself has been preaching at Bennicott and Massey regularly. A note by S. on the back says, "A very valuable man. The only wise Baptist at Launceston. Cousin to Mr. Eyre of Hackney."

[In July 1797, Steadman, with young Franklin of Bristol Academy, started a second tour of Cornwall. Franklin started at Launceston, Bennicott and Stratton. On the return in August, both went to "the Baptist meeting" in Launceston, but had to use the town hall also. As no Lewis was flourishing at this time in neighbouring Baptist circles, Fisher had apparently been a Paedo-baptist, and/or the Baptist cause was recent.]

73. No date given.

From JOHN RYLAND to STEADMAN (Broughton).

Re Northampton. Taylor has been there some weeks and R. hears "they are a good deal pleased with him," but does not know whether he will go there. Is fixing up S. to go there Ap. 26. Mentions several books, e.g., "Hopkins on New Birth," Edwards' Miscellanies, and gives a long account of a letter from a friend (Feb. 3, 1795) in which he gives a long criticism of Dr.

Gill's views on Justification; and R. further refers to "Mr. Hall's sermon at Mr. Moreton's Ordination" in which he "defends eternal justification by distinguishing between the *immanent* and *transcendent* acts of God."

[After Ryland left Bristol in 1793, there was an interregnum at Northampton for five years. Henry Taylor went to Birmingham.]

74. 1799. May 3.

From BROADMEAD CHURCH to Church at MUDNABATTEE (or elsewhere in the province of Bengal).

Commending Mr. and Mrs. Marshman, Mr. Grant and Mr. Brunson. Speaks of Mrs. Brunson also, as having resided in Bristol, but a member at Fairford. Marshman had frequently spoken in Conference, and Brunson had been under Sutcliff at Olney. Speaks proudly of the Socy. and says "we shall count it an honour that from us so many of this small number have gone forth." "We solemnly wish them God-speed and have set apart this evening to pray for their safe voyage." Signed by JOHN RYLAND, Pastor.

75. 1799. Nov. 29.

From T. THOMAS (Crowes Road) to PARTIC. BAP. FUND (London).

Petition for assistance. Has "afflicted wife and 5 children," and supports himself with a school.

[Apparently Thomas Thomas, younger son of Timothy, the third of his family at Pershore, but since 1787 pastor of the ordinary Baptist church which hired Mill Yard for Sunday from the Seventh-day owners. He took his school to Peckham, and became in 1813 one of the first secretaries of the Baptist Union.]

76. 1800. Jan. 2.

From D. TAYLOR (Mile End Road) to Mr. JOSEPH FREESTONE (Hinkley).

Encloses a "printed statement" (does not say what it is), and asks for money. Hopes to raise £70 "in these parts," and asks F. that it be read before his Church.

[The circular was probably the prospectus of the Academy which Taylor started for the General Baptists, which ended its days at Nottingham this century.]

77. 1800. Apr. 25.

From WILLIAM CAREY, JOHN FOUNTAIN, JOSHUA

MARSHMAN, WILLIAM WARD, and DANIEL BRUNSDON, all of Serampore, being the first of the Quarterly Public Letters.

They have agreed to write four Public Letters a year, to be compiled by each in rotation and signed by all. They have been living in the noise "of axes and hammers, but now our business of this kind is drawing to a close." Having bought a house, they have erected a verandah on it for a schoolhouse. Gives details of an Expenses Account for £829 11s. 6d. School will be opened on May 1st. Asks for more money. States that translating, revising Scriptures, preaching and learning the language have gone on. Printing too—Brunsdon has compiled some hymns and Marshman has compiled a schoolbook. They hope soon to begin the Bengali Bible. They find *binding* also necessary, which soon they hope to do. They bless God for the move to Serampore, for not only do they hold services for Europeans, but Carey and Fountain are doing much preaching in the streets and villages. All are well. "We consecrated yesterday as a Day of Thanksgiving" . . . "the business of the day was done in the following manner"—

(Briefly). Services at 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. Also *agreed*—

1. Sister Brunsdon be permitted Communion until her dismissal arrives from Fairford.
2. Carey be pastor, and Fountain and Marshman the two deacons.
3. Communion be the first Sunday in every month.

Another meeting at 4 p.m. at which addresses were read from the B.M.S. Committee (May 7, 1799), Pearce (letter), and Booth. From this meeting a letter of appreciation was sent to the "Governor of this settlement" (Col. Bie). At 8 p.m. Carey preached on "Rejoicing in Hope." The letter next states that the Governor was impressed with the address. Glad to have good news of home, and particularly gratified at the generosity of the Scottish brethren. Grieved at the capture of the "Duff" with missionaries aboard.

78. 1801. Jan. 13.

From WILLIAM GRANT (Chandry). No receiver stated.

(re Wm. Grant—an outside note on the letter says, "This is an English gentleman akin, I believe, to Mr. Chas. Grant.")

Regrets to hear of Fountain's death. The receiver is plainly (a) Settled in India—e.g. "You have been literally in death off since your arrival in India." (b) Does printing—"I suppose you are printing the Everlasting Gospel."—"We have received 20

copies of Matthew's Gospel and shall be glad when you can send us more."

The natives now begin to hear and *read* of Xt. in their own tongue, yet Instructors are still necessary. "It will be a great loss if your Society does not strengthen the Mission," for "the Govt. do not appear against the settling of missionaries," and every attempt so far "must have surpassed sanguine expectations." Regrets that in the 40 years of Britain's possession of Bengal "no single attempt has been made by those in power to spread the knowledge of the True God." Asks about "Your School" and sends remembrances to Mr. Carey.

79. 1801. Jun. 10.

From J. WYKE (Leominster) to Mr. WM. STEADMAN (Plymouth Dock).

States that S's father is dying (possibly means his wife's father because he says that S's mother-*in-law's* time is taken up in waiting on him). Mrs. Thomas of Eardisland has been able to get them parish assistance. Gives an account of the prices of commodities, and discourses at length on the necessity of *faith* in these difficult times. Speaks of the Leominster Church and mentions several names: Benjamin and Betty Havard, Hannah Bevan, Mrs. Thomas. The Asscn. was this year at Shrewsbury, and Mr. Palmer drew up the Circular Letter. The Bewdley Church have lost their minister, Mr. Williams (gone to London), and the Ryeford Church their's—Mr. Williams, of Ross (gone to Mitchell Dean)—"both for want of better support." Mentions Mr. Bradley in charge of Coleford, and Mr. Flint, of Shortwood. Mentions death of Grant and Fountain. Mr. Llewellyn is publishing a work on the Divine inspiration of the Bible.

[Wyke was of a good family, Isaac having been surgeon and ruling elder at Leominster till his death in 1755. The minister now was Samuel Kilpin. George Williams of Bewdley had come from Wolverhampton, whither he returned; he may conceivably be the man who settled at Waddesdon Hill 1809, joined the Bristol Fund 1817, died 1828. James Williams, ordained at Ryeford 1785, settled at Kingstanley 1800 and died 1818. Benjamin Francis of Shortwood had died 1799; Flint worked later at Uley, Gloucester, Weymouth, dying 1820. Bradley may be the W. Bradley who tried to settle at Evesham 1808, then had three troubled years at Hackney, and was in the Oxford Association 1817. This Llewellyn is not Dr. Thomas who died in 1793, but William of Leominster who had published on baptism in 1790; his work on Inspiration has escaped notice.]

(To be continued.)