

TO MRS. R. HEBER.

Dacca, July 18, 1821.

DEAR, DEAR WIFE!—All is over! My poor friend was released a little after twelve last night. The light-headedness, which in dysentery, I find, is always a fatal symptom, increased during the day, though he continued to know me, and to do and take whatever I desired him; between nine and ten he had a severe return of spasms after which he sunk into a tranquil dose, till he passed off without a groan. I grieve to find by your letter that his sister is set out hither; surely there will yet be time to bring her back again, and spare her some of the horrors of a journey made in doubtful hope, and a return in solitude and misery.

I greatly regret that anything in my letters gave encouragement to her to set off. But I have all along clung, even against hope, to the hope of his recovery.

On the 14th and 15th, he altered much for the worse; and it was on the evening of the latter day that he was first convinced his end was drawing near, and begged me to be with him when the hour came. You will not doubt that I kept my promise, though he was not conscious of my presence. As he was fully sensible of the approach of death, so he was admirably prepared for it. From the very beginning of our journey, we had prayed and read the Scriptures together daily; on the last Sunday which he saw we had received the sacrament together; I trust I shall never forget the deep contrition and humility, the earnest prayer, or the earnest faith in the mercies of Christ, with which he commended himself to God. On Thursday he had an awful mental struggle, but confessed his sins, and cried for mercy to Jesus Christ, with a simplicity, contrition, and humility, which I shall never forget, and I trust always be the better for. By degrees his fears became less, his faith stronger, and his hope more lively; and he told me at many different times in the following thirty-six hours, that God's goodness was making the passage more and more easy to him, and that he felt more and more that Christ had died for sinners. When his strength was gradually wearing away, he said, "If I lose sight of the Cross, though but for a moment, I am ready to despair; but my blessed Lord makes his mercy and his power more and more plain to me." The laudanum, which was given him in the course of Friday night, conjured up some evil dreams, of which he complained a good deal. Being very much worn out myself, I had gone to lie down for an hour or two, leaving him asleep, under the care of one of the surgeons. He wakened, however, soon after, and called earnestly for me, and when I came, threw his arms round my neck, and begged me not to leave him. After we had prayed a little together, he said, "My head is sadly confused with this horrid drug, but I now recollect all which you told me, and which I myself experienced yesterday, of God's goodness in his Son. Do not let them give me any more, for it prevents my praying to God as I could wish to do." He spoke very often of his "poor, poor sister," and said, "God, who is so good to a sinner like me, will not forget her." He asked, which you will not doubt I promised for us both, that we would be a sister and a brother to her. He said, not long before his light-headedness came on, Saturday morning, "Tell Mrs. Heber that I think of her, and pray for her in this hour." After his hallucination took place, he rambled very much about our voyage, but whenever I spoke to him, it recalled him for the moment, and he listened, and said Amen, to some of the Church prayers for the dying. "It is very strange," he once said, "every thing changes round me. I cannot make out where I am, or what has happened, but your face seems always near me, and I recollect what you have been saying." The last articulate words he uttered were about his sister. Even in this incoherence, it was comfortable to find that no gloomy ideas intruded, that he kept up some shadow of his hope in God, even when his intellect was most clouded, and that his last day of life was certainly, on the