Yorkshire and Lancashire Association
Minutes, June, 1764.

The Yorkshire and Lancashire Association met from 21st-23rd September, 1695, at Barnoldswick. The minutes were recorded in the church book, from which they were printed in 1913 for the Lancashire and Cheshire Association in Baptists of North-West England, which was circulated to members of our Society. It is possible that the first meeting, at which the constitution was formulated, was held in the preceding June, for the September minutes lead off: "At the Associated meeting," and speaks of "the Association" as already in being; yet it seems to complete a statement of order, and annexes "general conclusions" as to conduct.

In 1695 such organisation was going on over all England, on the recommendation of an assembly held in London 1691. There, and then, only six northern churches were known:—Newcastle, Bitchburn (now Hamsterley, Rowley & Blackhill), Pontefract, (Great) Broughton, Egremont (known later as Whitehaven), and Woolverstone (now Hawkshead Hill). The churches at Manchester, under Roger Worthington, at Warrington (with members at Liverpool) under Thomas Lowe, at Mottram and Warford under Francis Turner, at Bradford under Thomas Walker, and at Stokesley, if it still existed, were too scattered to organise. All of these were of the war period, and under William and Mary there was quite a new atmosphere.

William Mitchell, of Heptonstall, had begun his life work as an evangelist about 1684, and was soon imprisoned at Goodshaw and at York. When persecution ended, he registered his meeting-places, which by 1691 exceeded a score. Next year his cousin, David Crosley, was baptized at Bromsgrove, and came to understand the Baptist system of organisation by churches in an Association; this he urged, and persuaded Mitchell. As a result, we find in 1695 an Association, which has now had continuous life for over 240 years. In 1719 it met at Rawden, and the important measures of reorganisation then adopted were printed in the 1913 book. During the eighteenth century there were troubles as to doctrine, and in 1757 Liverpool saw another important meeting, when the Association repudiated hyper-Calvinism and the exceptional views of the talented John Johnson. James Hargreaves, in 1816, printed extracts from the minutes of this meeting.

Another turning point was in 1786, for, at the meetings in Preston, it was decided to adopt the forward policy initiated
by Robert Hall, of Arnesby, and Andrew Fuller, of Kettering. John Fawcett was asked to prepare an address on the *Privileges and Duties of Gospel Churches*, which might be adopted as a Circular Letter, and circulated in print, with the minutes of the 1787 meeting at Colne. Fifty years later, when the Association had swollen so that there were 8,721 members in Yorkshire alone, and it was not yet discerned how railways were linking up all towns, it was decided that the Association, which had been one from 1695 till 1837, must henceforth divide into east and west.

The early records were all in manuscript. The minutes were generally entered in the church book of the place of meeting: the circular letter was dictated, and a copy made for each church, whether represented at the meeting or not. Many have been collected, and unpublished records are known; but they seldom merit printing. There are exceptions, and Mr. James S. Hardman, of Cloughfold, has discovered at Goodshaw, a beautifully-written exercise book, headed "Minute Book of Old Goodshaw Chapel, 1764", containing the minutes and letter sent to that church in June, 1764, from the Association meeting at Halifax. Nine churches had been represented. The most flourishing was Goodshaw itself, with fourteen baptisms, and preparations for a new meeting-house. Bradford was a good second, with eleven; one had been cut off, one restored; there were two gifted brethren, of whom one had just been spared to succeed the late Brother Smith, at Wainsgate. This place shared with Oakenshaw the distinction of having had no baptisms; but Bamford was going to alter matters there, and transfer the centre to Accrington. At bottom, in every sense, was Whitehaven, which had had no baptisms, a dispute with Scotch Seceders, and a member cut off.

Wainsgate is the real point of interest. It was due to the revival of which Richard Grimshaw, clergyman at Haworth, was the indefatigable local leader, preaching twice each week-day. One of his converts was Richard Smith, who joined the church at Barnoldswick, where David Crosley had been pastor in 1694. His work as a local preacher was so successful that a small meeting-house was dug out, the earth thrown outward to heighten the walls, and in this primitive place the people of Wainsgate and Wadsworth proposed to organise a new church, with Richard Smith as teacher. The Association approved, and in 1750 a roll of members was drawn up. Young William Crabtree was third, and three years later he was called to head a new church at Bradford, formed of members hitherto on the roll of those who had worshipped under the Buckstone at Rawden Cliff. At Bradford was an apprentice named John Fawcett, sixteen
years old when George Whitefield arrived one Sunday and preached to 10,000 people; he trudged over to Birstel and was one of 20,000. Several hundred people, singing and praising God, rode back with Whitefield to Leeds, leaving young Fawcett quickened to new life. Grimshaw was the nearest clergyman of this type, and Fawcett was built up by him, attending communion regularly at Haworth, and occasionally going to Ewood Hall, where Grimshaw’s son farmed and lent his barn for the father to preach in. In Bradford there was no dissenting church, no evangelical preaching, till Crabtree came, and encouraged the Baptists to build a meeting-house. Young John attended, was won, and on March 11th, 1758, was baptized and welcomed to fellowship. At the age of 19, he married another member, as his articles were expiring and he could set up for himself or become a journeyman. They quickly established a meeting in their house, and he was soon enlisted in church work. His diary shows how carefully he read; at the age of 22 he was at work on Hebrew, and had been urged by the church to speak at Little Horton. He took notes of all visiting preachers, and used them in his private meeting at home, so gaining confidence and practice. Early in 1764 he had two invitations; to go and help John Oulton, senior at Liverpool, to succeed Richard Smith at Wainsgate. As the latter had been upset by John Johnson, he considered his duty to settle in his own county and steady the infant church, where he took up his abode on May 9th, 1764. Thus the minutes of the Association that year show John Fawcett just setting his hand to the plough.

The minutes here reprinted, verbatim, literatim et punctatim, show how the meeting concentrated on spiritual life, not on machinery. Many questions were propounded, and the discussions are fully reported. It may seem rather academic to debate at such length on the difference between Faith and Hope; but that helped to show how advisable it was to have an Academy for the purpose; and Fawcett was destined to found such, in Ewood Hall, and at Brearley Hall, till he persuaded others to join in a permanent Northern Baptist Education Society. A long discussion on private meetings showed how important these were; and the agenda suggested might well be adopted to-day; out of such a Christian home within the last seven years there is now growing a new community on a new estate, with a fine new building. Whether we should agree to-day that Sunday meals should be cold, and that children should be compelled to come to service, is somewhat doubtful; but the Association did not stifle debate. Indeed it had to adjourn many more questions to the August session, due at Liverpool.

W. T. WHITLEY.
The Minutes of an Association held at Halifax May ye 30 & 31 1764.—To the Baptized Chh. of Xt. meeting for public Worship at Goodn Shaw under the Pastoral Care of Mr. To" Nuttal may, every divine Gift, & spiritual Favour be multiplied—Dear Brethren, as I am appointed by the Ministers and other Mefsenders of the Chhs. convened at the Association held at the above mention’d Place and Time, to lay before you the Procefs of the Work then attended to; be pleas’d to take the following Account of it.

1st

The Meeting being open’d with Singing, & solemn Prayer by Brother Crabtree, the State of the Chhs. represented by their Letters as follows.

1st. The Letter from ye Chh. at Halifax was read which signified that they had been favour’d with some singular Mercies since their last Épistle of this Nature; particularly with unexpected Succefs in Reference to their Meeting-House, upon the Erection of w." their Hearts were so much set, and w." they judged, the Prosperity of their little Zion, and the Honour of their Redeemer were very nearly concern’d; That their Pastor, after receiving various and multiplied Favours, when seeking the Bounty of well disposed Persons, in distant Places, in order for helping forward their House of God, had been return’d to them in Peace and Safety, from whose Lips they had again heard the important Precepts of the divine Law, and the precious Truths of the Gospel advanced, with no lefs Satisfaction, Comfort, & Edification, as they hoped, than in Years past. That Sabaths are precious Seasons to some of them at times, tho’ in the general they have Occation to Complain of their spiritual Leannefs, of the Coldnefs of their Love to the Gospel, Person, and Ordinances of X." notwithstanding their being so highly favour’d: w." they intimate, they do not wonder at, Considering their many Transgrefsions against the God of their Felicity. They think they are in some Measure sensible of their Back slidings, and desirous of being turn’d from them, of making a better Improvement of the Means of Grace, as well as of striving together for the Faith of the Gospel and the Discipline of God’s House. And say that their Auditory is Moderate on’ Lord’s Days, and that they are more at Peace among themselves than ever they have been since they were form’d into a Church &c.

NB. All the Additions, Separations &c. respecting the Chhs. in this Association, will be mention’d together or in one Sum.
The Letter from ye Chh. at Goodshaw was read Expressing a Desire that the divine Presence might attend ye Messengers of the Chhs. in their assembling together at ye Association held here, the 30th and 31st of May, 64. that Wisdom & Prudence might be afforded 'em, for the Dispatch of such Business as they might be call'd unto; That God might be glorified in all; A Redeemers Interest advanced; Brotherly Love promoted, and Peace and Unity among the Chhs. maintain'd, supported and encreas'd: That Meetings of this Kind may be continued to the latest Posterity, in order that Difficult Cases of Conscience may be resolv'd for Edification and ye Increase of spiritual Knowledge. It also intimates, that it is w.th a singular Pleasure they wou'd acquaint their Christian Brethren, of this steady Attachment to the Truths of the Gospel, and close Attendance to the Discipline of God's House; that the removal of their Meeting-Place, hath been attended w.th a Blessing, & made a Means of strengthening the Interest of X't. supported by them. That the Ministrations of God's Word to them, has been blefs'd for their Edification, growth in Grace, and encrease of divine Knowledge, and to the Conviction & as they hope, ye real Conversion of many Souls. That their Public Meetings hath been well attended; their Preparation Meetings not neglected, each filling up his Place with a good Degree of Regularity: But that their private Meetings are not so well regarded as they cou'd wish, tho' they have no Reason to complain, That they are all peaceable, & harmoniously agreed together, except some Persons in one Family only. That some of them are alive to spiritual Things, love Holiness, delight in Duty, and have the Presence of God amongst them &c. For w.th Favours, they desire all the Chhs. to join with them in thankful Strains—But notwithstanding all these Mercies, they intimate that they have Reason to complain of too much Ingratitude & Unthankfulness, Hardness of Heart, Carnality & worldly Mindedness: Of Backwardness to Duty: Of neglects in private Devotion, of Pride & Haughtiness: Of Unbelief & Murmuring, for the Removal of which Evils, and ye Conveyance of Grace to enable them to honour God more, they desire ye Prayers of ye Chhs. Their Minister is now abroad collecting Money for their Meeting-House, in whose Absence they are supplied by a gifted Brother, and they beg the Prayers of their Brethren, they may be kept from every Thing of a distressing Kind, while their Pastor is absent, and ye he may be prosperous where unto he is sent and be returned to 'em in Peace and Safety.

3dly From ye Chh. at Rawden Cliff setting forth their willingness to meet the Messengers of the other Chhs. in Association.
by her Mefsengers, & yt her desire was yt ye divine Presence might attend 'em in their convening together, and yt they might be directed and succeeded, in whatever might fall under their Consideration. That they had great Reason to be thankful for ye Continuance of Gospel Means and Privileges, which they hope are in some Measure blefs'd, and desire they may be more and more succeeded, for ye most valuable Ends and Purposes. Public Worship in general, and especially in the Afternoon is well attended at present. They also intimate in their Letter, that some are enabled to attend to experience Meetings w. ch are found to be very profitable and useful; as well as exprefs their desire yt a more impartial and zealous Regard might be paid to the holy Scriptures, as the Standard of Truth, and Rule of Christianity, and they have reason to lament and mourn there is such a Departure from this divine Rule in practical Religion; so little Knowledge of the Purity of the Law, and consequently too little Sense of Sin and Duty; that there is so little Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Order and Discipline of his House. Lukewarm-nefs, Indifferency in Religion, worldly Mindednefs, and a vain Conversation, they fear prevails in too many, while that Strict-nefs and Uprightnefs, so necefsary and powerful to vital Godlinefs is too much neglected, They cannot but earnestly wish for a more fervent Zeal for every precious Truth of the Gospel, for a proper Regard for the Order of X.'s House, and a tender Concern for his Honour: for more Watchfulnefs against Sin, Diligence in Duty, love to one another, Humility, Meeknefs, Gospel Simplicity, and spiritual Mindednefs, for a Revival of the Lords Work among 'em more and more, for a Discerning Judgment, & for an Inclination to the Observance of those Things w. ch are pleasing in his Sight. Moreover they exprefs their Satisfaction in hearing yt the great Redeemer and glorious Captain of Salvation is lifting up his Standard at some little Distance from them under the Labours of his Ministers, and desire that many precious Souls, under the Influence of sovereign Grace, may be brought to enlist under his Banner.

4th From ye Chh. at Okenshaw shewing their unfeigned Thankfulnefs to God, in yt he hath not only favour'd 'em with a Name in his House, and continues them in the Enjoyment of his Word; but also blefses 'em with a Connexion & Communion with the Chhs. of this Afsociation, which Connexion they desire to hold and maintain. They affirm also, yt they blefs God for the Tokens of his gracious Presence in our former Assemblies and general Meetings, w. ch have been greatly to their Satisfaction and Edification, as also they trust, to the Advantage of their Brethren; and then exprefsing their Desire, yt all yt Wisdom and Prudence, love and Unity, Meeknefs and Impartiality, may be
granted, yt are necefsary to continue, and order all Afsociations to ye Glory of God; They pafs on to observe, yt their heavenly Father has done great Things for them, in giving them a Name in his House: In sending 'em a Pastor when in Distrefs, to feed them with Knowledge and Understanding in ye Misteries of X't. In blefsing his Ministry to the Good of others, compelling 'em to come into their little Zion, and making 'em eminent and useful in it: w.ch makes some of them cry out, "What shall we render to the Lord for all his Benefits confered upon us" But they intimate yt they have been Ungrateful to their heavenly Father, and Disobedient in many respects; That he has visited their Transgrefions with a Rod, and yt their private Meetings are poorly attended. Tho' they have Reason to blefs the Lord yt he continues Peace amongst themselves, and yt ye Ministrations of the Word, are pretty well attended to.

5th From the Chh. at Bradford, Shewing yt they believe their Connexion, in a Christian Afsociation, with ye Chhs. met by their Mefsenders at this Place, has hitherto had the desired and intended Effect, since many of them by happy Experience, can say, they have reaped much real Benefit and Edification thereby, and more especially, from yt Meeting of this Nature w.ch was held at Bradford ye last Year That Opportunity was peculiarly reviving and strengthening to great Numbers among them. The happy Symptoms of w.ch, they hope, remain with some to this Day. In regard to ye Doctrines of Grace, wherein they are agreed with the other Chhs. in this Afsociation, particu­larized in former Letters, they are of ye same Mind and Judgment. There is not ye least Division among them: They are perfectly joined together, and all speak ye same Thing, the Ministry of ye Word, is very refreshing and beneficial to most among them: It is indeed a joyful Sound; they intimate its justly number'd among their richest Mercies: This as many of them have said and can Witnefs, makes 'em breath & long for ye return of ye joyful Sabbath. They have very rarely had any Thing of a grievous Nature, to perplex ye Brotherhood at their Chh. Meetings this Year, and what of that Nature has fallen out, has been decided with great Unanimity. They are at Peace at present, and there is no apparent Prospect of the Contrary. Some com­plain of Coldnefs and inactivity in the Things of God, and others think yt in this respect it is better than formerly. Their Chh. Meetings are pretty well attended, tho' some are Shamefully guilty in neglecting them. The public Worship of God is well attended; several Families who used to attend elsewhere, are now become constant Hearers with them, and they are not without a Prospect of an Increase in the Chh. They are in hopes, that, that wretched Practice of whispering, Backbiting, Tale-bear-
ing or revealing ye Chh's. Secrets, which formerly occasioned them so much Trouble and Confusion, is in a good Measure laid aside, and they express an earnest Desire, that its grim Countenance may never more make its Appearance within the Walls of their Zion. This Year the Lord of the Harvest, who has the Residue of the Spirit in his Hand, & who dispenseth his Gifts when, where, to whom, & in what Measure he pleaseth, hath graciously blessed & honoured them with spiritual Gifts to profit withal. Two Brethren whom ye Chh. thought in some Measure qualified for public Usefulness, have been encouraged to exercise their Gifts in Public; one of them has had the Chh's. Approbation, and been regularly set apart to the Work, and is since remov'd to the Chh. lately under the Care of our decess'd Brother Smith, at their unanimous Call, where, they hope he will be made an Instrument of much good. The other they hope, will be useful, but intimate, that they have not as yet concluded any Thing about Him. They also desire their Brethren wou'd return Thanks to God for them, since they are so highly indebted to Him, as well as pray that he wou'd enable them to make suitable Returns for Mercies receiv'd, to be humble, watchful, spiritual and obedient in all Things. Moreover, they express a sincere & fervent Desire, that the Messengers of ye Chhs. in this Association, may want nothing in their aforemention'd Meeting, from the Fountain of all Goodness, to render their Meeting pleasant to 'emsewves, & profitable to ye Chhs. That the Spirit may come down upon them, and the Power of ye highest overshadow them: That they may enjoy a plentiful Effusion of the Spirit of Prayer, Praise, Gratitude, and Understanding in ye Things of God. That Love may be increas'd, the Unity of the Spirit maintained, and holy Joy and Gladness abound thro' ye Power of ye holy Ghost. That they may in ye most tender and affectionate Manner bear with one anothers Weaknesses, cover one anothers Infirmities, lay out 'emsewves to the utmost for the Good & Prosperity of all whom they represent, and ye they may meet and part in Harmony.

6th The Letter from ye Chh. at Liverpool was read, expressing a Desire ye have an Abundance of Grace, Mercy, & Peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus X, to ye Messengers of this Association, met in this Place, and intimating their Thankfulness unto God, for the Return of another of these Meetings, since they have been, in Times past, harmoniously conducted, and also refreshing to their Souls; for w. Reason, they wish for the Continuance of ye Association & hope all ye Chhs., have reap'd a Blessing as well as they, who surely, they think, are ye least of all ye Flocks of their Companions, considering their languishing Condition, they cannot but be thankful unto God, and esteem it a great Mercy to be permitted a Member of ye
Afsociation; since by this their Connexion, they hope, they are more immediately on ye Hearts of ye Chh's. in Afsociation in their Prayers, have the Advantage of Xtian Communion with them, & the Solution of Questions, which they have found very useful and Satisfactory. From which Privileges, they are sensible much Fruit might have been expected by their Redeemer; But they have too much like Israel of old, brought forth wild Grapes and greatly resembled ye Laodicean Chh. wh. occassions them to acknowledge that it wou'd be just in X't, to spue 'em out of his Mouth. Public Worship is attended with great Indifference by many of 'em, and by some often absented from: Their private Meetings for Prayer and Conference are much neglected, save only by a few, who have Sorrow of Heart on the Account of it; & who, tho' much discouraged by the Neglect of their Brethren, yet are favour'd with ye comfortable Presence of God. while such as are not circumspect in their walk are lean & Barren. They seem almost unavoidably forced, they intimate to mention their unhappy Case of some of their dear Brethren, tho' not from want of the sincerest Love unto their Souls; But that they may be convinced of, and brought to hearty Acquiesence in their Duty. Amongst their other Griefs & Sorrows, is the Age, and decaying Faculties of their dear Pastor who has been for a long Time a nursing Father unto 'em under God, whose Life and Conversation has been very honourable to the Gospel of X't. among them, & who was a Means of restoring their Peace, when little but Confusion was in ye Chh. But yet on ye Acc't. of his natural Decay, the Lukewarmnefs, and want of Discipline in ye Chh. they have unanimously agreed to beg of God to send 'em one to afsist their Dear and aged Brother, in ye pastoral Work and Care; and they have some Expectations of seeing shortly B. ro Williams of Cardigan whom they hope, their dear Lord has inclin'd to attend to their Call, and qualified with suitable Abilities, both natural & spiritual for a Labour in ye Vineyard, and desire ye Chhs. to join with 'em in Prayer y't he may be sent of God, like Nehemiah and Ezrah, both to rebuild ye Temple and ye Walls of their Zion. However one great Mercy they have continu'd to 'em, w. wh they cannot be sufficiently thankful for, is Peace among 'emselves, w. wh occassions them to hope y't ye Lord who is their Light & Glory, will shortly arise & shine upon them, & turn their Darkneps into Day. Moreover they beg the Prayers of ye Chhs. & exprefs their Desire after a Blessing upon their Afsociation, at ye afore mention'd Time & Place.

7th From the Chh. at Wainsgate, expreſſing their Desire of entering into ye Closet Connexion w. th ye Chhs. of this Afsociation: from ye Consideration of ye Dispensation of divine Providence towards them, and the need they stand in if their
Afsistance, and Christian Advice. They take notice of ye heavy Breach w.\textsuperscript{ch} ye Lord had made upon them, by ye Death of their dear and much esteem'd Pastor, who had been so remarkably own'd and blessed by ye Lord both in gathering together into a Chh. State, and feeding 'em with spiritual Wisdom and Knowledge for a considerable Number of Years. Whose Memory will remain precious to them, & whose Losses, none but 'emselves know the Greatness of. However, under this their Distresses, they were enabled to keep close one to another, & to seek ye Lord for help. Their Meeting Doors have been kept constantly open since the Decease of their Pastor, having had ye Afsistance of neighbouring Ministers once a Fortnight, and on ye vacant Sabbath (as to preaching,) meeting together for Prayer, and appointing one to read unto 'em, and having heard y\textsuperscript{t} a Member of ye Chh. at Bradford, namely, their present Preacher and beloved Brother John Fawset, had received from X\textsuperscript{t} such hopeful Gifts as were likely to render Him in some Measure useful in a public Way, they agreed to request ye Chh. to which he belong'd to send Him over to them, that they might have trial of his Abilities; which Request, after proper Steps were taken was complied with. He accordingly exercised among 'em every other Sabbath for sometime, and his Labours giving great Content to all, so far as they knew, they therefore looked upon Him as one whom ye Lord was raising up for them in their Necesfity; and seeking ye Lord by solemn Prayer and fasting, they unanimously gave Him an Invitation to settle among them: and having gain'd his Consent after due Deliberation, they desired his Brethren to send Him over, accordingly He remov'd to 'em on May ye 9\textsuperscript{th}. 1764. to preach to 'em in a stated Way, and upon whom they desire ye Lord to pour his Gifts more and more, yt he may prove a wise and faithful Steward of ye Mysteries of God. They have many Things attending them for which they ought to be humbled, and yet have also many for w.\textsuperscript{ch} they ought to be thankful. The Lord's Work they think, has in some Measure prospered among 'em, and Things in general have a pretty agreeable Aspect. Some Members who stood at a Distance on Acc.\textsuperscript{t} of a Difference in Sentiment, now stand in full Connexion, they having agreed to allow each other their different Way of expressing themselves as to those Points. Some yt have been excluded, are likely to be restored. They think they retain a regard for ye\textsuperscript{e} Doctrines of distinguishing Grace, as well as for practical Godliness, and hopes yt ye alarming Dispositions of Providence towards them have, in some Measure been sanctified.

8\textsuperscript{th}. The Letter from ye Chh. at Haworth was read, w.\textsuperscript{ch} intimates y\textsuperscript{t} they esteem their Connexion with ye Chh. in this Afsociation a Privilege and an Honour: that they willingly meet
by their Mefingers in ye Bowels of Jesus X., wishing and endeavouring yt Encouragement to their Undertaking & employ, w. ch they are worthy of, they have, they say, lately read and do well approve of ye Substance of our last Conference, and cannot doubt but yt such Meetings will Answer ye valuable Ends in favour of the Interest of our Redeemer design'd by them. The striking Evidence laid before them, in ye last Association, of a Chh. backsliding from God; are but too manifestly found w. th them, and w. ch they wou'd w. th Shame & Sorrow apply. They desire to mourn for ye Evil contain'd in such a Conduct and to take ye Warning given of ye Danger, such a State exposeth to. They are indeed at Peace among themselves, free from devouring Strife and Contention; But an unhappy Slumber seems to prevail: They continue to hold and profefs ye same precious Truths of ye Gospel, w. ch they more than once mention'd, and need not repeat; these are freely hold forth to them as in times past; But they fear yt most of them are sadly wanting in their Love to 'em, Zeal for them, and Pleasure in them, they were once ye Subjects of. They hope they love one another for the Truths Sake; But w. ch is greatly to be lamented yt fewer is wanting w. ch becometh Saints. They cannot say yt they formerly neglected any Branch of Chh. Discipline; But are very certain, yt there is not that Degree of Tendernefs for God's Glory, or ye Zeal, Care and Watchfulnefs over one another, w. ch they once felt and saw. Their Chh. Meeting, private Meeting, and other Opportunities for ye Worship of God, afford but too many Instances of Lukewarmnefs in ye best and most important Things; tho' there are some, they hope, whose last Works are more than their first. They desire yt ye Brethren would pray, yt they may be more sensible of their Case, and deeply affected with it, and yt ye blefsed Sun of Righteousnefs may arise and shine, with his chearing Influences upon their slumbering and sleeping Hearts, to reanimate & enliven them in the Ways of God.

9. th From ye Chh. at White-haven, expreſſing a Desire yt a Bleſſing might attend ye afore mention'd Meeting. The Complaints made in their last Letter, as then mentioned, several being put away &c still in a great Measure remains with them. The Frowns of their heavenly Father are not taken away. They have lately had much Disturbance from their neighbouring Profefſors of Christianity, the Scotch Seceders, about Baptism, w. ch at last terminated in a public Disputation in their Meeting-House ye 20 th Ult at w. ch Time, they intimate they had ye Management and Aſſiſtance of our much esteemed B. Hartly, w. ch Disputation has not turn'd out to their Disadvantage, as far as they are able to conceive, they hope they can say in Truth yt their Love to ye Gospel of X., to the Ways of Righteousnefs, and to all ye
followers of Jesus, is not upon ye Decline, and tho’ they have had fears lately, yt intestine Troubles wou’d have considerably affected ’em, yet their hopes in this respect begins to revive. Moreover they earnestly desire the Prayers of their Brethren.

The Total of the Addions to the Chhs. in this Association &c take as follows:

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Total added 38  Do Sep. 7  Do Res 2  Do. Dead 9

II.

The Questions that were attended to, please to take as follows.

*Question* As stated private Meetings for mutual Conference on the Things of God, are allowed to be expedient & useful, shou’d be glad to know how and after what Manner they may be best conducted in order to ans.‚ y’ Ends of Christian Edification and y’ Glory of God. The Purport of the following Ans. was unanimously agreed to.

1st

It was apprehended yt there is no particular Rule in y’ Word of God expreffly refering to this Affair, whereby any particular Form or Proceeding is either enjoined or prohibited and that therefore this Matter is to be determined by such general Rules as these, Let all Things be done to edifying, Follow y’ Things whereby you may edify one another, and to be left to y’ Option of those who are concern’d therein, to act as Xtian Prudence & Discretion may dictate. In respect to y’ Matter of their Conference, it was thought that it wou’d not be so convenient always to converse about one particular Thing. But yt it wou’d be proper, at such Meeting, to treat sometimes on one spiritual Subject, and sometimes on another.

1st For always to talk of y’ same thing; as Christian Experience &c, wou’d become burdensome and dulling to y’ Mind. It is well known yt constant Repetition of y’ same Thing, and
a treading in ye same Steps, with scarce any Deviation, tends to
cloy the Appetite & benumb ye Soul: wch serves greatly to
prevent ye End of such Meetings, namely Christian Edification.
2d It prevents ye Improvement of ye Mind upon a Variety of
useful Subjects. Christian Edification consists of many
Branches, and takes in a large Extent of precious Matter, yt
might employ our Thoughts, & engage our Attention at those
Opportunities. Nor is there any just Reason to be given, why
any one particular Thing should always be attended to at these
Meetings. Moreover ye Conversing upon different Subjects, is
best suited to ye awakening ye Attention of ye Saints, to
ye spread of divine Knowledge, and consequently, best adapted
to promote ye divine Honour. And agreeable to the above
mention'd general Rule. It was apprehended 1st That it may
be proper for ye Saints to relate their Christian Experience one
to another, at Times, at those Meetings mention'd in this
Question. It is of great Advantage sometimes, for good Men
to be acquainted with ye Trials and Mercies of their Brethren.
To hear of their Difficulties which are not a few; and how the
Lord supports, upholds, and relieves 'em by ye Discoveries of his
Love to 'em, and ye Exertions of his Power towards them,
since this is obviously suited to stir 'em up to Christian Symp-
athy, to ye more lively exercise of Faith & Hope, and to display
the matchlefs Perfections of God. Gal. 1, 24.th Which noble Ends
or such like, we may reasonably suppose ye Psalmist had in
view when he said, come and hear all ye that fear God & I will tell you
what he hath done for my Soul: Nor is it any Objection to this
Conduct, that the Weak in Faith may sometimes make a wrong
Use of ye Experience of ye Strong, by concluding that because
they are not favoured with so much Faith, Joy and Peace as their
Brethren are; that therefore they are entirely destitute of special
Faith: for ye same Objection will be of equal Force against ye
weak reading ye Experience of ye Strong in ye sacred Oracles,
and let it be observ'd ye no Countenance is here given to the
relating of that wild Enthusiasm, and irrational Exercise of
ye Mind, and those unaccountable Impulses which some Men call
Christian Experience, But 2dly It may be proper at such Meetings,
sometimes to talk of some Doctrine or Doctrines of ye Gospel, or
some Pafsage of Scripture wherein it or they are contain'd.
Gospel Truth is very precious Phil. 3, 5, 9, and it highly concerns
ye Saints to be throughly settled in ye Belief of it, especially in
this Day; when it is furiously attacked on all Hands, by subtle
Methods, and by designing and cunning Men, as it was in ye
Days of ye Apostles, and as a confirming it by Pafsages of
Scripture and Arguments drawn from thence, is a likely Means
to establish and build up one another upon their most holy Faith,
Jude 20th &c so it seems proper to attend unto it, at times, at ye aforemention'd Meetings. & 3dly

It may be proper at such Meetings, sometimes to converse about some Duty or Duties incumbent on ye Saints, or some Passage of Scripture wherein it is, or they contain'd. They are apt to forget what it becomes them to do, and to wander from the Path of Duty, & many Occasions of Sin frequently attend them, so they have need of being put in Remembrance of the divine Statutes, as ye Apostle intimated the scattered Strangers had seen ye 3d of Hebs. the 13th ye 2d of Pet. y e 1st 12, & 13.

4thly As there are variety of different Cases of Conscience amongst the People of God, w. ch for want of proper & seasonable Solutions, often lie with great Weight upon, and deeply distrefs their Minds, it might be very useful to take some of them into Consideration, when met together in private, since this is a likely Means to support the Weak & to comfort the feeble minded, is a walking in Love, and a following that which tends to Edification to w. ch the Saints are exhorted in Scripture, Hebs. the 12th 12, 13, Roms. the 14, 15th &c Nor can ye Solution of such Cases be scarce thought to be done at a more seasonable Opportunity than when met together. But 5thly

It was apprehended yt it might turn out to advantage for someone at such Meetings, now and then to repeat ye Minutes of a Sermon delivered a little while before by ye Minister or Pastor; this might tend to refresh ye Memories of ye Saints, who, are frequently complaining of Forgetfulness and a treacherous Memory lamenting that they can retain so little of ye w. ch in ye Hearing was so sweet & delightful to their Souls: and it is well known ye a second Look or a second Hearing often fixeth a Subject more deeply upon ye Mind. & 6thly

It may be proper to read, at times, some Judicious Book or useful Piece of Divinity in our private Meetings, the Labours of ye learned & pious World, are of great Service to the Chh. & as they often are a Means of Instruction & Comfort to such as read 'em in their Closets, why might not a Subject judiciously chosen be read to ye Advantage of a few Christian Brethren in their private Assemblies, yet several of these Rules shou'd be used with Caution as 1st

In the Relation of Christian Experience one to another, those ye feel much of ye comfortable Presence of God, & extensive Peace & Joy in believing should be careful to abstain from all such Expressions, as confine the Existence of a Principle of Grace only to those who do experience much Consolation, for to act thus is acting contrary to Truth Isai. 50, 10th & is also opposite to a Walking charitably toward the Brethren. And it
may be proper for ye lively Believer to intimate along with ye Acc’t of his sweet Communion with Christ, yt he has felt, & sometimes does feel himself in a quite different Frame, & ye extensive spiritual Pleasure, is not essentially Necessary to constitute the Character of a good Man, & especially he shou’d act thus, if he knows yt any of ye Meeting he belongs unto, are prone to measure themselves by others, and to draw wrong Conclusions of their own Case thereby 2ndly.

The Saints shou’d never at these Meetings treat upon those Doctrines & Duties with they are incapable of properly stating and proving: As Ministers, in their public Ministrations shou’d not attempt to treat of Matters they have not a proper Idea of, and cannot vindicate Rom. 12. 6 since hereby Truth is likely to be rendered contemptible, the Weak stumbled, & Men hardened in their Errors; so neither shou’d the Saints undertake Matters too hard for them, for the like Reasons. We shou’d never for the sake of Variety engage in Matters beyond our Sphere. But 3rdly.

All Persons belonging to ye afore-mentioned Meetings are not absolutely obliged to argue upon a Doctrine or Practice propos’d: there are some Persons incapable of doing this, and consequently it wou’d be better for such to be silent and to hear what others have to say, tho’ they shou’d not use their Incapacity as an Occasion to indulge sloth. If any such Meeting shou’d have no Person belonging to it yt is capable of defending & profitably representing scarce any divine Truth, it might be proper for such a Number of Christians to converse chiefly about Experience, & sometimes to read in some good Book. But 4thly.

As to ye Manner of conducting private Meetings, it was apprehended 1st That ye Subject Matter of Christian Conversation at one Time, shou’d be propos’d at some preceeding Opportunity. This will allow every one proper Time for Meditation upon the Subject, without which little will be done to purpose 2nd That to prevent Confusion, care shou’d be taken yt only one Person speak at once, & if the Subject has pased any of ye Brethren, & something necefsary to be observ’d to him after, it wou’d be proper for him to wait for a fair Opportunity of speaking alone, or sue for Audience: For many to be talking together at such Meetings, render ’em more like an Ale-house Club than an assembley of Christians.

3rd That it might be proper for a Person of known Judgment and Ability, in ye Brother-hood, to be chosen to conduct the Conversation, to keep good Order & Regularity; and properly to steer ye Subject thro’ the little Asembley.

4th That it may be prudent to avoid such Subjects, in our private Meetings as may tend to jangling.

5thly That if time will not admit ye finishing of a Subject at
a Meeting, without such Brevity as is inconsistent with its Importance, it may be prudent to take it up again at ye next Meeting, and pursu'd its full length to gain general Satisfaction and cordial Absent if possible.

6thly If a Subject be readily gone thro' to general Content, and there still remain Time on Hand, it may not be amifs in order to prevent Tautologies, w. ch are seldom useful, to enter upon some other suitable Matter.

7thly If one Brother in giving his Mind, has also given ye Mind of ye next, it wou'd be proper for ye latter to speak nothing further, ye Time be not wasted to no purpose.

8thly As there are so many different Subjects to furnish us with spiritual Conversation at such Meetings, and necefsary or proper to be attended unto, it is thought, that it wou'd be prudent no one particular Subject be too long continued thro' a Course of Meetings, but varied according to Necefsity & the Appearance of Things.

9thly The before mention'd Subjects shou'd be treated upon or convers'd about with Reverence; God is greatly to be fear'd in ye Assembly of his Saints & to be had in Reverence of all that are about Him Psal 89. 7. The Sublimity, Importance & Excellency of ye Thing talk'd of, naturally demand our serious Regard and solemn Reverence; we are too apt to glide into a light and frothy Conversation and Behaviour at such times; But this by no means ought to be; as always, so more especially when speaking of ye great Things of God's Law, our speech shou'd be season'd with Grace and freed from trifling, Eph. 4. 29—10th.

10th They shou'd be convers'd about calmly and without heat and Resentment, for ye Wrath of Man worketh not ye Righteousness of God, Jam. 1. 20 And when Persons are full of Anger, they are incapable of expressfing their own Ideas, and Wrath begets Wrath &c. 11 It wou'd be very proper for those who frequent ye aforesaid Meetings to come together in proper Time, For what Advantage can we expect, when the Body thro' or by Labour & Fatigue is more fit for Rest then Exercise. 12th It is apprehended that we shou'd guard against taking up too much Time in our Private Meetings, for several Inconveniencies will attend it, as Dullness &c. Lastly, That these Meetings shou'd be attended to frequently. As to some Circumstances attending Christian Conversation at these Opportunities, it was thought that Prayer was one, or ye one more shou'd, as ye Mouth of ye rest call upon God for a Blessing upon their Endeavours to edify one another, that their Hearts may burn within 'em with sacred Fire, while they talk together of heavenly Things, since this is a likely Way to attain ye desired End. & X.'s promise of being with his People who jointly call upon his Name, may
we think, serve to encourage 'em in this Affair, Matt. 18. 2.—
2d Praise or Singing spiritual Songs, is thought to be another
Circumstance that may attend those Meetings, to this laudable
Work ye Saints are exhorted in Scripture, and it seems a very
suitable Season for it when they meet together in private, since
it tends to raise and enliven ye Mind, as well as to impress it
with reverential Thoughts of God.

QUESTION.
Whether is dressing of Meat by roasting, baking, boiling
or otherwise, on ye Lord's Day, a breach of ye fourth Command-
ment, & contrary to ye sanctity of ye most holy Day therein
required Unanimously agreed as follows,

1st That dressing of Meat in either of ye above-mentioned
Ways is no Breach of ye Sabbath, provided it be done for ye
Nourishment & Advantage of those who are labouring under
some disorder of Body: Persons may be attended with such
bodily Distempers, as make it very necefsary for them to have
something warm & nourishing, & which if denied 'em might be
great Detriments unto their Health: & as it is lawful on ye
Sabbath Day, to take care of ye Life of a Beast, to raise a Sheep
or an Afs from a Ditch & to relieve 'em Matt. 12th. 11. 12
Luke the 13th. 15th. So it is very reasonable to conclude yt the
above-mention'd Act of Mercy toward Men, is lawful on the
Sabbath Day. But 2dly
There may be some who have very weak Constitutions, and
who grow faint and ill suppose they have not some warm Meat
and Provision: & in such a Case we see not why it shou'd be
unlawful to drefs Meat for 'em, since doing so seems evidently
to come within ye Limits of those Acts of Mercy, w. ch may be
lawfully done on ye Sabbath Day: As ye Disciples being hungry,
did ye on the Sabbath Day w. ch had Circumstances been different
it wou'd have been sinful in 'em to have done, & yet were
blamelefs Matt. 12. 1-7: So we conceive ye Meat may be lawfully
prepared in ye Cases & Sense above mention'd & 3d.

Some Persons on Sabbath Days have a good Way to
tavel in order to attend upon ye Word of God, and may be
greatly fatigued therewith, and as ye Want of some warm and
strengthening Food may prove very detrimental to their Health,
so it is lawful, as we think, for them to take such Provision, &
for Persons to prepare it for them: & if any other Case can
be justly thought similar to these, it is not inconsistent, it is
apprehended, with keeping holy the Sabbath, to drefs Meat
thereon, in ye above Sense, Nevertheless, it is thought, ye in all
other Cases, or when Acts of Mercy do not require Persons to
prepare Meat by baking boiling &c. on ye Sabbath, to do this is
a Breach of ye divine Command w. ch enjoins ye keeping holy ye Sabbath. The Reasons are as follows. 1st. The dressing of Meat in any manner, is not a religious, but civil Act, and therefore when Mercy & Necefsity do not require it to be done on ye Lord’s Day (which is often ye Case) to do it on ye Day must be a Breach of ye sacred Word, which runs thus, Six Days shalt thou labour and do all thy Work, but the seventh Day is ye Sabbath of ye Lord thy God, in it thou shalt do no manner of Work. Ex 20. 10th This Argument must be allow’d forcible by all those who plead for ye Unlawfulness of burying on a Sabbath Day, except in Cases of Necefsity & Mercy from its being a civil and not a religious Act: For if it be unlawful to bury them because ye Burial of a Person is a mere civil Act, by a Parity of Reason it must be unlawful to dress Meat, unlefs when Necefsity and Mercy require it.

2d. It was unlawful for ye Israelites to bake or boil ye Manna they were indulged with in ye Wildernefs on ye Sabbath Day, as appears from Ex. 16. 5 when it is intimated ye Lord inform’d Moses, ye on ye 6th Day ye People shou’d prepare the double Quantity of Manna they had brought in, namely into their Tents, w. ch Preparation cannot design ye gathering the double Quantity of Manna, because it follows its being brought in which was after the gathering it, & what this Preparation was, Moses intimated to ye People in v. the 23d: where, he plainly refers unto ye Order of God to him mention’d in ye 5th v. & he said unto them, This is ye Lord hath said, tomorrow is the Rest of ye holy Sabbath unto ye Lord, bake ye will bake to Day, & seethe ye will seethe. Some seem to think that these Words only imply ye Israelites might take & boil what they wou’d, and dress as much of ye Manna as they pleas’d; and not ye they were to bake & boil for or against ye Sabbath; but if these Words be compared with ye 5th Ver. if seems evident ye they were to prepare twice as much on ye 6th Day, as on any other, and ye therefore they were to dress ye Manna against ye Sabbath, by baking or boiling; and if so then dressing Meat in ye above Sense, except in Cases of Necefsity and Mercy is a Breach of ye Sabbath. If it should be objected ye Manna for ye Sabbath was not dressed ye Day before, by baking or boiling, because then, or if it had, it is no wonder ye it did not stink, w. yet it intimated it was in Ver. 24th. It is thought 1st. That it does not absolutely appear from its being said in ye 24th Ver. ye it did not stink nor was ye Subject of Worms, that there was any Thing miraculous in this, or ye it was contrary to ye Nature of ye Manna, for this is placed not in Opposition to ye Nature of ye Manna; but to its being made to corrupt by ye Judgment of God,
when it was kept contrary to ye Command; and so only intimates yt God did not cause it to putrify when it was kept by his Order, tho he did do so when it was kept contrary to it. But 3dly May we not argue from the lefs to ye greater, it was unlawful to gather ye Manna on ye Sabbath Day Ex. 16. 26. 27 & therefore it was unlawful to drefs it on ye Sabbath, this greatly strengthens ye preceeding Particular, and if it be unlawful to fetch in Provisions on a Sabbath Day, it seems most likely yt it is unlawful to prepare 'em then. 4thly The making of Fires on ye Sabbath Day was prohibited ye Jews Exod. 35, 3d tho doubtles it was lawful for 'em to do so when Mercy or Necefsity required it, as it is for us when ye want of Fires wou'd be detrimental to our Health, and tend to bring Disorders upon us: But as it was unlawful to ye Jews to make Fires on ye Sabbath it was unlawful to drefs their Manna then by baking or boiling and as it is not right for us to kindle a Fire on ye Lord's Day except in ye Cases just mention'd, it must be unlawful for us to drefs Meat on on ye Sabbath, by baking &c. except in Cases of Necefsity and Mercy; much lefs can it be thought a commendable Thing to prepare Meat then in a sumptuous Manner, & so as to detain Servants & others from the public Worship of God.

QUESTION.

As Faith and Hope are two excellent Graces, and very useful in ye Christian Life, & in Scripture the one is sometimes put for ye other wou'd therefore ask how we may know more of their distinct Nature, or the Difference betwixt 'em?

Unanimously agreed as follows. It is apprehended that Faith & Hope are indeed exceeding useful to good Men in encouraging and supporting 'em in this Wildernefs under ye various Trials they are subject to, and in prompting 'em to Holiness, and therefore are more precious than Gold yf perisheth and sometimes, they may be put ye one for ye other, as in ye 3d of ye 1st of Jo.m & the 3d & the 3d of ye 2d of Cor. & the 12th Ver. tho' perhaps not so frequently as some People imagine; but suppose that they are put ye one for ye other in more Places than ye above mention'd, yet this will not prove yf they are ye same, if respect is had to their proper, formal, and current Meaning in ye sacred Oracles, for 1st The Term Hope in Scripture is several Times put for eternal Glory, w. th is the principle Object of Hope, as is Col. 1-5. where ye Apostle says for ye Hope yf is laid up for you in Heaven. Titus 2. 13 Looking for ye blefsed Hope see also Rom. 8. 24 and Gal. 5. 5. But then it is thought yf no Man who speaks justly will say from hence, yf Hope and eternal Glory are ye same properly speaking which yet he hath equal Reason to do, as to affirm yf Faith and
Hope are ye same in Nature, as to their formal Meaning because they are sometimes put ye one for ye other.

2d Faith in Scripture is sometimes put for its Object, as in Rom. 4. 5. where ye Apostle says but to him yt worketh not, but believeth on him yt justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousnefs (i.e.) X.\textsuperscript{th} Righteousnefs w.\textsuperscript{th} is an Object of Faith, is counted to him for Righteousnefs, see also the 3\textsuperscript{d} of ye same Chap. & ye 3\textsuperscript{d} of Jude. Now as we are not to conclude that ye Term Faith, if respect is had to its formal Meaning, is not ye same with ye Object of it, because ye one, is sometimes put for ye other: So neither are we to conclude yt Faith & Hope are Identically same, because the one, is sometimes put for ye other. & ye like Observation might be made in respect to Fear and Love; & here let it be remarked, that it is easy to know when Faith & Hope &c. are to be taken in an improper or figurative Sense, and when in a proper one. They are never to be taken in a figurative Meaning, unlefs there be something in ye Text or Context yt absolutely requires it: Because it is only by Circumstances in ye Text and Context, yt we can know, yt their proper Meaning cannot be intended: And therefore, when there are no such Circumstances as denominate 'em to be taken improperly, their common, genuine, and natural Import ought always to be adhered unto. This Rule of interpreting Scripture is a precious one, suits every Meridian, nor will it, nor can it deceive any Man.

3d Some of ye Terms of Scripture y\textsuperscript{t} set forth ye Satisfaction of X.\textsuperscript{t} are used sometimes in a different Meaning, from whence Men of corrupt Principles argue yt they do not prove ye Truth of X.\textsuperscript{t} dying in ye Room of Sinners, and his giving full Satisfaction to Justice for those for whom he died: If we wou'd not therefore strengthen ye reasoning of such perverters of Scripture, we must not conclude yt Faith and Hope are ye same, strictly speaking, because they are sometimes, used in a figurative Sense. And now y\textsuperscript{t} they are really distinct & not Identically ye same, considered as Graces of the Spirit, or Branches of Evangelical Holinefs, the following Considerations will make appear as 1\textsuperscript{st} The Apostle in 1 Cor. 13. and last Ver. speaks of Faith as distinct from Hope, now says he abides Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but ye greatest of these is Charity. Now if Faith and Hope are ye same Graces ye Apostle cou'd not have said with any Propriety these three for then there wou'd but have been two Graces here specified; But as two is not three, nor three two; so neither is Faith, Hope, or Hope ye same with Faith.

2d The Apostle speaking of ye Christian Armour makes mention of Faith as a distinct Piece of Armour from Hope:
but let us says he who are of ye Day be sober, putting on ye Breast Plate of Faith & Love, & for an Helmet ye Hope of Salvation, As ye Breast Plate & Helmet were two distinct Pieces of Armour; So Faith & Hope are certainly distinct, and not Identically ye same. 3. In Consequence of the more vigorous Exercise of Faith, Hope is augmented, & hence ye Apostle pray'd, yt the believing Romans might be filled with all Peace & Joy in believing, to ye End they might abound in Hope, thro' ye Power of holy Ghost, Rom. 15. 13. & therefore if ye Effect is not ye same as the Cause: Faith is not Hope nor Hope Faith properly speaking. Besides ye Apostle distinguishes one from other in ye 1st of Thes. ye 1st & 3. where he says remembering without ceasing your Work of Faith & Labour of Love, and Patience of Hope in our Lord Jesus X. It is conceived yt a just Description of Faith & Hope will make it farther appear they are distinct considered as Branches of Holines, & also will give a full Answer to this Question. If we can but truly discover what Faith and Hope mean, considered as spiritual Acts of ye Mind; it will clearly appear what their distinct Nature, or ye Difference betwixt 'em is: for it is thought yt ye principal, yea that the only Difference betwixt Faith & Hope lies in their being formally considered, or considered without respect unto their Causes, Effects, & Object, for in ye Particulars they are ye same, as 1st They are the same in respect unto their impulsive Cause, or they both are ye Effect of ye same everlasting and sovereign Goodness. Hope proceeds from this Fountain, since ye Apostle says blest be ye God & Father of our Lord Jesus X. who of his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again to a lively Hope, see 1 Pet. 1. 3. and Faith flows from hence also, for it is the Effect of Election, Acts 13. 48; which Election is ye Result of God's singular Love unto his People Rom. 8. 29. Jer. 31. 3. 2nd Faith and Hope are ye same in respect to their procuring Cause, They both are convey'd in a Consistency with ye Justice of God, thro' ye Blood & Righteousnefs of X. to you said ye Apostle it is given on ye behalf of X. to believe in him, Phil. 1. 29. and if Faith be convey'd this Way, what Reason can be given why Hope is not. Besides Men are made holy or enabled to believe in X. &c. thro' his Sufferings, Titus. 2. 4. tho' not to ye Exclusion of his Righteousnefs. 3rd The Efficient Cause of both is the same, namely ye Spirit or ye agency of ye Spirit: we suppose it will be allow'd that Faith and Hope are Branches of inward Holines, and if so, then they must be produced by ye Operation of ye blest Spirit because he is the Author of Holines in general in ye Hearts of Men, such were some of you, but ye are wash'd, but ye are sanctified; But ye are justified, in the
Name of our Lord Jesus by the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor. 6. 10. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 2.—But 4thly They both arise from the same inward Spring of holy Acts, or from ye New Nature, thro’ ye Influence of ye Spirit. We are not to conceive that Faith Hope Love &c arise from distinct Principles of Life or Holiness in ye Soul, for as unbelief, Despair, Pride &c. arise from the same Root or Spring of Action, namely, the depraved Mind, or ye old Man; so Faith, Hope, Love &c. arise from ye same holy Nature, call’d in Scripture the new Man, Spirit &c. And to this purpose ye Apostle may be understood, when he says ye Fruit of the Spirit, (ie) the spiritual Nature, is Love Faith &c. Gal. 5. 22. But 5thly Their instrumental Cause is ye same, namely, the Preaching of ye Gospel; As Faith comes by hearing ye glad Tidings of ye Gospel advanced, Rom. 10, 17; so by Consequence Hope comes ye same Way. And 6th The Means of their Growth are ye same, namely an Attendance on ye Preach’d Gospel & divine Appointments; for ye Gospel Ministry is designed for ye Edification of ye Saints in general, & in, tho’ not for ye Keeping of the Divine Commands there is a great Reward and there the Lord renews the spiritual Strength of his Israel Jam. 4. 8. Psal. 19. 11.

7thly They are ye same as their Effects. Does Faith support the Soul in Trouble and in shaking Times? So does Hope which is an Anchor within ye Vail. Does Faith occasion ye Saints spiritual Pleasure? So does Hope, we rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God said ye Apostle Rom. 5. 2 & 12. 12. Does Faith occasion Patience in Adversity? So does Hope. In Fine, as special Faith discovers itself in Acts of spiritual Holiness so does spiritual Hope, hence Paul calls it a good Hope, & Peter a Lively Hope, in Opposition to yt Dead & False Hope of unregenerate Men. 2 Thes. 2. 16. and 1 Pet. 1. 3.

8thly The same Objects yt Hope fixes upon, the same Objects Faith fixes upon, the Object of Hope is eternal Life Titus 1. 2. and so it is also an Object of Faith Heb. 11. 1. &c. It is true, that ye Objects of Faith, may, in a Sense, be said to be more extensive than ye Objects of Hope; But then whatever are ye Objects of Hope are also ye Objects of Faith; Because to suppose ye Contrary, it is thought, wou’d be to suppose yt Hope ye Effect, might exist without Faith ye Occasion of it, w. ch is absurd. And from hence it is manifest yt ye Difference betwixt these two Graces must have respect to their formal Nature, which will be included under a just Definition of them, and therefore, a Description of them is the only Way left to give an Ans. to ye above Question, which Description take as follows. It is apprehended yt special Faith may be thus defined: It is a spiritual and an appropriating Sense & Persuasion of heavenly
Objects, as ye justifying Righteousness of X. t, his amiable Person &c. that one constituent Part of Faith, is a Perception of heavenly Objects appears we think from its being intimated in ye 1st of Rom. 17. yt just Men thro’ ye preaching of ye Gospel, come to clearer Views of ye justifying Righteousness of X. t: & the like might be observed, in respect to other Branches of Evangelical Truth: Besides the Apostle intimates yt Men become ye Children of God by Faith in X. t Jesus (ie) It is apprehended, by Faith or in ye Exercise of Faith they discern their Sonship: & those Persons who think and affirm ye Faith is ye. Eye of ye Soul yt looks to X. t will assuredly agree to this, namely, yt Faith includes in it a Perception of heavenly Objects But 2nd It is thought, yt there is included in Faith as one constituent Part of it; a Persuasion of Evangelical Truth; for the Term Faith, & yt which is rendered Faith, properly signifies a Persuasion, and it wou’d seem exceeding odd and unreasonable, that a Term shou’d be used for this Grace that naturally includes in it a Persuasion, if so be that Faith did not include in it a Persuasion: We can only tell Ideas of Scripture by ye Meaning of ye Terms in W.ch they are convey’d to us; and if there is nothing requires a Departure from their natural Meaning which we apprehend is ye present Case, they shou’d never be receded from. Moreover, as an unbelief of a Thing imports, a non-Persuasion of it; so Faith in it implies a Persuasion of it, & Abraham’s believing in ye Promise, is in fact call’d his being fully persuaded of it Rom. 4. 21. 3rd This Sense, & consequently this Persuasion is of an appropriating Nature; for it is common to every Believer to apprehend his Sonship, in some Measure: To as many as did receive him to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to us many as believe in his Name, Jo. 1. 12. & since to suppose otherwise wou’d, we conceive, suggest yt the holy Angels exercised special Faith in X. t, which we have no ground to believe they do &c. It is true, yt there may be true Faith, where there is not a comfortable & full Afsurance of future Felicity. True Faith may be attended with doubting and staggering as may be collected from Rom. 4. 19. 20. But then there is some Degree of Appropriation in it.

4th This appropriating Sense & Persuasion of heavenly Objects, we call a spiritual one in regard, as it is a Discernment & Persuasion of their Nature, & because it is produced by ye holy Spirit, & in Distinction from a mere rational Sense & Persuasion, from w. it is as widely distant, as ye East is from ye West, and as Earth from Heaven: Thus Faith is ye Substance of Things hoped for, & ye Evidence of Things not seen. Only here observe, yt when we say yt Faith is a spiritual and an appropriating Sense of heavenly Objects, that w. wou’d not
hereby intimate, that a Man may not be said to be a Believer, who does not exercise Faith in all ye Objects of Faith, nor yt ye Saints w. think they are, because no Man here perhaps, is so perfect in Knowledge, as to be acquainted with every Particular respecting ye Object of Faith. But 2dly

The Grace of Hope, we think may be defined thus, it is a spiritual Expectation of promised Good Things, in ye Lord’s own Way and Time. Hope signifies a looking for and Expectation of: & ye Objects it looks for must be promised Favours, otherwise it wou’d be a Hope without a Foundation, and it is absurd to suppose that it is an Expectation of Favours in a Way and Time contrary to the divine Pleasure: And we call it a spiritual one for ye same Reasons we call’d Faith so. This being observ’d, we now Ans. the Question, by saying that Faith is a spiritual and an appropriating Sense of heavenly Objects whereas Hope is an holy Expectation of promised Good. Faith as it were is a distant Enjoyment of them, & Hope looks for them; & ye Latter seems to bear the same Proportion or respect to the Former as ye Effect to the Cause. A Man, we think, who has no Faith, is without Hope & without God in ye World. A Man yt has a little Faith has also a little Hope; and a Man who hath an extensive Faith, has an extensive Hope.

QUESTION

Suppose a Person who is a Member of a Gospel Chh. has Children, and neglect to bring them to ye Worship of God on ye Lord’s Day, tho’ he has it in his Power to bring them, Query, is such a Conduct criminal, and if so, how is ye Chh. to behave to him?

Unanimously agreed as follows.

It is, or must be supposed, that ye Children of such a Person to whom the Question refereth; dwells with him in ye same Family. 2. That they are in a Capacity to travel to ye Place of Worship without apparent Damage to their Bodies. 3. That such an one is capable of drefsing his Children so as to keep ’em from the Inclemency of ye Weather; & in a homely Manner. If all these Circumstances occur, we think yt ye Person refer’d to in ye Question, has Power to bring his Children to ye public Worship of God, and yt his neglecting it, is a Breach of the divine Law. Our Reasons are as follows

1st It is the Duty of Parents to cause their Children to keep holy the Sabbath Day. The divine Law particularly directed to Parents respecting this Affair, runs thus : In it thou shalt do no manner of Work, thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter Ex. 20. 10. the purport of w. is thought to be this. You Masters of
Families take care ye keep holy the Sabbath yourselves, and see to it ye your Children who are under your Care, keep holy that Day also. Now one Branch of keeping holy ye Sabbath, consists in an Attendance on ye Word preach’d or on public Worship Acts 20. 7 w.ch is free and open to all whether young or old. & therefore for a Member of a Gospel Chh. to neglect bringing his Children to public Worship on ye Lords Day is to omit the Performance of an incumbent Duty and so must be his Sin. 2. It is ye Duty of Parents to train up Children in ye Way they shou’d go, or to teach ‘em of, and to constrain ‘em to their Duty Pro. 22. 6: But it is ye Duty of Children to hear the Word, & to attend upon public Ordinances as well as others, since it concerns ‘em to believe divine Truth & to know their Duty, as appears from its being the Duty of Parents to instruct ‘em in heavenly Things, and seeing that is ye Duty of all Men in general who have an Opportunity of hearing ye Word to attend to it. & therefore it is ye Duty of Parents to cause their Children to attend upon the Worship of God. & in what Place of Worship can they attend more agreeably, than in ye Place where their Parents Worship; who can then have their Eye upon them, ask them Questions about what they have heard, when they come Home, and correct any Indecency they may have exhibited in the House of God.

3. It is the Duty of Parents to restrain their Children from Sin, & to use lawful Means tending thereunto, & hence Eli is blam’d, that when his Sons made themselves vile, he restrain’d ‘em not, see 1 Sam. 3. 13. But suppose they suffer’d ‘em to stay at Home on Sabbath Days, and keep from public Worship, when it is in their Power to bring ‘em, then they wou’d be suffering ‘em to live in ye neglect of Duty, since it is the Duty of their Children who are refer’d to in ye Question, to resort to public Ordinances; as was observ’d under ye preceeding Particular, & besides, when Children are left at Home they are apt to get into bad Company, to play, and to spend their Time sinfully. & admit they were to go to hear the Word in a different Place from where ye Parent hears, it is likely they wou’d not behave right, that they wou’d associate with vain Persons after divine Service, and in one Case or another prophane God’s holy Day, nor cou’d a Parent inform ‘em so well of ye which they have heard, as if he had been with ‘em; & therefore, as it is the Duty of Parents to restrain their Children from Sin; and to use Means in order to this, it must be their Duty to bring their Children with them to ye public Worship, since if they neglect this, they either suffer their Children to break ye Sabbath, or do not use those lawful Means, they might use to restrain ‘em from Sin, as hath been prov’d.
4th Parents ought to be very desirous of the spiritual Prosperity of their Children, with Submission to the divine Pleasure, as y⁵ Apostle was in respect to his Kinsmen after the Flesh Rom. 9. 2. 3 and so they shou’d use all likely Means in order to this End; But a bringing their Children with them to the Worship of God’s House on the Lord’s Day, is a likely Means to bring about their spiritual Advantage, since God is pleas’d to blest his own Word to the Profit of Persons of various Ages who attend upon it, and therefore Parents fail in their Duty when they neglect to bring their Children to the public Worship. 

5th Parents ought to be concerned for and desirous of their Children coming to a rational Knowledge of divine Things, since they are commended to bring ‘em up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord Eph. 6. 4. Now one likely Way to bring them to know the Truth of divine Things, is to cause ‘em to come under the Word, where the Truths of the Gospel, & y⁵ Precepts of y⁶ Law are opened and explained; and since to suffer them to go to a different Place from y⁴ where they worship wou’d be exposing them to sin; So Parents fail in their Duty to their Children when they do not bring ‘em to the House of God on Sabbath Days. 

6th Jos.⁶ resolv’d that he and his House wou’d serve the Lord (i.e) wou’d jointly & together serve the Lord, in all those Acts of social Worship he had commanded &c. Jos.⁶ 24. 15. Now one Branch of social Worship w.⁷ Children as well as Parents are concerned in, is hearing y⁶ Word, or an Attendance on social Worship, and therefore Fathers according to the laudable Example of Jos.⁶ shou’d resolve to serve God along with their Children, or their Children to serve God along with them in God’s House on the Lord’s Days. 

7th We ought to be concern’d for Posterity, for the Good of our Children, and the Interest of X.⁸ when we are sleeping in y⁶ Dust, this seems to have been the Case of y⁶ Chh. Psalm 78. 4. 5. 6. But little regard is had to the Glorious Gospel of X.⁸, and the Happines of the rising Generation, by such as neglect to lay out themselves to y⁶ utmost of their Power in order to bring their Children to y⁶ House of God. 

8th We find that Joseph and Mary train’d up our Lord in an Attendance upon y⁶ public Worship of God in his House, he went up to Jerusalem to worship with them Luke 2d. 40, 41, 42. And so Parents should bring their Children to y⁶ House of God with ’em. 

9th Parents neglecting this, stand reprov’d by God’s special Command to his ancient People Israel Deu. 31. 11, 12, 13. When Israel is come to appear before y⁶ Lord thy God, in y⁶ Place w.⁸ he shall choose, then shall read this Law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather y⁶ People together, Men, Women, and Children, and thy Stranger y⁷ is within thy Gates, that they may hear, and y⁴ they may learn,
and fear the ye Lord their God, and observe to do all ye Words of this Law: And yt your Children w.ch have not known any Thing, may hear and learn to fear ye Lord your God. 10.th It is a peculiar Recommendation of Widows to those Offices in w.ch they may be useful, and to ye Charity of ye Chhs. If they have brought up Children (viz) in ye Nurture and Admonition of y.e Lord, w.ch we apprehend, includes in it a bringing 'em to ye House of God on Lord's Days. Only it was observ'd yt if a Child be arriv'd to ye years of Maturity, and capable of throughly judging for himself and cannot in Conscience go to worship in ye same Place where his Parents go, he is to be left to his Choice after due Means are used for his Conviction. As to ye Chh's Conduct towards a Member who is guilty of ye above-mention'd Neglect it was thought 1st That if his Children do attend at some Place of Worship, and are not suffer'd to loiter at Home, ye Thing is not so bad, as ye Contrary, yet still he is faultly if he neglects to remind 'em of their Duty, (viz) to wait upon God in ye Place where he attends, and as such he ought to be admonished of his Mistake, and his Duty shou'd be laid before him, with proper Motives, to excite him to ye Performance of it. Bût 2. If he suffers his Children to spend ye Sabbath Day, in Idlenefs and sinful Diversions ye common Custom is, it is apprehended ye Case is much worse, and yt he ought to be brought under the Chh's Censure: And if he wilfully persists in ye like Conduct, he ought to be put away from ye House of God, as a disorderly Person. Nor can we think yt any orderly Chh. of Christ, wou'd think it justifiable in her to receive such an one into Communion with her: & surely yt Law w.ch will not allow a Chh. to receive such a one, will not allow her to retain him.

IV.

Sermons Preach'd &c.

2. On Regeneration by Bro. Oulton June.—3. On Believer’s Baptism. To be treated as to its Figure or Representation of ye Believer’s Burial and Resurrection with X. by Bro. Crabtree—

The following Questions remain for Consideration at ye said Meeting.—Ques. Provided one who is Master of a Family, proposes for Fellowship with a Chh. of X. who upon enquiry is found mostly if not altogether to live in the Neglect of Family Prayer, tho’ in all other respects his Conversation is becoming ye Gospel of X. Query, what is ye Chh’s. Duty in Reference to such a Person?—Ques. Whether a Desire after worldly Riches is lawful, and if so, how far, and when doth it become sinful?—Ques. Suppose a Sister of a Gospel Chh. hath an Husband, how far doth her Power extend over her Children and Servants, in a Way of restraining ’em from Sin and enforcing their Duty upon them?—Ques. Whether in cutting off Members any particular Form of Words shou’d be used, Oration made, or Remarks of any Scripture given before ye Chh.? And whether the Supper Ordinance be a proper Time?—Ques. What are we to understand by making Friends of ye Mammon of Unrighteousnes? And what are the Everlasting Habitations mention’d in Luke 16. 9?—Ques. In what respect are those who have ye true Qualifications for Bishops in Gospel Chhs, said to be ye Husband of one Wife, 1 Tim. 3. 2.—Ques. Whether is it agreeable with a Gospel Conduct to purchase any Commodity to sell again, knowing not to have paid his Majesties Duty? The Proposer wou’d have this Question consider’d with ye most favourable Circumstances. For Instance, suppose a Person is employ’d in a certain Branch, in which all of the same Business in the place, follow such a Practice, and by ye Means render it impossible for ye Man to live by his Trade without doing as they do, by selling only such Articles cheaper than he can do, purchasing only such as hath legally paid ye King’s Duties; And that the Man cannot maintain his Family in any other Way. The Articles must be supposed to be such as are bought for manufacturing. Likewise whether it will agree with a Gospel Conversation to buy any Article for Family Use, knowing it has not paid ye King’s Duties?—Ques. Whether a Member of a Gospel Chh. being Master of a Vessel, can be justified in sailing on a Lord’s Day, supposing he has a fair Wind, and may not have such an Opportunity for some Time?—Ques. As ye Scriptures of Truth are ye Foundations of spiritual Knowledge and Understanding 2 Tim. 3. 16 and as ye reading of them is a Duty incumbent upon us, please to point out ye likeliest Method of perusing that holy Book, in order to attain true Edification?—
Ques. As spiritual Knowledge is a Thing yt is much talked of by Persons of all Denominations, and while some esteem it above Rubies, others think it not worth labouring after, tho' Solomon says, yt for the Soul to be without Knowledge is not Good. Pro. 19. 2. We shou'd be glad to be inform'd what is necefsary for a Man to know in order to constitute him a real Christian?—Ques. As Christians are exhorted in Scripture to let their Light so shine before Men, that they seeing ye good Works of ye Saints, may be induced to glorify our heavenly Father, we therefore ask, what are ye chief Things intended, yt will produce so glorious an Effect?—Ques. Upon what Evidence may a Man safely conclude yt he is called of God, to take upon him ye Ministry of ye Gospel?—Ques. What are those Qualifications which a Chh. of X. ought to apprehend in any Bro. she encourages for ye Ministerial Work.