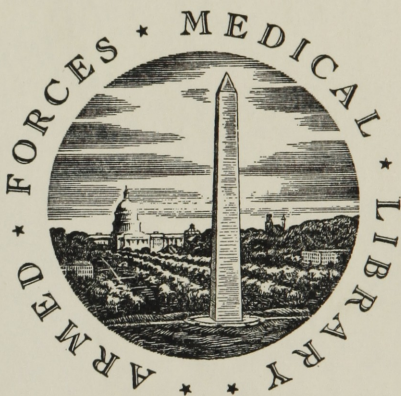




UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



FOUNDED 1836

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WASHINGTON, D.C.





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A  
SHORT ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
YELLOW FEVER

ADVERTIMENT

PHILADELPHIA,  
FOR THE  
REFLECTING CHRISTIAN.

BY  
J. HENRY C. HELMUTH,  
Minister of the Lutheran Congregation.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY  
CHARLES ERDMANN.

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PRINTED BY JONES, HOFF & DERRICK,  
No. 8, NORTH FIFTH-STREET.

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THE  
PROPRIETOR'S  
P R E F A C E.

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*THE proprietor of the following pages having read with much pleasure the original work, written in the German Language, was very desirous to see it in an English dress. He communicated this idea to the author of the work, who readily granted him permission to translate it, and generously relinquished to him all the emolument, which might arise from such an undertaking. The translator is only sorry that he has not been able to do full justice to the work. He is aware that it has not the ease or accuracy which the author gave it in his own language. The ideas, however, it is hoped, are materially preserved, and the diction such as will not be found offensive. To do good was the design of the original publication. To render this design more extensively successful has been the object of the proprietor; in which he trusts, that, he will not be altogether disappointed.*

TOBIAS HIRT.

*List of all the Burials in the several grave-yards of the city and liberties of Philadelphia, as taken from the several books kept by clergymen, sextons, &c. from August 1st to November 9th, 1793.*

Protestant	}	Christ Church	173
Episcopalians		St. Peter's	109
		St. Paul's	70
Presbyterians	}	First	73
		Second	128
		Third	107
		Scotch	12
		Seceders	33
Roman Catholics.	}	St. Mary's	251
		German part do.	30
		Trinity	54
Friends			373
Free-Quakers, returned in gross			39
German	}	Lutherans	641
		Calvinists	261
Moravians			13
Swedes			75
Baptists, returned in gross.			50
Methodists	do.		32
Universalists			2
Jews			2
Kenfington			169
Potter's field, including the new ground	}		1334
			<hr/>
			4031



## SHORT ACCOUNT, &c.

JEREM. CH. IX. I.

*Oh! that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughters of my people!*

**W**HOEVER has seen the distress of our deeply afflicted city; whoever has shared in it by the loss of friends and relations and whoever is only susceptible of human feelings, will undoubtedly break out in similar lamentations with those of the Prophet, for Philadelphia in these days of mourning.

There are few cities upon which the Lord had poured forth richer blessings, than on this; and there are but few indeed, that have been plunged by his just judgment into a deeper abyss of distress, than our now weeping Philadelphia.

It is true this flourishing city has experienced on former occasions, the chastising hand of the Lord; many of its inhabitants recollect the mortality of the year 1762, when hundreds were swept away by a similar fever; many will recal to their minds the horrors of the year 1777. when this place was the rendezvous of foreign troops, the sons of ra-

pine and violence, whose trade was blood, and whose object was the subjugation of America.

Repeatedly have our streets resounded with the terrifying cry of fire, and particularly the year 1791 was fruitful in instances of this kind, when several buildings were actually set on fire out of wanton wickedness, and a general terror spread over all parts of the city.

But never were there scenes so terrible, so distressing to us, as those which our citizens experienced during the late months of mortality in the current year 1793.

To give a short and true account of these months, and of what has happened therein, will probably be an agreeable undertaking to our German brethren, notwithstanding the mournful scenes which I shall have to lay before them. No doubt but one and another of them will drop a tear at the perusal of this account; and their tears will flow the more plentifully, the nearer the facts may concern the reader in particular; or the more tender and susceptible the feelings of his heart may be. If a single corpse can sometimes embitter all our joys, and plunge our heart into the deepest mourning, what must be the effect of several thousand deceased, and among these some tenderly beloved friends. In sadness itself the heart finds sometimes a kind of voluptuous satisfaction; and and if this account should produce only here and there such an effect, the author would not think his trouble altogether in vain in giving it into the hands of the mourner: But this mournful pleasure, otherwise so delicious, would be of a short

duration only, and very imperfect; it would after all be a sadness of the world, which leads to death, and real comfort would remain concealed from the heart; and for this very reason this small and imperfect work seeks and aims at a much better object. The author places a firm reliance on the grace of God, that perhaps this account, and Oh! may God grant it! will cause not only a sadness but a divine sadness in some of its readers; it is at least his design, that in perusing this imperfect sketch some one or other may be led, feelingly to exclaim "And I too have carried straw, yea even pitch and brimstone to this fire of the anger of the Lord; it is true it has not devoured me as yet, but I owe my preservation to the intercession of my Redeemer: and shall I continue to provoke this my merciful Saviour any longer by the commission even of one intentional sin? My God! this would be the thanks of Devils and a challenge to the Almighty to bring his judgments nearer and more dreadful upon me. Up therefore oh my soul! thou must quit thy former ways of sin, and by an immediate and true conversion of heart throw thyself into the arms of a forbearing God."

This short account, which I am about to communicate, must certainly be imperfect in many respects, on account of the accumulated business, which during the time of our extreme distress would not permit us to pay much attention, to matters of small moment. Our duties, indeed were so numerous and pressing, that it was difficult to give to each their attention which it seemed to demand. I will therefore only just take a short view

of the distressed situation of the whole city, and then confine myself particularly in this relation to what concerns our German-Lutheran-Congregation ; but even of this I shall not be able to mention some things which at any other time would be looked upon, as of very great consequence.

As early as in the middle of the month of August we had a funeral in the above mentioned congregation, which seemed rather suspicious, but nobody at that time had the least idea, that the deceased had been affected with a contagious disorder.

On the 19th. I was called to a man, whose breathing was very short, but who did not shew in his countenance the least symptoms of approaching death ; nevertheless to my very great surprise, he was a corpse on the 20th.

Nobody yet suspected, that this man had died of a contagious fever. On the 21st. a man out of the same family was buried, out of which eleven days before the first-mentioned corpse had been interred, but even this did not make any particular impression in those parts where these funerals happened. However on the same evening terrifying accounts were reported from that part of Water-street, which lies between Race and Arch-streets. Experienced physicians had been called to some sick persons, and these found the fever, that had broken out there, of the most dangerous complexion.

Terror was visible on every face in that part of the town. Very few of those in health were to be

seen who had not one thing or another before the nose or mouth, in order to keep out infectious air. Many of the inhabitants began to feel a certain kind of horror at that part of the town; and if business forced any one thither, he would go with a trembling heart and hasten away as fast as possible.

The sick complained of great pain in the head and back; and all their limbs felt as if they were bruised; some had a strong tense pulse, and these experienced an uncommon difficulty in breathing; they seemed to be in a constant agony; and such usually died in three or four, some even in one or two days, and generally in the most pitiable conflict of nature.

Others complained likewise of pain in the head and back; but their pulse was so weak that it could hardly be perceived, some felt a most excruciating, others, a more tolerable pain in all their limbs, which they could hardly move; these lived from five to eight days and then died in a more easy and quiet manner than the others. Both kinds of the diseased complained of sickness at the stomach, which occasioned them to vomit; and they brought up a matter that appeared quite black or rather like black coagulated blood; some bled very much from the nose; they had a black lengthy streak on the tongue, and when this last appeared they were mostly the certain victims of death.

Some fell into fits of real madness and thereby, as may be easily imagined, greatly augmented the terror of their relations.

Most of them turned yellow during their sickness, which color they kept after their deaths, though it then became of a deeper hue. But in others, this color could hardly be perceived, though they had shewn every other symptom of the yellow fever, as it was generally called.

Many of them had black, red and blue spots, others turned quite black in the face; particularly round the eye-lids and the nose. This black and yellow colour shewed itself in several, whom it has pleased the Lord to restore to health; and it remained until nature worked off the poison by degrees.

The attack of this sickness was very sudden; few had any particular sensations of approaching disease; many went to bed in the evening to all appearance in the enjoyment of perfect health, and at break of day they were often at death's door. This unmerciful enemy most commonly made his first deadly attack on the body with a severe chill, which was in some of a shorter and in others of a longer duration and then changed into heat and pains.

From the above mentioned part of Water-street, sixteen persons had been buried within a few days, before the upper part of the city knew much of the danger.

The first question now naturally was "*From whence did this dreadful disorder take its origin?*" Water-street had been always looked upon as one of the healthiest streets in the city, and really

was so, and it was therefore the more surprising, that just here such a destruction should take place. The opinions of our citizens were much divided on this question: Some believed,

This dreadful fever to have been generated in Philadelphia itself;

Others insisted, that it had been imported by some vessel from abroad.

Those who looked upon this child of destruction as a native of this place, supported their opinion by the following circumstance:

In the house in Water-street, wherein the first grown person died of the yellow fever, several others died afterwards; this drawing the attention of many and the house being examined, they found a great deal of dirt and filth and even real ordure in it.

To this it was added, that this narrow and closely inhabited street had been greatly injured, by a less quantity of tar being burnt therein for some time past than formerly; the vessels being obliged by an Ordinance of the Corporation, to make their repairs of this kind higher up or lower down in the city, whereby the air in these parts had not been purified by the healthy smell of the tar, as had been formerly the case.

Some ascribed the originating cause of this fever to the weather; and others again to the great numbers of people, which for some months past,

had been too much thronged in the dwelling-houses.

I for my part believe this disorder to be the offspring of another climate; but how it found its way to us, has as far as I know, never yet been ascertained; at a future day we shall undoubtedly obtain more light upon this question, when a cooler and more exact investigation can take place, I will in the mean time relate what I have heard on the subject.

A vessel arrived here with some damaged coffee, and near this vessel it was said, the disorder shewed itself first and with the greatest violence. The Magistracy of the city caused an investigation to be made with respect to these imported goods, from whence it appeared and was looked upon as certain that this vessel and its cargo were not the cause of this calamity; however, several persons were taken sick in this neighbourhood and died.

It was further said, that several dead bodies had been brought ashore from aboard a vessel that lay outside of the before mentioned vessel, which emitted a very offensive smell. This was done in the night time and persons who had seen it, were taken sick immediately, and died.

Such were the reports that circulated among the inhabitants; but as I said before, nothing can as yet be decided on the subject with any degree of certainty; but there is one thing which seems to corroborate the presumption, just before mentioned: it has been further said, that the vessel from whence



the dead bodies had been carried ashore, across the one laden with coffee was taken a few days after to Kensington, a small town two miles north of Philadelphia, in order to be repaired; and that immediately afterwards the ship carpenter, who had undertaken the work, together with his people, had been taken sick in Kensington, and that he and several of the hands had died. (I myself conducted to his grave in said Kensington, as early as the 25th of August a young man of twenty years of age, a ship carpenter, who had died of this fever.) This disorder soon afterwards began to spread among others. Campington had likewise its share of this calamity. We are more and more confirmed in our opinion, that it was this vessel, which brought the infection to us, when we consider that that part of the neighbourhood called the Neck, between Schuylkill and Delaware remained entirely clear of this scourge; a part which is counted at other times the most unwholesome about this city; a part also which is as near to the southern extremity of the city, as Kensington to the northern: a part where the houses are not much further asunder than in the other place, and whose inhabitants go daily through the whole city with milk and vegetables. It is true some have died there, but they amount to no more than three or four at the most, and these were persons who had either followed their daily labour in an infected part of the city, or who had nursed their relations and acquaintances in town, laid them out when dead, and then carried the sickness home with them and died. Several people now fled to the Neck in a season of the year, when at other times they would have been afraid of remaining there

only an hour after sunset, because it was deemed to be very dangerous to people, not accustomed to the air and vapours of that place, yet, Lo! now they were safe in this unhealthful place; not one of them, to my knowledge, got sick. But few would fly to Kensington, because that part was infected as well as the city itself.

In laying thus before the reader my opinion about the origin of the disorder, I should be entirely misunderstood, if any should suppose, that I thereby meant to exclude the agency of God in exercising his holy judgments upon us; no, I repeat again, what I have said already in the beginning, I look upon the whole as a deserved punishment of a just, as well as merciful God.

It remains an eternal truth, of which I am fully convinced, when we answer the question of Amos. III. 6. *“ There is no evil in the city, but what the Lord hath done.”* It is the Lord who makes the pestilence cleave unto thee. It is the Lord who smiteth mankind with ulcers and fevers, and heat, and blasting, and drought, and infection, and jaundice, Deut. XXVIII, 21. 22. *The Lord sends pestilence among the transgressors of his law,* Jerem. XXIV. 10. It is according to Isaiah XXIV. 1. *The Lord of whom it said “ Behold he maketh the earth empty and maketh it waste.”* And v. 3. *The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word.*

Sword, famine and pestilence are the servants of the Lord, whom he sends or retains at his pleasure. It would not have cost a miracle to have

turned aside the pestilential fever from Philadelphia ; it wanted only the intervention of a trifling circumstance, and the life of thousands would have been preserved ; but this circumstance was not allowed to intervene at this time ; It was God's will to visit the city ; and if we ask further, " Why was it God's will ?" The word of truth itself will give us the answer ; it is said in the aforementioned 24th chap. of Isaiah, 5. & 6.. *The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof : because they have transgressed the laws, and changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate ; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left, v. 7. All the merry hearted sigh, v. 8. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth, v. 10. Every house in the city is shut up, that no man may come in. And v. 17. Therefore fear and the pit are upon thee.*

It would be foreign to my intention to answer the question. " Why has God visited this city in particular? Are the inhabitants thereof distinguished above all sinners, by a long list of sins, wherein the greatest part of the inhabitants of the earth have sinned equally with us?" \*

\* *It is not necessary to suppose greater criminality in one place, than another, in order, to vindicate the equity of the divine procedure in punishing any guilty part of God's dominion. It is sufficient that such*

But I hope I shall be permitted to mention a few matters, which, long since have been very alarming to every serious thinking man in this city, and whereby Philadelphia has distinguished itself before all other places in Pennsylvania. Things which even in a natural way threatened the temporal ruin of the city.

Philadelphia far exceeded most of the cities of North-America, in luxury and dissipation among all classes of people.

It was Philadelphia, that did not rest, until the performing of theatrical exhibitions was authorised by law. It was Philadelphia that refined so much on this species of vanity, as to erect one of the largest houses upon the continent for theatrical exhibitions and engaged actors at a prodigious expence; as if one house, that existed before were not sufficient to ruin our young people, too much neglected already. It was Philadelphia that imported from luxurious Europe, the number of 70 or 80 actors and retainers to the stage, who actually arrived here exactly at the time, when the fever raged with the utmost violence. It was Philadelphia, that contained those parents who had given willingly 300 dollars to obtain a perpetual right of free access with wife and children to the plays, in order to plunge themselves and their relatives the quicker into all kind of dissipation, and

*part deserves the stroke: but perhaps he designs to reserve those places that are more corrupt for heavier and more desolating judgments at a proper season.*

to obliterate in their hearts all taste for what is serious and useful, I will not say godly and heavenly.

Many a one looked upon 300 dollars as a trifle to gratify vanity and levity, who would have been afraid of being ruined, were he to lay out so many shillings for widows and orphans.

This was the very autumn in which the new house was to be opened, which numbers waited for with joyful expectation; but this was likewise the very autumn, when these newly arrived sons of levity found this poor city in the deepest mourning, and fled with horror from the long wished for place to New-York and other places. And may they never tread on Philadelphia ground again in that character! May all the inhabitants of this city of sorrow, particularly those who remained here in those days of death and terror join, and with united endeavours labour for that purpose, that the fathers of our country may repeal that certainly injurious act, which has rendered this folly lawful among us.

For my part it was horrid to hear that notwithstanding the great calamity which we have recently experienced, I say, that notwithstanding this, it has been said, I am told, *that in the course of this winter the new play-house was yet to be opened*; yea, that, in order to deceive the public or rather to deceive Omniscience itself, the proceeds of the

first night were intended for the benefit of the widows and orphans.\*

Away with these horrid benefits and the money of sin! Keep your sinful wages, for this is all you have to expect for your pains here and in eternity; God knows how to gladden the heart of the widow and orphan in a better manner; he does not want for this purpose your wages of vanity; leave these to them for whom they were intended; our widows and orphans stand in no need thereof, for the Lord himself is their protector and father; and he will find means, without this money earned in levity, that the forsaken shall not suffer want.

It was Philadelphia, that during the whole of last summer was so eager to see the rope-dancing and other shews exhibited in the city, that one hardly knew how to pass along, for the immense number of people, who were either going to these diversions or returning therefrom. Many a one carried thither, that money which he wanted exceedingly for the support of his family. Most of them distracted their hearts, there in such a manner, that on the following Sunday they ei-

\* *This is a very superficial pretext. If they who attend upon such occasions intended a charity to the poor, why would they not rather select the objects themselves, than make use of such almoners as players? If it were possible that players possessed sensibility in their proper character; why not distribute their alms from the remnant of their dissipations and their usual profits, instead of calling upon the world, to admire their charity by public advertisements!*

ther did not go to church at all, or else could have no benefit from the explanation of the word of God, every part of their minds being so filled with those follies, that it was impossible, that any thing serious could find room therein.

After such a merry, sinful summer, by the just judgment of God, a most mournful autumn followed, which commenced when the much esteemed and celebrated Circus was hardly closed.

How striking must this circumstance be to every contemplating mind, that this very circus was the place, whither the very first sick were brought, in a most deplorable situation, who on account of poverty, and want of friends, could find shelter no where else! This place, which a few weeks before resounded with the noisy acclamations and clappings of levity, was now filled with the lamentations and groans of the dying, and resounded with the wringing of hands by those forsaken wretches, that were sent thither, three whereof died in extreme misery, and where no one recovered.

Philadelphia was the place that seemed to strive to exceed all other places in the breaking of the sabbath. It may be said with propriety, that our fundays and holy-days were our most sinful days. Immediately at break of day, the rattling of the carriages began through all the streets. They hurried into the country with their families as early as possible, in order by no means to approach the Deity in public worship, along with other citizens and sincere christians.

Here the whole day was spent in extravagance and dissipation; Father, Mother, and Children formed together with the servants, a whole groupe to proclaim to the Most High, *We care not for thy commandment about keeping holy the day of the Lord.* When evening came on they returned, and gave no small interruption to those before whose places of worship they rattled along.

But, oh! my God! how suddenly, how mournfully, was this scene altered! the rattling bustle of carriages, which used to carry the despisers of the institutions of religion far away from the worship of Jesus, particularly on Sundays, to vanity and the joys of the world; was now changed into the slow melancholy movement, from morning till night, of those carriages, which certainly have conveyed many of those Sabbath-breakers, to their silent graves; whilst their souls have been obliged to appear before the tribunal of that God who himself had given the strictest command, "*Remember the Sabbath-day to sanctify it;*" and who has virtually renewed the same by his apostles in the New Testament, when he causes them to remind us *Not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together—Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.*

A great many who had not the means to ride out into the country on the Lord's day frequented the taverns and beer-houses in the city and vicinity, and there spent their time in the most frivolous discourse, backbiting their neighbours, or even coarsely ridiculing the word of God itself; or they gamed, drank to excess, and frequently quarrelled and fought.



During these last months many of these tipplers and sabbath-breakers, became delirious; their levity was changed into the terrors of death, and their mockery into whining and lamentations. Just God! what scenes of this kind have we seen! scenes which for a long time will convey images of horror to the neighbourhoods which saw them! My pen is not able to give a description of that agony, which was but too visible in the last moments of such persons.

If I had never before been convinced, of the advantages, which the christian has over the infidel; the instances which I have seen of the dying condition of both, would have been more than sufficient, to produce such a conviction in my mind.

Oh! Philadelphia! Philadelphia! how often would thy Jesus have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not! Sundays were in particular the sacred days on which thy Saviour carried on his work of love in thee; on those days he frequently called thee powerfully towards him; but it is deplorable to say, hardly one third, yea! hardly one fourth of all thy numerous inhabitants, would vouchsafe to hear the call of the Lord, much less suffer themselves to be gathered under his wings. Under these circumstances was it then to be wondered at, that thou was laid waste.

Philadelphia was the unfortunate place, where cursing, swearing and perjury had fixed their resi-

dence; one needed only to walk the streets on Saturday evenings and Sundays in particular to hear the most horrid imprecations from men, and sometimes from women and youths, nay even from children.

Philadelphia was the place where a certain class of people, had associated themselves for the avowed purpose of blaspheming our blessed Saviour. It was gone even so far about two years ago, that a certain preacher had hired a room, wherein he set before his hearers, what he called sermons, or rather poison of seduction, from which many were to imbibe an aversion against the doctrine of Jesus Christ. It was even said, that money had been collected for the purpose of building a proper meeting-house, for this new teacher, who denied the God-head of Christ.

In order to give a better idea of the frivolity of these people. I will relate but one instance, which will shew at once, how deeply some of the inhabitants of this city were fallen: On a certain morning when this frivolous meeting had broken up to a person, passing by and asking; What all these people had been doing in the dancing-school on a Sunday? it was answered, "*We have just now heard a sermon, wherein it has been proved to us, that your supposed God was nothing but a bastard of Maria.*"

I here give the story as it was related to me, the whole excited in me an unspeakable horror, and must be a sufficient proof to any of my readers, that such a place, if it should not go quite to de-

struction, wanted a visitation like that which it has experienced.

Were I to close here the enumeration of the particular sins of our city, it might be objected to me with justice, that I had omitted mentioning a subject, on which I was bound to speak, particularly at this time. The tears of the widow and the sighs of the orphan have had always, alas! too much reason to rise against people who have wronged them out of their property; and as there have been numbers of such interested harpies in our city, I am well convinced, that the judgment we have lately been afflicted with, was the completion of the threats, which the word of God has denounced against such a city and such a country. The great Luther used to say, "*I would rather see the Turkish Emperor with his whole army march against me, than have a single sigh of a widow appear against me in God's judgment.*"

Widows and orphans are under the particular protection of the Almighty, and whoever wrongs them, or imposes upon, or cheats them, has to do with the Almighty power itself, and often by such crying sins draws the most dreadful judgments of the Most High on a whole country and city.

Attend to this, ye guardians! be careful! for God's sake and for your soul's sake be exact to the least trifle, with respect to every thing you have in your hands, and for which you are to account with widows and orphans. It is you, who may easily cause a recurrence of a more dreadful visitation; as there are now so many more widows and orphans, in this city than ever before. For God's

fake do not augment by your unkindness, by your imposition and selfishness, their distress which is so great already; and know, that the Lord will prove himself especially in this respect, a severe judge and avenger, not only on yourselves but particularly on your own posterity.

It would be easy to recite numerous instances of sinners, who, having defrauded the widow and the orphan experienced in a visible manner the avenging hand of the Almighty upon themselves or upon their descendants and it would not be very difficult to find out persons, who, during these last months, gave up their terrified souls, with a reproaching conscience, and with the tormenting thought, "*I too have defrauded the widow and the orphan.*"

It were to be wished, that no other sins prevailed in Philadelphia, than those above specified; but unfortunately this city, in common with all other large cities, was remarkable for drunkenness, lewdness, fraud, pride, avarice, uncharitableness, quarrelling.—and where would the catalogue end? all these and far more had attained the highest summit among us.

Numbers came indeed to hear the word of God, but the majority of those denied its efficacy. Repentance has been preached in the usual way, to our city these many years; but when this had no effect, God took upon himself this business in an unusual but dreadful manner. Hundreds, yea thousands of corpses were made to call to every one of us: "Turn ye; turn ye!—And oh! how would

all good men, how would even the crucified Saviour rejoice, if this call of God, had produced a general echo among the inhabitants of Philadelphia. "Oh! my God! Turn thou me; turn thou me!"

[What kind of people were particularly swept away by the Yellow-fever?]

Having made mention before of dying youths, and girls, I will only add to this short account of this deadly fever that generally people, between fourteen and forty years of age were swept away by it. But few children or old people were attacked by it; among those who appeared to be the healthiest and strongest the instances of recovery were fewest. Men who seemed to have made a covenant with death, and an agreement with the grave for a number of years to come; whose exterior appearance seemed to warrant the hopes of a healthy and advanced age, were laid in the dust in a few days by this fever.

Further, people who made their belly their God, those in particular who had given themselves to drunkenness, or in other respects to a loose and abandoned way of living, when attacked by this disorder, were most commonly the sure victims of death. Several physicians, to whom the way in which such people live was known, when called upon to attend them, were very loath to go, or would not go at all, because they expected beforehand, that their remedies would have no effect for the recovery of the sick.

The disorder likewise raged with much more violence among the men, than upon persons of the other sex.

Many a widow bewails now a husband, who to all appearance, would have been the support of an increasing family, for many years to come. How many uneducated children are now fatherless orphans; in how many houses do we hear the cry: My son—Alas! he is no more—My beloved daughter—Ah! my God, they are, these dear children are in the dust of the grave!—And woe to the father, woe to that careless mother, in whose bosom the excruciating thought arises: “*The poor creatures died, but they died comfortless perhaps through my fault: I never sought after Jesus, and therefore never could earnestly awaken the darlings of my heart, to seek their Saviour; My God, what is become of them, whither are they gone, and what is to become of myself and those of the children who remain.*”

My soul shudders at this thought; and probably very few fathers and mothers can read this altogether without feeling. And is not this the place where something in particular, ought to be said to parents? certainly it is: and nobody can take it amiss to find the following reflections in this small pamphlet.

Our children were intrusted to us for the purpose of educating them in the knowledge and fear of the Lord; early or late he will demand this trust at our hands. When death dissolves the tie between us and them; and especially in the day of judgment, we shall have to answer for the man-

ner in which we have executed our duty, and it will be solemnly decided, whether in this weighty concern, we have paid due obedience, with all uprightness, to his commands or not.—Every parent need only read the single history of the unfortunately Eli, which is found in I. Sam. II. 23. 25. 30. 34. and IV. 11. 18; and if he read it really with attention, I am very sure he will make the following observations :

Eli neglected the education of his children, and on account of this neglect, a dreadful judgment came upon him, and in this judgment were involved, not only the sons of this unfortunate father, but his whole posterity, yea, a whole nation.

Eli was far from being that indifferent much less that quite wicked father, of whom there are, alas! so many among our present fathers and mothers, and nevertheless he suffered that dreadful judgment which made the ears of thousands ring! But certainly God is not unjust nor partial; he never suffers one to go unpunished, when he visits others so severely; and therefore certainly a more dreadful judgment must await those parents, who who have been less attentive to the welfare of their children than Eli was; or who perhaps have been themselves the seducers of these comparatively innocent victims to temporal and eternal destruction.

I might extend these observations to a very great length; I could make here a just complaint, that there are too many parents found in this city, from whom, nothing but the most dreadful curses

and many other abominable things are heard or seen by their children; so that it must be really a miracle, if these poor creatures do not go down to everlasting destruction.

I would propose here the following questions, and leave them to every father and mother who reads them, to answer them faithfully to their own consciences. Do you pray with your children, and do you pray heartily and earnestly for them? How is it about family worship? Do you keep morning and evening prayers? Does the word of Christ dwell richly among you? Do you read the Holy Scriptures with your family? Do you admonish them to serve God in spirit and in truth? Are you acquainted with the signs of a true conversion of heart, and do you instruct your family therein? How is it at your table? Do you pray before you eat? Do you take your victuals with thanksgiving, or does not this complaint lie against you? "The people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play." How do you make your children keep the Lord's-day?

Here I will cease; Make good use of the above questions dear readers, and let serious reflection at a silent hour originate a greater number of such necessary questions in your own hearts.

One word more to parents, who have lost sons or daughters during the late disorder, whose spiritual state at the time of their disease was rather equivocal, and where there is no full conviction of a happy meeting again.



All the advice that can be given to you, in your present mournful situation, is contained in these few words; Return unto the Lord! acknowledge with contrition that you have neglected your poor children—consider the dreadful indifference for the religion of Christ, which has prevailed in your family; your neglect of prayer—but alas! where shall one begin and where end the catalogue of all that has been deficient in this respect in most families! remember, at the same time, the dying groans—the last agonies of the departing spirit—the lonely melancholy funeral of your deceased son or daughter; to these reflections add the question, have not I perhaps neglected my child? Was not I perhaps the cause that it died so comfortless, as was to all appearance the case? and if this consideration will not induce you, to look with horror on your dangerous condition, and to long for being converted to Jesus Christ—then nothing—nothing can move you; you are hardened, hardened beyond conception—and the deepest abyss of hell is justly your due.

[The disorder was contagious.]

The most dreadful circumstance in this terrible disease was that few, very few, who approached any person afflicted with it, could escape the infection; and that all those, who were infected, could generally trace the place where they had taken the seeds of the disease.

In some, this deadly poison shewed its effects immediately; in others, by slower degrees. I have known instances, of persons, to appearance hearty

and strong attending the sick, who within a few days were buried; when sometimes the sick persons, whom they attended, began to recover and were actually restored.

Frequently a husband infected his wife, a brother the sister, parents their children, and children their parents; and the heart-piercing wounds which such scenes must have given, is much more easily felt, than described.

When the idea was once deeply impressed on the mind that approaching the sick might be dangerous and even fatal, it had in one respect a very advantageous, but in another a very melancholy effect. The consequence in the first case was, that people were more cautious, and did not crowd the sick-rooms with unnecessary visits, whereby the spreading of the disorder was greatly prevented; hundreds, yea, thousands more would have been swept away, if it had not been that this apprehension had taken possession of the minds of the inhabitants, and in this respect it was a fortunate circumstance for the city. But this very circumstance was the cause, as may easily be imagined, of increasing the terror in several instances, and became injurious in the highest degree; a person hardly complained, but he was deserted by every body; the sick were left frequently in a dreary solitude in a house intirely alone; and numbers undoubtedly have perished through such desertion, and have been hurried into eternity, when their recovery was not only possible, but perhaps might have been easily accomplished. There are numerous instances of parents shunning their children

and husbands their wives, like death itself, and being prevented as it were by a secret power from approaching the sick, otherwise so dearly beloved. But, for the comfort and preservation of many of the sick, there were likewise those, whom the Lord had inspired with fortitude, in such a manner that they went without fear to the forsaken, and by their attention saved their lives. I have been an eye witness of numerous instances of this kind; I have seen persons, who without any regard to reward or relationship exposed their lives to the greatest danger, out of mere christian charity; in attending the sick, night after night, and frequently performing offices of the most undesirable kind about them. And I am very sorry to add, that not a small number of these well meaning people, fell the victims of their zeal. But again my heart rejoices, when I can count likewise a great number, who have been preserved through all these dangers and at present enjoy a perfect state of health.

It was a great comfort to my deeply afflicted mind, to find such christian minded persons at the death bed of their acquaintances; to see their courage, their careful attention, their unremitting assiduity, and their disinterested conduct, and it strengthened this thought in me: *The Lord in the midst of his wrath is yet among us, and has his work of mercy in our congregation.*

This dreadful infection was so general, that the most of the physicians with all their skill and precaution, were attacked with it, and not a few of them brought to the grave, which greatly

heightened the distress. It was in the most dreadful stage of the sickness, that some of the most famous among them died, others from terror had fled out of the city, and others again were dangerously ill; and as those who remained were not able to attend one half of the sick, to whom they were called, certainly a great number remained without assistance.

How much the distress was increased by this circumstance no body can imagine, who has not witnessed it. At the first attack of this disorder the thought would fall mountain-like on every one's mind.—I must inevitably die. If then nobody could be found to give some relief by proper remedies, and thereby raise a spark of hope of recovery in the drooping mind, the fear of death overpowered many and actually killed them. The relations of the sick, full of terror, wandered about the house, or stood at a distance from the unhappy victim; some perhaps would approach his bed, but with visible reluctance, in order to hand him some refreshment, or to administer some remedies of their own prescription.

And I do not know, where this distress would have ended, if some persons had not interfered, who at other times did not properly make it their business to attend the sick. I mention this circumstance so much the more, as it was precisely such a man, who not only recovered a number of highly esteemed members of our congregation, but likewise by the use of his remedies under the blessing of God, restored a colleague to me, and a Pastor to the congregation.

## [Interment of the dead.]

The dread of this disorder soon became so great, that it was impossible to find carriers of the dead, as numbers of those who had carried at first such as had died with this disorder, were infected thereby and fell sick; it therefore became necessary to make use of carriages.

The number of attendants at a funeral was greatly diminished, every body retired at the approach of a hearse; windows and doors were shut as they passed. Frequently nobody but the driver of the hearse or chair shafts and the inviter accompanied a coffin, which hundreds would have followed at other times. Here one man justly deserves to be mentioned in particular; this is our inviter; he not only took care of funerals as formerly, but in the most dangerous instances always assisted with his own hands to put the corpses into the coffins: \* by his intrepidity the driver of the hearse was encouraged to do the same; and I do not know, how a number of corpses of our congregation would have been conveyed to the grave, if God had not endowed these men with such courage.

The day frequently would not suffice to bury all

*\* The Sexton and Clerk of the 2d English Presbyterian church were remarkably useful in the same way, and have been mercifully preserved. The first never had the disorder at all and the second not till its prevalence was greatly abated.*

the dead, because no assistance was to be had in digging graves, and it was impossible for our usual grave diggers, to make from twenty to twenty-six graves in a day; it became in several instances therefore necessary to take the night to it. Melancholy for all and dreadful for many, as these scenes were in the streets of the city, yet, (to the praise of my gracious Redeemer I record it) this nightly silence amongst the tombs, when I was waiting for funerals, and wandering, quite alone, among the newly raised hills, was sometimes sweetly solemn.

How comfortable to me in this situation, *O thou my once buried Saviour! the remembrance of thy grave; How did the thought force itself upon me, that my Jesus also wandered amongst the tombs; and whom did he seek there? the unfortunate possessed, and to the possessed he there gave the most substantial relief; lo! here wandereth a spiritually possessed; but Jesus too is here and brings me likewise relief from my distress whilst among the tombs!* Such thoughts as these, Oh! how reviving were they to my soul! how many silent tears have they forced from mine eyes! Ye, who were present at such nightly funerals, every hour of your life remember the grave.

Our grave diggers were not exempted from this disorder; both were laid up with it and one of them died. A young man who had faithfully assisted the latter, was also seized, and in the very prime of life, fell a prey to death. Another assistant was at death's door, but is now recovered.

Under such circumstances it cannot be surprising, that thousands of the inhabitants fled away. Nearly one third left the city; some of these carried the infection along with them; sickened in the country, and were brought back to us dead.

The streets of the city looked quite empty; most of the stores and a great many houses were shut up; many of those, who remained in the city kept themselves pent up in the back part of their houses, and even cut off all communication with the neighbourhood. Night appeared to me, at least sometimes, most melancholy. Such a deep silence reigned in the streets between nine and ten o'clock at night, as at other times was scarcely to be found at twelve or one in the morning. I perfectly recollect several visits of the sick, which I had to make, intirely alone, at that time of the night and that at a considerable distance from my dwelling. Houses shut up to the right and left, deserted by their inhabitants, or containing persons struggling in death at that very time, or whose former inhabitants were all dead already, formed a part of the melancholy scene! In two or three squares hardly a living soul was to be met with, where twenty or thirty people would else be passing and repassing at that time of night; at one house and another the remembrance of the lamentations and the dreadful pangs of death, which the rooms thereof had witnessed a few days ago, and the——— but I'll break off here, I will not retrace this image, I should only renew the pain, which often has pierced my very soul.

Advantageous as the flight of our fellow-citi-

zens was, in many respects, yet their taking leave was distressing. I have met several that were hurrying away; in tears they would take my hand, and with sobs some would cry, *Oh God! grant that we may see one another alive again.* Tears would start into my eyes; I hurried away and felt, what at such scenes one must naturally feel.

The infection spreading in a few weeks not only through the whole city, but likewise filling the suburbs with terror, our frightened inhabitants pursued their flight into more distant parts. The inhabitants of Philadelphia will certainly never forget the instances of humanity and hospitality they experienced in different places, and their hearts will certainly never cease to glow with the warmest wishes for the happiness of these generous friends of mankind. Whereas the unfriendly conduct, sometimes even inhuman brutality, of some will remain a stain upon humanity.

Kensington, as has been mentioned above, experienced the violence of the disorder at its very commencement, and lost a great many of its inhabitants; Campington, between Kensington and the city, had likewise a great number of dead; the Neck, as it is called, fared best of all, and hither a number of families fled for refuge. In the city itself, one street suffered certainly more than another, but few, I believe, remained quite free.

Narrow streets were the most dangerous, and here the greatest number were swept away. In Apple-tree alley alone (a street only one square



long, and not all along inhabited as it contained a number of stables) near forty persons died, whereas Market-street did not loose near as many in eight or nine squares.

The mere sight of the great number of deaths, which is annexed to this book, will excite without doubt different emotions in the minds of distant readers, and they will certainly wish to read what impressions these mournful months have made upon the minds of the inhabitants of the city itself. But it would require a much abler hand to paint the whole extent of these sentiments.

[Sufferings of the Sick.]

I want words to express the incredible sufferings of some of the sick; the visible anxiety, the violent struggles, the labour of nature, the most dreadful concussions of the whole frame, which manifested themselves in many of the dying. Some, it is true, sunk tranquil into the arms of death, for it was the nature of this disorder, to assume different shapes; but to speak in the language of scripture and in that sense in which the following expressions ought perhaps to be taken, I must say—The far greater part *died the death*. All the powers of death seemed to assail them, and they mostly experienced a dreadful end.

[Melancholy situation of the Healthy.]

Those who were still well among us, generally shewed how much the fear of death oppressed their

terrified minds. When death had robbed them of some relation or acquaintance ; there was such a mixture of melancholy, of pain, of sadness, and also of an anxious fear of the disorder, that it was impossible to distinguish the one from the other ; in some, these emotions would break out in loud lamentations, yea, shrieks, which were heard in our grave-yards by day and by night at those funerals, where fear would permit some of the nearest relations or acquaintances to be present.

Many of the dearest relations were hurried out of the house as quick as possible, perhaps even before they were cold ; coffins and graves were bespoke beforehand for some ; every one wanted to be the first to have his dead buried out of his sight ; for immediately after the death of a sick person, the body would turn to putrefaction, and would increase the cadaverous smell considerably, which had been spread through the house and neighbourhood during the sickness. The whole neighbourhood generally insisted very earnestly upon it, that the danger should be removed as quick as possible. Very few had the courage to approach a house where any lay dead, much less to enter it.

Having spoken of the houses wherein people died, and likewise of the sick, and described the feelings of those who, still in health, were present at these scenes, it will undoubtedly not be disagreeable, nor may it perhaps be without a blessed effect, if I add something more on this subject.

[State of mind of the Sick.]

I have been called to several sick persons, who till that time, had looked upon the religion of Je-

fus as a matter of the utmost indifference, but to whom that truth now gave the greatest comfort, which teaches that Jesus of Nazareth can and will save sinners; real sinners—sinners, who have nothing to bring him but sin, because he is the Lamb of God, which bore the sins of the world. Oh! how often have I seen tears of the bitterest grief, roll down the cheeks of the most hardened sinners at this truth. Not deeming this a proper time further to distress the poor terrified creatures by the threats of judgment, when they were distressed already beyond their power to bear; this was therefore the truth which in the execution of this mournful duty, I always made use of to the sick and dying; *Jesus may yet save thee sinner too; give him what is his; what he has not; what he has purchased for thee; purchased with his blood; give him all thy sins; Oh how full of love thy Jesus is! lo! he is willing to take thy sins from thee;—how was it possible that thou couldst offend the friend of thy soul for so long a time? But take also what is thy own; the justice of Christ in his blood; remission of sins and the peace of God; take eternal life from the hand of crucified love, without reward, without merit, &c.*

As I have said before, tears of distress flowed from the dying eyes of some who had been very unconcerned sinners. Many of those who were spectators both such as were in health, and such as were diseased, were sometimes moved in the highest degree; and I—the most unworthy of the servants of the Lord, who had been so unprofitable, so little useful, during the whole time of my office, I may cherish the unmerited hope, that

the Lord graciously made use of me, to lead many a soul to salvation, who else would have strayed and been lost—and oh! my God what happiness! to be instrumental in saving a soul! not for a world, would I barter the personal advantage which I have derived from the mortality in Philadelphia. Forget not oh my soul! what the Lord has conferred upon thee, unworthy as thou art!

[Consequences with some respecting the Sacrament.]

Several, who had long thought but very little about the use of the Lord's supper, now shewed an ardent desire to partake of it. Young people, advanced towards maturity, who had been neglected by their parents, requested with the greatest eagerness to be baptized, confirmed, and to be admitted to the Lord's table: in consequence whereof, two young men were actually baptized after a short instruction; one of them recovered, but the other died the very next day. Not long after, a boy of thirteen, and one of nine years of age, together with a girl of eleven years, were baptized in the same family, wherein the above-mentioned youth died, and that in presence of another brother who was then dying.

[Instances of such as died happy.]

I hope I shall be permitted to add, that in those days of mourning, I have found some real, sincere Christians among our so much defamed Lutherans. I will select a few instances, which have diffused through my soul a most lively joy.

Nearly at the beginning of the disorder, I was called to a young man dying; he was very low; but my visit seemed to give him a great deal of pleasure; he answered the questions respecting the state of his mind with the greatest alacrity, and with the full conviction, that he knew in whom he believed. So sweet a smile diffused itself over the already livid features of his face, as often as the merits of his crucified Lord were mentioned, that it might have been taken, rather, for the smile of an angel, than that of a sinful mortal—he found an unfailing life in the death of Jesus.

Two very valuable and virtuous married women, who died almost at the same time, were blessed in a similar manner. Oh what humble, yet ardent, expressions of the heart, flowed from their dying lips! They lay there as sinners at the footstool of mercy;—as sinners they waited for salvation, and they found the sweetest peace in the arms of the friend of their souls.

A young woman suffered for some weeks the most excruciating pains, but she bore them with the patience of a lamb; a few days before her death, when she was hardly able to move her lips, she brought out the following words with a great deal of difficulty, yet so that I distinctly heard them. “*Oh! I suffer much, but here* (pointing at her heart) *here, I have a friend, who comforts me, my dear, dear Jesus.*”—here she was obliged to rest—she then wanted to tell me a great deal about an inward struggle, but I could not rightly understand it; afterwards she began again to speak a little more intelligibly, and added very distinctly:

“ *But this is nothing, when I close mine eyes, oh then I shall be in Paradise, before the throne of my dear, dear Lord Jesus, and that will be soon, very soon!*” She then reached me her dying hand, and I went away rejoiced and strengthened in my mind, having first with praises and thanksgivings recommended her in my prayers to the care of the good shepherd—she died two days after.

A very young person, who had suffered a great deal during the short time she had been married, lay sick with the fever but a few days, and shewed in that situation, what she had shewed in many other circumstances, the greatest composure; when she was very low she asked, “ *Is it not Friday to day?*” and being answered in the affirmative, she replied with visible joy of mind: *Oh how good that is, then I shall die on the same day, whereon my Saviour died for me;* and shortly after she expired on that very day.

It would be easy to fill a whole book with anecdotes of the deceased, if the extraordinary interruption and the great fatigue of going and riding backward and forward to the sick and dying, had not rendered one at times, almost totally thoughtless; but these few instances will show the reader how well prepared some of the dying were, for their great change.

[Instances of frivolity in some of those who were  
in health.]

In general, more seriousness, modesty, humanity, and brotherly love was observed among the in-

habitants of the city, than ever before. It is true, this was not the general character of all the citizens, for some of those very persons of whom the wise king says, "they bring the city into a snare" Prov. XXIX, 8. "and who do not mind the punishment" chap. XII, 1.—the scornful could not, even now refrain, here and there, from their scorn. A well meaning Christian was seriously reprovng one of those on account of his levity; she shewed him, that he and his companions, particularly, had been carrying straw to this fire, by their profligate conduct; whereupon he answered laughing, "*That is all nonsense; if this was the case I certainly should burn in the same fire; but you see how healthy I am, the flame will not touch me; what the priests say is all a farce; God does not trouble himself about these judgments; they have their natural causes.*" He was only answered "*Be not deceived, God is not mocked.*" And lo! in two or three days after, the wretch was buried.

Another turned into jest what he had heard in church about this visitation, a few days before his sickness. In the last night of his life an inexpressible anguish seized him: he cried for a minister, whom nobody could bring on account of the great distance, and it being in the night; at last his distraction affrighted his nurses, and they fled out of the room and left him alone: next morning at four o'clock he was found out of his bed, and dead on the floor.

Another foolishly offered to lay a wager, that he would not get the fever, and in two days after was buried.

And where would the narration end, were one to put down all that has happened of this kind among us?

[What increased the terror of the Inhabitants.]

The terror which this disorder had spread every where, was in some instances greatly heightened by its breaking out into real madness—Some of these unfortunate creatures jumped out of their beds, escaped in the night time and would run sometimes a great distance from their dwelling into another street, and sometimes into a strange house if they found one open.

Add to this the groans and lamentations of some of the dying, which sometimes became so loud as to be heard distinctly in several adjoining houses and in the street.

The external appearance moreover of those who met one another in the street, increased the alarm. They generally had sponges or handkerchiefs before their mouths and noses, and some even had the mouth entirely covered. They shunned each other through fear of being infected. Besides, the deep mourning which appeared in dress, and the distress in the countenance, the constant going backward and forward of the dead-cart, especially its doleful noise in the night time; rendered the situation of the city deplorable beyond description.

[Public Worship.]

Great as the distress was, which under these circumstances, pervaded the whole city, there were



not wanting such occurrences as afforded comfort particularly to our congregation, and which were highly acceptable to the teachers as well as several of its well disposed and considerate members. Several of these have been mentioned already in the preceeding pages, particularly how the power of the religion of Jesus had manifested itself in many particular examples.

We have to add still, that the pre-eminence of the Christian above the infidel was visible every where throughout the city : the Christian is a lover of the word of God ; he loves to hear it dispensed ; and hundreds expressed in these days of distress, a wish to be Christians in reality. They who despised the doctrine of Jesus formerly, and perhaps even blasphemed and mocked, now came frequently to attend upon the preaching of the divine word, which was still continued with us. Though a number of the members of our congregation had fled into the country with their families, and a great many of those who remained in the city, were afraid of coming to church ;—though a good deal had been said, with a good intention, in the newspapers against the assembling for public worship ; though a great many were sick themselves, or had sick or dead persons in their houses and families, and therefore at such times could not appear ; and though the number of the deceased was not inconsiderable, yet, notwithstanding all this, our meetings were often crouded, as if nothing of the kind had taken place !

We saw now on Sundays and week-days people attending service, whom we had never seen in our

church, or at least very feldom feen there, before. And the filence, the attention, the emotion, which were obferved in our hearers!—Ah! what a fight, what a fcene otherwife fo rare! even during the finging, tears began to flow in various inftances, which increafed during the fermon to a foft sobbing; and then after the fermon—the humble fupplications throughout our bleffed Zion—the fighs—the groans and the increafed guff of tears—the contrite humble confeffion of finfulnefs in the Minifters, who from conviction, ranged themfelves foremoft amongft the pooreft finners; acknowledged a heartfelt register of fins, and then threw themfelves in the name of Jefus, into the arms of a reconciled father—My God! what hours were thefe! what comfort pervaded our otherwife diftreffed congregation! for me it is impoffible to describe what the Lord hath done among us.

To thefe bleffings muft be added moreover how the Lord ufed to deal commonly with his miniftering fervants; thefe faw and felt very plainly the confidence, the filial love of their hearers; they feared not any infidious fpy, who had come to draw poifon from their difcourfes; no fupercilious defpifer or fcornor; and this fentiment gave them a warm and loving heart and an open mouth. Here prevailed not the ftiffnefs of an accurately arranged and methodically divided fermon; here the friend, the lover, the father was fpeaking to his children the fentiments of an upright heart; never during the time of our office, was preaching a more welcome and bleffed duty, than what we found it during this calamity, and never, we fincerely believe, were we fo ufeful in the vine-

yard of the Lord, as in those days. But here we are obliged to add with great concern, that we find ourselves brought in guilty in a thing which we had looked upon as having produced many blessed effects; we are charged of having done considerable damage by our public worship: in evidence of this charge they alledge the great number of deaths, in our congregation, above all others in the city; and what is of the greatest consequence, they attempt to prove our guilt from Scripture.

[Answer to the charge respecting the holding of  
Public Worship.]

This charge having repeatedly been made against us, it is our duty to give a short answer to it in these sheets. Take it as follows:

We know that the Most High doth not dwell in temples made with men's hands; but that he dwells in a contrite and humble mind; but we know likewise, that few people have a contrite and humble heart at the time of the judgments of God, and that the Lord makes use of his word, to produce in them this blessed disposition: we know that the public preaching of the Gospel, and common means of edification, promote the same very much; we know that the Lord dwells with such really contrite souls particularly then, when they unite in a church or in any other house for his worship; for has he not said, "*The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling-places of Jacob.*" Has not our Blessed Saviour given

this promise? *Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* Has he not called to us through his Apostle, *Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together.* Has there been any exception made in any part of Scripture with respect to sickness, or the time of the plague? Do we blame the first Christians, when they assembled together for the common adoration of Jesus Christ at the utmost hazard of their of lives? was it not in these meetings where the blessed martyrs gathered courage and strength, joyfully to shed their blood for Christ's sake? Do we believe that the law of self-preservation would have excused them if they had for that reason neglected the opportunities, which prepared the way for them to a glorious death? The narrow compass of this small pamphlet will not allow us to say any more of the blessings of God upon such associations of his people; and even of the Scriptural necessity of such meetings in times of calamity; we will only add a few remarks concerning our meetings themselves, from whence it will appear that we were extremely cautious, and endeavoured to render them not only harmless, but even useful.

Very soon in the beginning of the disorder we left off our evening prayers, as we thought that they might perhaps be hurtful on account of the evening air; and because many would perhaps not change their clothes in the evening which they had worn all day in sick-rooms. We fixed our meetings in the morning, and we came together in our large church and no longer in the small one, as being too near the grave-yard. This roomy building was opened long before the time of meeting, in

order that the fresh morning air might pervade it; afterwards all the doors and windows were shut and a strong smoke of juniper berries and nitre was made throughout the whole house. Then the people gathered; when all were met, many or few, or perhaps all of the windows and doors were opened, according as the weather required.

Those who had sick people at home, or did not feel well themselves, were particularly requested not to come to our meetings; all who attended were advised to sit as far apart as the numbers of the hearers would permit. The service itself lasted seldom longer than half or three quarters of an hour.

In our discourses we did not confine ourselves to truths concerning salvation, but frequently interspersed other necessary matters according to circumstances; among these we reckon:

A repeated injunction, that the disorder was contagious and that nobody ought to go near the dead or into the sick-rooms without occasion:

A recommendation of certain necessary and harmless preservatives:

A caution against all that might be hurtful and might promote the infection, such as intemperance in eating and drinking; uncleanness of dress and body; immoderate use of strong liquors; catching cold; overheating; fatigue, &c.

Directions how to conduct themselves in the

rooms where the sick lay ; what was to be done with the cloathing and bedding of the dead, and several other particulars of the like nature. We are well persuaded that these and other directions have been the means of saving the lives of many ; but these we could not have given, if the said meetings had not been held.

We preached moreover Jesus, the friend of the poor sinner ; the ready and Almighty physician and assistant in the greatest distress ; we tried to banish all excessive fear out of the minds of our hearers, and inspire them with courage and confidence in God ; we recited instances of persons of our congregation who had given up their spirits into the hands of their heavenly Father with faith and joy. We may safely appeal to the evidence of a number of those, who were then our hearers, that we say not too much when we assert, that forgetting almost entirely the distress that surrounded us, and banishing all fear from our minds (and experience has shewn how hurtful fear has been to the inhabitants of this city) we, could and really did yield ourselves into the hands of the Almighty Father, with filial, penitent, but likewise composed confidence.

Such were the purposes of our meetings, and that these could be any ways injurious, will only be asserted by those who do not know the power of religion, or who form to themselves an idea of the danger of infection from the disorder which prevailed here, far above the poison of the real plague.

But here the question will be asked, From whence

proceeded that very great and disproportionate number of burials in your congregation?

To this question we give the following satisfactory answer—

*First.* The number is not so greatly out of proportion as some people may think, for our congregation was always the most numerous in births and burials, of any in the city, according to the bills of mortality, of which, every one may easily convince himself, by having recourse to the said bills for a few years past; and therefore, now, without any thing extraordinary, the number would naturally exceed that of the other congregations.

*Secondly.* It has been generally observed, that this fatal disorder, made a much greater havock among the poor, than among the rich; and a great number of the members of our congregation, are of the poorer class.

*Thirdly.* For this very reason, more persons of our congregation, remained in town than of any other; consequently were in greater numbers exposed to the danger and swept away by it.

*Fourthly.* It must be striking to every body, as it was to us, that from the first of August, until the fifteenth of September, the number of burials, in our grave-yards, was smaller than what it ought to have been in proportion to other congregations, and even to their own in former years, when a calculation is made according to the lists of burials; and yet, in those days we held as usual, our meet-

ings for worship, without observing all those precautions which we made use of afterwards; and there were as many members of our congregation living in that part of the city, where the mortality began and spread during the first weeks, as where it raged afterwards. Nevertheless the number of our burials encreased after the fifteenth of September, in that disproportionate manner, in which we now find it stated. Every reader will naturally suppose, that there must be a particular reason for this, and herein he is not mistaken.— This reason we trust, we can give to every body's satisfaction: Among the brethren who left the city, was likewise the member, who had been appointed by our corporation, to grant the licenses for burial; no one of the corporation would now take this office upon himself; we were therefore obliged to transfer it to our inviter, and that under this injunction (which for good reasons was highly necessary at this time) that he should give leave for the interment of the dead to *every one gratis and without any particular enquiry*; the inviter himself was most of his time at funerals, and, therefore, could not always personally attend to this business, but was obliged to leave it, to a child of eight or nine years old, who gave tickets to the grave-digger, to any one that came.

This circumstance was soon generally known; there was not a burying-ground in the whole city, whither people could bring their dead with less trouble than to ours; and, besides all this, our inviter and driver put the deceased in the coffin themselves, and their friends had no occasion to look for any other assistance, numbers of people



came from all quarters on account of this considerable advantage. Among these a great many who had never before called themselves members of our congregation, applied to have their dead buried in our grave-yards. I do not know exactly how many we can reckon in our list of the dead whose names were not even known to us before; but their number is certainly very great. And now, who can be surpris'd any longer, that the number of our dead was so very great, during the abovementioned time? certainly nobody, who considers all these circumstances, will contend that the reason is to be found in our meeting for worship.

The number of those who attended divine service, and sickened or died, is proportionably small compared with the number of those, who never or at least very seldom attended our meetings and nevertheless were buried with us; I never heard of a single one of whom it could be supposed with any degree of certainty, that he had taken the seeds of the disorder in church; and in regard to whom a different and more probable cause of the infection could not be assigned.

Being very much concerned to shew every reader, that the public worship of God, has contributed nothing to the mortality, we will add the following circumstance: Out of the poor society of our congregation twenty-four have died during these fatal months; one of them died four hundred miles from hence; five of them frequented the church constantly. Three of these were infected, by their close attendance on the sick; of

the two others we cannot say this with such a degree of certainty, the other eighteen could not have taken the infection in church, as they according to the testimony of several of our members, (probably from fear) seldom or never attended in those days. If time permitted us to enter into a more minute enquiry, we certainly should find a different cause of infection in the above-mentioned two persons, than that of going to church. We add moreover, that the list of our burials was kept with great accuracy; whether the same strict attention has been observed in other religious societies, we do not pretend to say; but this I hope we shall be permitted to say; that from seeing the dead carts and hearses travelling up and down every street daily, we should have supposed the amount of the dead considerably larger than what it has been published. Perhaps there were not wanting some, who looked upon this judgment as falling only upon the wicked, and were sorry to find so many people of this class in their congregations; but we rather believe that the Lord makes no difference in his general judgments; we believe that as so many pious souls have been called off, this mortality has proved a harvest for heaven. We could besides mention the names of several, belonging to another religious society, which pretended at a distance, that none of their members had died; who have been buried in our grave-yards.

[Comfort during these weeks of Mourning.]

Disagreeable as it was to us to make this digression from the more pleasant path, wherein we

wished to conduct our readers, it was nevertheless necessary to add this short apology for our meetings of worship. We shall now return to the narration of that, which supported our minds and instilled much comfort into them, amidst all the distress which we witnessed.

[Domestic Service or Family Worship.]

It was in these days of mortality that domestic worship, which had been so long and generally neglected, had a blessed revival in several families, and presented scenes which some of them will never forget. I will, for the encouragement of our youth, mention in this place, one circumstance, only: A young woman one evening encouraged the whole family to sing certain hymns with her, which she herself had collected and transcribed with her own hand into a book, and which all pointed to Jesus, and in some places treated of an happy death; she with great alacrity led the whole company in singing, and continued this edifying exercise with much life and zeal until eleven o'clock at night, and behold! this was the last evening of life, wherein she was able to sing in this world; for a few days afterwards she was a corpse. But this exercise was without a doubt a blessed preparation through the grace of Jesus Christ to so near a dissolution.

[Comfort out of the Calamity itself.]

We reckon among the blessings of these days, those solacing sensations which faith sometimes produced in the midst of this great distress; sen-

fations, which the Lord usually instilled first by the instrumentality of his word into the teachers, and which were by their frequent discourses communicated to their hearers—and I shall not be blamed perhaps, if from my journal of one day, I put down in a few words, what on that day I felt; I will select a day, which brought us nearly to the highest pitch of distress; it was the 5th of October, the very Saturday before that week, wherein our congregation lost one hundred and thirty of its members. The reader may easily imagine, that under these circumstances our poor congregation must be full of sick, and that the distress and the agonies of the sick, must have necessarily taken away the courage of the ministers at their visits, if the Lord had refused them his support; but to the praise of his mercy we herewith humbly acknowledge that the Lord did not forsake us; He assisted us. In the abovementioned journal, it is recorded on the 5th of October as follows:

“ Early awake—manifold anxieties of mind—my prayer was barren, more barren than it has been for a long time. My heart as cold as the air of the morning is abroad.

“ Text: *Teach me to do thy will*—Meditated on Isa. LXVI, 2. *To this man I will look even to him that is poor*”—Went towards the church with a heavy heart—On my way the distress of a family very dear to me was greatly increased by the relation given of it by a female friend, and this augmented my uneasiness which was great already. Preached on Isa. LXVI, 2.—During the discourse my poor heart was enlarged—Oh! how I could evan-

gelize! Thanks to thee, my blessed Redeemer! Rode down into the Neck—Afterwards visited the following sick in the city—”

Here follow about thirty names of sick persons, twelve whereof were buried a few days after—Then it says further :

“ Blessed evening—blessed awful solitude—The thought: *The city is distressed—so many families are distressed—but the Lord looks down upon the distressed, and who would not willingly be in a place on which the Lord looks down in mercy?* This thought had so much comfort for me, that I forgot all the calamity around me—

“ Oh! dear, blessed Philadelphia, now more blessed than ever, for the Lord looks down upon thee—Happy I—and so the Lord looks down upon me too in mercy, through Christ—This looking down comprehends the whole blessing of the Old, as well as the New Testament, in it is comprised *the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost—*

“ Happy art thou! oh my soul! thou hast a blessed portion! here and there I behold persons kneeling, as soon as I begin to speak, in sick-rooms and in the adjoining apartments—Ah! what a thirst after the word of God; praised be our good Lord!”

The sympathy that was shewn every where at our distress, was a matter of great comfort; it has been mentioned already in other general accounts,

how this sympathy from different parts was extended to *all the poor* of the city; and how the committee appointed here for that purpose was supported by liberal contributions, to take care of the poor sick at Bush-Hill, and to provide for the widows and orphans; in this account we will only mention what concerns our own congregation in particular, and here we reckon,

*First*, The charitable donations which were sent to our widows and orphans—The Lancaster Congregation was the first and most generous; never will the ministers of the Evangelic Congregation in Philadelphia forget the comfort which they derived at that time in the midst of their distress from these tokens of love; and never ought our whole congregation to loose the remembrance of the sisterly treatment which they have experienced in this respect; Germantown followed this Christian example, and to both these congregations the warmest acknowledgments of their expressions of affection are offered in the name of our poor widows and orphans.

*Secondly*, It was a great comfort to us whenever we heard from our brethren in the country; and this consolation was frequently so increased by their letters, that we were enabled to raise ourselves above our distress, and instead of lamentations appear before the Lord with praise and thanksgiving. May Jesus Christ grant to these ministers and other brethren, that comfort in the hour of death, which by their letters they have conveyed to us in the greatest danger of life.

*Thirdly*, The blessing of the fervent prayers of so many pious souls, was a great support to our minds; we could, as one may say, feel that many others, even far distant brethren, assisted us in bearing the burthen which sometimes would become too heavy for us. And how much more will eternity discover of all this to our mutual joy. Good God! how will our hearts, then no longer bleeding at thy judgments, there mix in pure celestial extacy, and even for these very afflictions praise thee in eternal strains, for “our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for us a far, more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” Amen, Hallelujah!

F I N I S.

The first of the living  
 to be mentioned is a great part of the  
 world, and it is not only the  
 human race, but the whole of the  
 animal and vegetable kingdoms, and  
 even the inorganic world, for all  
 these are the objects of God's  
 love, and he has provided for  
 their sustenance and well-being  
 in a most wise and merciful  
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 manner.

J. I. W. 1871









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