

If I could contemplate the conducts of Providence with the eyes you do, it would give ease indeed, and no disastrous events should much affect us. The new scenes of each day make me often conclude myself very void of temper and reason, that I still shed tears of sorrow and not of joy, that so good a man is landed safe on the happy shore of a blessed eternity; doubtless he is at rest, tho' I find none without him, so true a partner he was in all my joys and griefs; I trust the Almighty will pass by this my infirmity; I speak it in respect to the world, from whose enticing delights I can now be better weaned. I was too rich in possessions whilst I possessed him: all relish is now gone, I bless God for it, and pray, and ask of all good people (do it for me from such you know are so) also to pray that I may more and more turn the stream of my affections upwards, and set my heart upon the ever satisfying perfections of God; not starting at his darkest providences, but remembering continually either his glory, justice, or power is advanced by every one of them, and that mercy is over all his works, as we shall one day with ravishing delight see: in the mean time, I endeavour to suppress all wild imaginations a melancholy fancy is apt to let in, and say with the man in the gospel: 'I believe; help thou my unbelief.' . . .

WIMBORNE ABBY, 27th Novr. 1685.

To Lord Cavendish.

Tho' I know my letters do Lord Cavendish no service, yet as a respect I love to pay him, and to thank him also for his last from Limbeck, I had not been so long silent, if the death of two persons both very near and dear to me had not made me so uncomfortable to myself, that I knew I was utterly unfit to converse where I would never be all company. The separation of friends is grievous. My sister Montague was one I loved tenderly; my Lord Gainsborough was the only son of a sister I loved with too much passion: they both deserved to be remembered kindly by all that knew them. They both began their race long after me, and I hoped should have ended it so too; but the great and wise Disposer of all things, and who knows where 'tis best to place his creatures, either in this or in the other world, has ordered it otherwise. The best improvement we can make in these cases, and you, my dear Lord, rather than I, whose glass runs low, while you are young, and I hope have many happy years to come, is, I say, that we should all reflect there is no passing thro' this to a better world without some crosses; and the scene sometimes shifts so fast, our course of life may be ended before we think we have gone half-way; and that a happy eternity depends on our spending well or ill that time allotted us here for probation.

Live virtuously, my Lord, and you can't dye too soon, nor live too long. I hope the last shall be your lot, with many blessings attending it.

24th October 1685.

To the Earl of Galway.

I have before me, my good Lord, two of your letters, both partially and tenderly kind, and coming from a sincere heart and honest mind (the last a plain word, but, if I mistake not, very significant) are very comfortable to me, who, I hope, have no proud thoughts of myself as to any sort. The opinion of an esteemed friend, that one is not very wrong, assists to strengthen a weak and willing mind to do her duty towards that

Almighty Being who has from infinite bounty and goodness so checkered my days on this earth, as I can thankfully reflect I felt many. I may say as many years of pure and (I trust) innocent, pleasant content, and happy enjoyments as the world can afford, particularly that biggest blessing of loving and being loved by those I loved and respected; on earth no enjoyment certainly to be put in the balance with it. All other are like wine, which intoxicates for a time, but the end is bitterness, at least not profitable. Mr Waller, whose picture you look upon, has, I beg remember, these words:

'All we know they do above
Is that they sing and that they love.'

The best news I have heard is, you have two good companions with you, which I trust will contrIBUTE to divert you this sharp season, when, after so sore a fit as I apprehend you have felt, the air even of your improving pleasant garden can't be enjoyed without hazard.
(1721)

Richard Cumberland (1631-1718), born at London, and educated at St Paul's and at Cambridge, held various cures from 1658, and was raised by King William to the see of Peterborough in 1691. He had published, in 1672, a Latin work, *De Legibus Nature Disquisitio Philosophica*, 'A Philosophical Inquiry into the Laws of Nature: in which their form, order, promulgation, and obligation are investigated from the nature of things; and in which also the philosophical principles of Hobbes, moral as well as civil, are considered and refuted.' This erudite but verbose treatise expounds some novel views, and lays down a distinctly utilitarian criterion in ethics. The laws of nature he deduces from the results of human conduct, regarding that to be commanded by God which conduces to the happiness of man. The public good is the *summum bonum*, and 'universal benevolence' the fountain of all virtue. He wrote also a learned essay on *Jewish Weights and Measures* (1686), dedicated oddly enough—to his friend Samuel Pepys, then President of the Royal Society; and a translation of *Sanchoniatho's Phœnician History* (translated from Eusebius, with disquisitions; not published till 1720). He was a really learned man and an acute thinker, but at best a poor writer: his sentences are involved; he lacks humour and vivacity, grace and point; and his works are hopelessly tedious even where most suggestive. In the performance of his Episcopal duties he displayed rare activity, moderation, and benevolence. When expostulated with by friends about his too great labours, he replied with the now proverbial maxim, 'I will do my duty as long as I can: a man had better wear out than rust out.' Yet he lived to the age of eighty-six, in the enjoyment of such mental vigour that he successfully studied Coptic only three years before his death. The dramatist who bore the Bishop's name was his great-grandson.

There is a *Life* by Payne prefixed to the *Sanchoniathon* (1720). The *De Legibus* was twice translated (by Meacock in 1727, by Towers in 1750).