

A. R. Barclay MSS.

Extracts. Continued from vol. xxxii., p. 64.

Notes are not supplied to Friends respecting whom notes appear in 'The Journal of George Fox', Cambridge edition, 1911, or "The Short and Itinerary Journals", 1925. The A.R.B. MSS. are in the Library at Friends House.

XLI

MARY HOWGILL to GEORGE FOX, 1656.

Dearely beeloved George my deare life¹ my livinge Joy who beegat me into the liveinge life & put life² where none was & turned me towards an endles Kingdome whose Kingdome endures for ever & stablisht me on him yt was beefore the world was . . . Deare life³ I desire thee to pray for me whose words is life & as sweet to me as pretious oyntment that I may be kept out of all visible thinges in my measure & led up to god who is the end of all thinges. . . .

A prisoner of the lord at Lancaster

Mary Howgill

[endorsed by George Fox] M. howgill to G.F. 1656.

XLII

T[HOMAS] L[AWSON) to GEORGE FOX. *Great Strickland*, 20.ii.1689.

Dear George

Whom I have & do love without Eclipse, & I can truly say, the remembrance of thy first comeing, in power & innocency & thy perseverance therein hath often sweetly tintured & strengthen'd me in hours of temptations. [Acknowledges receipt of a request from G.F. to go to London but cannot come] I follow my ancient employment of

¹ "life" corrected in George Fox's hand to "frend".

² "put life" deleted.

³ "life" corrected in George Fox's hand to "frend".

schooling, & makeing conscience thereof fear to minister offence by ouer long absence, many souldiers draw into these parts & though they are pretty civill yet many become much straitned, & more thorough want of provision then men. . . . I am sometymes thinking if Way were made answerable to my minde it were better I were in or near London in order to complete somethings I have travel'd^t about, I have by me Manuscripts of many subjects, relateing to the primitive order & how it came to be lost, & then what fopperies & fooleries externals borrowed from & extracted out of the idolatry of paganism, as also from Judaism, entred & how the same or great resemblance thereof is continued in Churches pretending to Reformation, That about the Witnesses, mention'd to Tho. Robartson, I have done nothing therein, except by way of Meditation . . . being driven out of my course by the enormous irregularity of some. Dear George, I shall say no more, but conclude with y^e near & dear unfeigned affection to thee begotten in us y^t day when thorough thee, a furnished & polished Instrum^t in Gods hand, where his stars are, we were brought to waite at Wisdoms gate.

T.L.

Remember me to Williã Mead, Williã Pen, John Rous, & their wives, George Whitehead, Alexander Parker, James Parke &c.

[addressed] For George Fox in London this.

[endorsed] This is to be Read in ye 2^d dayes Meeting.

XLIII

THOMAS JORDAN to GEORGE FOX. *Chucatuck*,²
18.ix.1687.

Dear & Honorable Geo: Fox

I received thy letter & Papers of yo^r Yearly Meetings servis for truth & I have Read them in our Monthly Meeting & if please y^e Lord may be Read in our Yearly Meeting wch is on ye 2^d: 5th day of ye 7th mo that they may have other servis And I desire that yo^r yearly meeting papers may be

¹ i.e. traved.

² To the S. of James River, Virginia. This M.M. was established as early as 1683.

conveyed to us if possible against our Yearly Meeting it may be opportunity may present by way of Barbados if no other way As to y^e Increase of truth it hath bin but Littell sence Frances Denson and hir tribe went out from us & Caused such a scattering from ye truth y^e few hath com in sence & yet she will not condem hir worke, but cryes out what Evell have I don & will not clear gods truth Many ther be y^t are Convinced of ye truth & will com to meetings when frends of ye ministri from other Cuntries Come amongst us but few will com & sett & waight wth us when they are gon to know an Increase of it & ther are but very few ancient frends left amongst us & y^e most of them are weak in buisnes except John Porter who hath not bin amongst frends near this two or 3 yeares and John Copland & sam Nuton who is mad[e] as useles amongst us by reson of ther Misdemeniors so we have Need of viseting if y^e Lord please to send faithfull Labourers amongst us I beleeve that many might be gathered to us & Dear Georg I hope the Lord will put it into thy harte to wright to John Porter to stir him up to Com amongst us againe & not to sett at Home & hide his tallant & I hope frinds will be stird up to wright unto your yearly meeting from oures soe wth my dear Love & wifes to thee & all frends in ye truth I bid y^{ee} farwell in ye Lorde

Tho Jordan.

[addressed] To John Edridge in Love Lane Lane Neare Billings Gate these delir In London for G.F.

[endorsed] Tho: Jordans Letter to G.F. Virginia 8:9 mo:87.8. Answered by G.F.

XLIV

JOSIAH COALE to GEORGE FOX. *Barbados*, 12.iv.1661. G.F.

My Deare and welbeeloved in the Lord whom in the Measure of Life wch I have receved I dearly and tenderly Salute, as y^e dearly Beeloved of my Soule . . . [reports the work great there, many convinced daily, Friends fresh and living, meetings large and precious, the Lord attends his labours, to which his life is given up; of Virginia, left three months before, he writes] I left frends generally very well

and fresh in y^e truth . . . & frends at Liberty, [believes he will return to Virginia again ; on the island are Robert Maylins, and Ann Clayton who cam with John Rous, R.M. is to go to Jamaica and Ann Clayton to New England].
I remayne Thine in the Lord

Josiah Coale

If thou have anything to verginia Ann James of London knows to send it I should be glad to receve a few words from thee.

[no address, endorsed by George Fox] J. Coull to G.F.
1661.

XLV

OLIVER HOOTON to GEORGE FOX. *Barbados*, 8.ii.1682.

Deare George

I have now received thine in Answer to mine formerly sent, & though but answered in part, yet am very well satisfied therewith [speaks of the tone of his former letter, of his complaint of "much more violence than ought to be amongst christians", hopes that] more moderation will be used in time to com amongst us for such procedings has but produced hardness in those whom tenderness would have overcom [Solomon Eccles, John Rous mentioned as peacemakers. William Rogers's books but little known in the island & do little harm.] I am now going to see y^e new Countreys of New Jarsey and Pensilvania, I cannot say to setle there but hope if y^e Lord plese to be back before y^e yeare Expires [desires preservation in the fear of the Lord "while I have a beinge heare below".] I allwayes Remayne thy truly loving Friend & hope I shall never change

Oliv^r Hooton

[addressed] For my deare Friend George Fox these present p Chrisop^r Newham who is desired to gett it Safely Convayed as abov sd.

[endorsed by George Fox] Oliver Houten to G.F. from barbados 1682.

XLVI

JOHN ROUS to GEORGE FOX. *Barbados*, 30.xi.1681.

Dear Father

I lately writ a letter to thee G[eorge] W[hitehead] & A[lexander] P[arker] wherein I gave you an acct of my rec^t of y^r Answer to the quarterly meeting's paper^t & y^t it was read at our last Quarterly Meeting at Ralph Fretwell's . . . & y^t the paper was taken out of the booke & your Answer put in the place . . . Jno Weale proposed the giving forth of a paper of Condemnation, . . . for R.F. who drew y^e paper. I doe under stand y^t some freinds in England have judged that he hath been hardly dealt with . . . [Describes means taken to have John Weale reconciled with Friends, proposal to transfer a meeting to his house, etc., all unavailing; reference to Thomas Crisp's *Babel's Builders Unmasking Themselves* and to John Rous's enclosed answer to it, see XLVII below. Ralph Fretwell intends to return to England, possibly preceded by his wife and children, his son Ralph to remain in Barbados.] Since the proposing of a general unitie meetings are much fresher y^a they have bin . . .

John Rous.

[Letters "about any public concerns of truth" may be directed to Joseph Borden, "who is a very honest friend".] [addressed] For my Dear Father George Fox this in London.

[endorsed by George Fox] John Rous to G.F. & frendes for advice to be given & sent to Barbados
1681 anesered

XLVII

JOHN ROUS. *Barbados*, 28.xi.1681.

Paper written in answer to *Babel's Builders unmasked* & sent with foregoing to G.F.

Envy and prejudice displayed in their proper Colours as appears in a booke falsely called as intended *Babel's*

¹ This episode, a significant one in the growth of the Quaker conception of authority in Church Government is dealt with in Braithwaite: *Second Period of Quakerism*, 348-50, but this MS. is not mentioned. See also the next four letters.

Builders unmasking themselves [long title, followed by foreword "To the Reader" and text of the paper, 4 closely written folio pp.].

XLVIII—XLIX

JOHN ROUS to GEORGE FOX, GEORGE WHITEHEAD
& ALEXANDER PARKER. *Barbados, 25.x.1681.*

Deare Father, & Deare Freinds G.W. & A.P. who are truly honourable in the Lord . . . even in the Ilands afarre of, to whom your love & tender care in the Lord is extended, in your comfortable advise, & tender reproofes where things are amisse, the effects whereof hath been manifested in your severall epistles to freinds in this place.

[The writer acknowledges receipt of G.F's. paper in answer to their Quarterly Meeting's paper (see XLVI and XLVII above) which he and his wife somewhat unwillingly signed. Recounts the discussions that took place in the meeting, the condemnation of the first paper by some, more from disunity with Friends than from unity with George Fox's admonition. Refers to Oliver Hooton's paper defending his not signing the first. Regrets that such matters are dealt with in large open meetings in the presence of "diverse boyes & young unsettled people" instead of by seasoned Friends, and that his opposition to the inopportune reading of G.F's. paper has been misunderstood as a slight on his love. A copy of the paper had been read at a Six-Weeks Meeting in the island, unfortunate effect of some copyist's errors, question whether they were malicious. Thinks there are some ill-disposed who try to get copies privately of such epistles. References to John Weale, Walter Benthall, Edward Hunt, Mary Weale, Richard Ford.]

. . . Friends have used many endeavours to gaine John Weale, & are willing to pass by & forget all that is past, & if any thing still rests y^t cannot be buried & forgiven to discourse it in coolnes. I have much laboured with him divers times to gain a reconciliation & after he had abundantly eased his minde, I told him y^t when he had said all y^t he could, the ballance of the account must be this, y^t we must forgive one another, as God for Christ sake had forgiven us, but as yet I doe not see y^t anything doth prevaile.

[Describes further attempts to reconcile John Weale, disaffection of Aalice Butcher in spite of efforts made " in the love of God ".]

Deare freinds these things were in my minde to acquaint you with knowing your naturall care for the truth, & that knowing what the grief is you may according to the wisdome of God in you apply a suitable remedie for we have found by experience (of which I could give divers evidences) y^t Epistles from you who are Elders have been of great service here.

[Speaks of his long concern] to know what was the occasion of the great deadnes & dulnes y^t hath been in our meetings in Generall, even when the best of freinds amongst us have been gathered together, & it opened in me y^t it was want of love & y^t the only remedie wil be a promoting of love in generall. [He has propounded to a meeting of Friends in the ministry] that differences & strifes be wholly laid aside . . . which at present is under the consideration of that meeting & when it is fully closed with they may goe to the quarterly & six weekes meetings & from thence to the particular monthly meetings, & from thence to each particular, even the apostates themselves, y^t as many as truly embrace the offer of Gods love to them may be gathered, but those who reject it may remaine excluded, which I believe will reach where anything of sinceritie & honestie is.

And as to our meetings I think it necessarie to give you an account y^t when yee write any epistles you may direct them to those meetings you would have them read at, & then there will be noe controversie but your directions followed. We have four quarterly meetings which are at four freinds houses in the Country which hold 3 daies apiece two daies for meetings of worship and the third day for busines, only we cannot yet bring them to their full service because divers intrude who are not fit to be at such meetings. I have often desired y^t it might be ordered y^t none should come to quarterly meetings but such as are either chosen or well approved of by the particular meetings, but some frends fearing it may give severall offence, have not yeilded to it, so y^t we are forced many times to wave busines necessarie & some times weake freinds hear disputes which are not for their benefit in which case your Advice might be serviceable.

We have also between every quarterly meeting two generall monthly meetings at the bridge towne, which continues two days, the first day of which meeting used to be for busines, & till they were altered proved great meetings of Contention, but now we meet the men apart from the women about two or three hours, where if any generall epistles come (having only relation to doctrine) are read, & ordered how to be dispersed among freinds, & a collection made, & then both men & women goe downe into the publick meeting, & there have a meeting of worship.

To the men & womens meeting marraiges are sometimes brought after they have passed the particular meetings, & because there is little comes to this meeting which may admit disputes there are invited to it young convinced freinds, & freinds children who are growing towards years of discretion, & since meetings have thus altered, they have been very peacable, though some who consented to the altering of them, are not now well pleased with y^m.

The second day of this generall meeting in the morning, freinds in the ministry meet for the supplying of the first daies meetings for a fortnight, & afterwards there is a publick meeting for worship, & between the generall meeting & the quarterly we have a meeting on the 3^d day of the weeke, where in the morning freinds in the ministry meet, & where things are treated of in relation to the publick service of truth, but soe many presse on us y^t often times we cannot speake to things necessarie. After this meeting there is a publick meeting for worship, where are most of freinds in the ministry in the Iland, but many coming a great way, & our time being short we are streightened y^t we cannot goe through things necessarie, & soe we were glad dear father of thy advice to have y^t meeting on the second day which we have not had time yet to settle.

We have also six weekes meetings not soe much from the time as busines there treated on, answering the busines of the six weekes meeting at London & to these meetings we would willingly have none come but established freinds, such as are sound in their minds & Judgments & free from contention, though we cannot alwaies have it soe, but some weake freinds, & those y^t are in contention will come, to the hurt of our meetings.

And having 6 Divisions we have in every division a particular Monthly meeting to which all that are convinced & walke honestly doe come, & on first daies we have 5 or 6 publick meetings which at meetings of freinds in the ministry we take care to supply, which doe soe fall in turnes that once in 5 weekes there is a publick meeting on first daies to which any y^t desire may come in any part of the Iland, & for the further information of freinds I doe intend to send my brother Meade a plat of y^e Iland with the severall division lines drawne in it, & an account of all settled meetings in the Iland

I have been the more large y^t knowing how it is with us you may yeild us [your] assistance & prayers, y^t the unseemly practice of contention may be [en]ded your dear Freind in the Everlasting truth.

Barbados y^o 25th of the 10th moth 1681.

John Rous.

[addressed] For my dear Father/George Fox/and/my
Dear Freinds George/Whitehead &
Alexander/Parker this in/London.

L

BARBADOS FRIENDS to [GEORGE FOX, AND OTHERS].
14.xi.1681.

Dear & Honoured Friends in the Precious Truth of our Good God.

[Acknowledges receipt of their epistle touching the paper issued from the Quarterly Meeting at Ralph Fretwell's, which was sent abroad without the knowledge and consent of the meeting. This distribution was condemned by the meeting, 1 mo. 1681, several months before any remonstrances from Friends outside were received. It was again declared against at a Q.M., 13.x.1681, and ordered to be taken out of the book and "your testimony unanimously submitted unto". One contentious Friend disliking the paper justified sending copies abroad, though both obtained and sent without authority. Speaking of church government, the writer continues] helps of Government we believe y^e Lord doth continue in his church whose place it is to be Healers (as some translations have it) or peace makers, & for y^e Edifying

of y^e Body to bring y^m to oneness in y^e Truth . . . Also we should have hinted (as in Justice to y^e Meeting we should) of y^e great love, freedome, tenderness, brokenness & liberty y^t was in y^t said Meeting expressed & y^t when any thing of hot zeal, or constraint appeared in any particular, how Friends were desired to forbear anything of that kind, to which there was a loving submission, & again repeating, for as much as it was a day of Love & liberty & choice, & not of constraint, & y^t y^e Spirit of Love & Truth went over every individual to their great refreshment & acknowledgment from Jangling or opposing.

[Referring to the criticized statement by the Barbados Friends he states it was too short, ill expressed, especially for any not at the meeting. The private judgment of the meeting was intended to be only that of those who had " come unto a loss in themselves ". It was in their hearts only " to be helpful to y^e dimsighted, Lame, maimed, or strayed "] . . . All judgment in this thing out of y^e Light or against y^e least measure of true Light in any particular or particulars [i.e. individuals] is wrong and Judged by us : And with y^e universall Spirit of God which seekes y^e good of all Friends & Enemies & is one with everie true measure of Light in each particular y^t believes in y^e Light do we desire to be one with, & not wilfully to grieve & oppose. . . . Even so Amen.

14th 11th month 1681

This is a Copie of y^e Originall Examined

Rich: Forde.

LI

BARBADOS FRIENDS to GEORGE FOX and others.
14.xi.1681.

[Acknowledges receipt of advice from London and its being recorded in their Quarterly Meeting minute book, the former paper being removed. If they have fallen short still they hope to answer to satisfaction. Signed by John Rous and fourteen others.]

[address] For G.F., G.W., &c.

[endorsed] A letter from Barbados 14.xi.81 about y^e subscribing *the order*. [* * these two words struck out.]