

III. Life of brother Philip Henry Mather who departed at Buxford Sept 9. 1780.
extracted from his own manuscripts.

I was born in the year 1714 Dec the 28th at
Fusheim in the vicinity of Bussweiler in Elva-
hia where my father was the parish minister.
Being 8 years old, I was sent to the school
at Bussweiler with a view to lay the first
foundation for studying divinity. I felt
already in my infancy that the friend and
Redeemer of my soul was drawing me
by his grace. tho' I had many bad
examples before me, I remained in innocent
simplicity till in my 14th year, when I
was seduced into sin by one of my school
fellows. Sin begot death, and my conscience
was repeatedly alarmed with this dreadful
sentence: "Thou art doomed to death", which
caused me to feel unceasing anxiety of heart,
& imbibed the sinful pleasures of life, to me,

severing

living, through the kind care of the lover of my soul, as a barrier, which prevented me from rushing into misery. In the year 1734 I was sent by my parents to Metz in France, in order to learn the French language. Our Saviors pursued me also here by his Grace in many ways. Being once in company with my French master, I accompanied him at night to his lodgings seeming ly in good health. The next morning I was thunderstruck at hearing that he was dead, as my conscience forced immediately this question upon me: what would have become of you if this had been your case? I hastened to my room trembling, and throwing myself on the ground, I prayed to an unknown God for Grace and conversion of heart from sin. But sometime after I fell again into a dilatory track. In the year 1735 I went to the University

at Jena, on which occasion I prayed to God with a concer ned heart to preserve me from seduction and convert me. This prayer I repeated very often as I knew howhurstful had the time was spent by the major part of the students, being afraid of falling into the same track. Soon after my arrival the late brother Daenbaum went with me to the meetings of edification, held by the Revd. Mr. Brumhard. Here I heard for the first time of Jesus readiness to receive the poorest and most miserable sinners, which proved to me, a word worthy of acceptance. After the meeting I went to my lodgings and cast myself at the feet of the friend of sinners, entreating him with many tears to have mercy upon me, and to assure me of my being accepted of him by delivering me from the dominions of sin in soul and body which had been an, for some time a most grievous burthen to me. He caused me to look in

that moment believingly to him, in a manner
as I had never been able to do, and I
felt that sin had been ^{completely} ~~laid~~ maimed
and lost its force. Declining the propos-
al of my Father, to return home and
to accept of a living, he withdrew his
assistance, which on the one hand obliged
me to find my support by teaching French, ^{which} renders me an unfortunate man. But to
but set me on the other hand at liberty, ^{to} be devoted to the Congregation. I do not
from accepting my Father's proposal com-
trary to the dictates of my heart. Christian
^{Renatus de} ^{Scots} ^a ^{Linrenday} coming in the year 1737
under the care of John Kitchman, to
Jena, I had the pleasure to be his teacher
in Music and the French language.

About Easter the same year the late ordinary
travelling through Jena, he had an interview
with all those who were employed to teach
his son, and asked every one, after he had
first spoke with each of us separately;
whether we were willing to devote ourselves

to our Saviour and the congregation, and
were
desirous to be prepared for serving our Saviour.
Every one said yes. But the question being
put to me, I answered. "I am convinced
that I ought to devote myself to our
Saviour, and to be connected to him with
my whole heart, for not doing it will
be unfortunate man. But to
be devoted to the congregation I do not
understand". He replied: It is very well,
this matter is only for such as understand
it, meanwhile you may continue to instruct
my son. In June of the same year our
Saviour was pleased to convince me, in
a most striking manner of my call
to the brethren's church, which time I
never shall forget. At now, I thought
as is common in my circumstances, that
I was bound in duty to serve my native
country, which had prevented me from to

see or attend to our Saviour's views with me.
Previous to my going to Doctor Hamburgh's
lectures upon natural philosophy, I
meditated about myself and prayed to
our Saviour, who was pleased to speak
to my heart and to lead me into a serious
consideration concerning my past and
future course. The following questions
were brought home to my heart: "What will
become of you at last and in what manner
will your studies terminate? You can't stay
always at the university. If you become
a minister in your native country what
benefit will it be of to you or others;
for if you go without being sent by me, you
will be an unprofitable servant, and it
may terminate with you as with other awa-
kened students who did not prosper! If
you will save your soul take refuge to
the brethren's congregation &c These and
other

other considerations came with such clearness
into my heart as if our Saviour was pre-
sent and speaking to me, and I was en-
titled to acquiesce and say amen to all
with my whole heart. Now I knew
what I was about, heard and saw every
thing in another light, and my eye being
tingle the whole body was light, so that
I could not help wondering at the change
wrought in me. I moved with the consent
of John Hitchman in the month of July
into the ^{home} of the young count, and which was
exceedingly happy in the company of the
brethren. John Hitchman was beloved
and respected as a father among us, and
cared for the good of our souls with
much love and faithfulness. Our main
view was to become like little children, and
such a spirit of love and zeal prevailed
among us, that we sat many a night
till

til one o'clock together, speaking of the state of our souls and singing praises to him, who had chosen us from before the foundation of the world, and called us from among the confusion of the learned world to his people, and to whom we now wished to devote ourselves, with heartfelt joy as living sacrifices. In the year 1738 we went with the young count to Berlin, where his father resided, having about 70 passengers with him. This was a blessed time for me. The singing of the brethren and sisters and the discourses of the late ordinary were attended withunction and the demonstration of the spirit of God. On the 8th I was received into the congi^m and the 22^d I was admitted to the Lord's supper. As our Lord had given me striking proofs of his grace, I was yet subject to many changes. The true foundation was

was laid in my heart, and I was delivered from sin. But being ignorant of the privileges our Saviour's patients are intitled to, I perplexed myself often at feeling my innate depravity and did not know how to look upon it. But now it pleased the friend of my soul to remove this by granting me the favor to cast a believing look upon Him as my all sufficient Saviour, for being at the common liturgy in deep and grateful meditation concerning the great favor I had enjoyed in eating and drinking the flesh and blood of the son of man sacramentally, and sighing to him, to make me more happy, he appeared in such a most striking manner to my heart as my bleeding and suffering Redeemer, that I melted into tears like wax before the fire. From that time I proceeded from grace to grace and the connection with Him my beloved Lord whose love

try love had captivated my heart because
I daily more confident, and my precious
call to belong to the congⁿ more impor-
tant and precious. Having stayed 5 months,
at Berlin we returned to Jena. where the
w testimony of Jesus Blood approved itself
as the power of God to salvation upon many
of students and others. In the year 1739 we
were called to Wetteravia, which proved a
means to bring me to the Congⁿ at Marien-
born. July the 1st the late Ordinary arrived
from St Thomas in the West Indies. As soon
as he had saluted me he said: "My brother
I have spoken to our Saviors concerning
you, whilst I was at sea. He has ordered
me to mention to you in his name, that
you are to go to Pennsylvania to preach
the gospel in the whole country." I replied.
Here I am, may he do with me what is
wellpleasing to him. Soon after I was ordain-

dained a Minister of the brethren Church,
and went in company with the late Ordinary
to a synodal conf^e held at Ebersdorf. Short-
ly before my setting out on my intended
post, he put me to a very severe but bly^e trial
^{before all present} by saying: "Our brother Walter is
now going to Pennsylvania, there he'll perhaps
meet with books wrote against us, or hear
many bad things concerning the congregation;
which will confuse his mind and then he
will go from us" &c I answered: "I can
not boast of myself and make fair pro-
mises; but one ^{this} I can ascertain, that
before I prove unfaithful to the Congⁿ,
I must first lose sight, and entirely for-
get our Saviors, nothing else can seporate
me from the congregation". At this declara-
tion I could not refrain from tears. My
answer removed his thoughts concerning
me, and he dismissed me with the a-
lips of love and many blessings. I now

went to Fessenthou, where I was much struck
with the primitive simplicity of the place
and the singing of all the single brethren
who were just going in procession through
the place when I arrived. Having enjoyed
many blessings during my abode there
I returned to Charentborn, where every
thing relative to my future plan was settled
and I was married to Johanna de Seydeur
on the 5th of Sept^r. As circumstances
required my setting out without her, ~~she~~ it
was resolved that she should follow me, with
the next company that was to go to America.
Sept^r the 23^d I set out and arrived at
London Oct. the 18^d. As no ship was to
sail ^{to Pennsylvania} till the middle of Jan^y, I endeavoured
to spend my time as useful as I could,
and kept meetings to a number of Germans
who had been awakened by means of the
testimony of brother Richter, who ^{had} de-
parted this life at Algiers. To the english
brother

brethren and sisters I kept meetings in the
Latia language, having some body who inter-
preted what I said into english; till I
after some time ventured to deliver discourses
in the E. language. There was at
that time a Society at Fetterlane which
was begun by Dr. Peter Bachler and
was then cared for by [the Revd John &
Charles Wesley]. As these people did not
rightly know what they were at, they were
come into a strange fanatical way, so
that I did not know what to think when
I came for the first time into their mee-
tings and heard them sing grown and howl
in a very strange manner, which they cal-
led the demonstration of the spirit and the
power of God. At speaking with the indi-
viduals of this society, I found many
deeply concerned for their souls. As
deficient as I was in expressing myself
in the E. language, they helped me so
hard

Seeing that he could not obtain his aim
he declined all further fellowship with the
Society, and ^{rising} from his seat with
^{He} walked out with the words: "To me all
that are the Lord's: some few followed
him. Some brethren ^{who} gave me an account
of what had happened, I advised to be
still, and to leave the issue to our Saviour.
In August, I had the joy to welcome
my wife here in London, on her way to
America. It was left to me to let her
proceed or keep her with me; but being
convinced in my heart that it was the
will of our Lord that she should go thither,
and finding her willing to go, I accom-
panied her on board, where we prostrated
in prayer before our Saviour and con-
venanted with each other to be and remain
his, after which we took an affectionate
leave. In September I was recalled

from London to Macclesfield, where having
stayed for some time, I was commissioned to
travel into France in order to look for such
as were awakened. In Paris I found
some godly persons who were mysticks and
valued the writings of Mrs. Bourignon and
Lady de Guion. I also learned that there
were a great many more of the same
people who did not venture to make them-
selves known. From thence I went to Lyon
Geneve by way of Aixon, here I stayed with
the late Ordinary till Chay and enjoyed
many blessings. On my road from thence
to Holland I fell sick, which necessitated
me to stay 10 weeks with my mother. I
had no patience to wait till I was recovered,
and before I reached Holland the fever
had left me. In Sept. I arrived at London
full of hopes and joy to pursue my destina-
tion to Pennsylvania, but I was again ill

with another illness, so that my fellow-travellers entered upon their voyage without me. Tho' it did not appear as if I should recover, I was informed by a letter that in case of my recovering I was to go again to Geneva to serve the awakened souls in that place. After 9 weeks illness I sat out for Geneva, where I ^{arrived} after an agreeable stay of some days at Marienborn, in Feb of the year 1742. I had not been there above a fortnight when I was ordered by the magistrates, who were dissatisfied with my stay there, to quit my private lodgings, and to move to an inn. Taking a journey in the country I fell sick again & was received and treated as a servant of Christ at the house of Mr. Clie Pseudhomme, to whom I was recommended by his brother. It proved a great joy to me to see afterwards him and his

his whole family, to whom I was so much indebted, to become children of God our Saviors. This was also the ^{case} with the family of old father Pindert, who at another time served me in the same kind manner. About this time I ventured, in reliance upon the help of one Lord, to translate our Hymns into the french language and in about a year's time I got 70 of them printed. In April 1743 I returned to Marienborn, where I found my wife, who was arrived from America a few days before me. I received her as if she was given me quite anew by our Saviors. After some time we travelled together to the Synod, which was held at Hirschberg, here we were appointed to visit the awakened souls in Switzerland. This journey proved very agreeable to us both. When we were tired of walking we sat down in a lonely spot and sung a verse, feeling excep-

dingly well threat. In a town called Speyre
where the whole French army was quartered,
we had a narrow escape of being killed,
being nearly trodden under foot, by the
horsemen who came from both sides upon us
when we were just under the gate. In
the critical moment, when nothing seemed
to offer for our relief, I espied a little
space between the horses, ^{and} snatching my
wife into my arms I slipped through,
wondering at and thanking our Lord for his
kind protection. Nov 13th I settled the in-
habitants of Montmirail-horse into a wagon
but after some time it was broke up again,
as we met with opposition in Switzerland
and were even forbid to reside any more
at Geneva. We now returned again in July
1745 to Marciacborn. In about the time of
a year we went again into Switzerland, and
^{where besides my former office}
had also to care for the housekeeping, besides

this and the journeys into the country I was
employed in translating the Congor accounts
into the French language, as also with re-
sing the hymns I had translated sometime
ago and adding more hymns to them, which
labour proved a refreshment to my heart.
As circumstances required again our remo-
val from Montmirail, we met in the hall
for the last time to thank our Saviour for
all the grace he had given us to enjoy in
this place. I arrived at Hornhaag (in
company of the French brethren and Sisters
from Montmirail) in the last days of Sept^r.
of the year 1748. My stay here was not
agreeable to me, as I did not like the then
course of that congor. I therefore kept silent
and in stillness. These circumstances caused
me to search my own heart thoroughly, the
conclusion of which was, that our Lord was please-
led to give me a renewed impression of my
election.

election of grace. In 1749 we were in
Holland and England with the late Ordinary,
in whose house we spent the time very blessed.
In 1750 we went to Barby, in hopes that
the french brethren and sisters, who were
obliged to emigrate with the rest of the con-
gregation from Altonhaag, would find it pre-
ferable to settle there. Meanwhile the
Count of Nervi^o offered to receive them
in his dominions and to grant them liberty
of conscience. The late Ordinary having
had an interview with the count of Nervi^o,
previous to his arrival at Barby,
he acquainted me, that he had found a place
for the french brth & s^{rs} and in: Nervi^o,
and told me to prepare for my journey
thither. In Sept^r I went to Gronhaag
and from thence with some of the french
brethren and sisters to Nervi^o, where we
arrived Oct the 16th. Soon after the remain-

der of them french brethren & sisters arrived
with us, after which we all partook of the holy
Comm^{union}, at which our Saviour's grace was power-
ful among us. We lived at first together
in one house as one family. Love, simplicity,
and grace and truth ruled among us, and
he who regardeth the needy and poor, walked
in our midst, and the peace of God rested
upon this cong^{regation}. What trials of faith and
patience we had to experience during the
first 6 years is only known to our Saviour,
but his faithfulness and support was our
only dependence. These trials were the conse-
quence of our moving to Nervi^o before
matters had been finally settled with the
count of Nervi^o; for a deputation which
travelled afterwards with him in behalf of
the unity returned after a stay of 3 weeks
without being able to conclude upon anything,
and we were left upon a very uncertain footing.

Meanwhile occurred the well known hand trials, in England, so that the brethren had no time to think of our settling here upon a sure footing, and upon all the letters we wrote during the space of 18 months, we received no answer. All the newspapers were filled with the most bitter speeches against us, which were often repeated at our windows by persons who were evil inclined. We laid our heavy circumstances before our Cong^{re} who formed the unanimous resolution to hold out with courage and patience as long as possible.

In the spring of 1753 the late ordinary sent a letter to the count of Overyeim ^{ordinary} informing that his present circumstances made it impracticable for him to assist the establishment of a french Cong^{re} at Overyeim, and that people who had moved thither with that intent would probably be obliged to return to Switzerland. The Count expressed his

his compassion ^{for} with us and encouraged us by saying: "God can still give this matter a favourable turn and bring it ^{it} to bear." In Nov. It was resolved in a Cong^{re} Council to send a deputy to London, who was to procure a final resolution whether we were to stay here or to move away; but our deputy falling very ill at Teist, we were obliged to be patient. In July 1754 we received the long wished for message, which put an end to all our ^{concern} ~~concern~~ that the Cong^{re} was to stay at Overyeim, to build proper habitations and was to be augmented. The word of the day when I received this account from London (viz. July the 22^d) was: "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it." It is not possible to describe what joy this account occasioned in the Cong^{re}. All praised and adored the Lord for his kindness towards us. Our concision being drawn up and

and signed in 1755, we began to prepare for building and in 3 years time the hall and 2 Pews houses for the Soc^e box & Soc^e were finished and sundry houses and gardens bought. The congregation increased so fast that the number of souls ~~amounted~~ amounted at the end of 1760 to 202. December the 10th 1758. the cong^e was settled by brother Johannes, the meeting hall consecrated, and In April 1763 having been released from my office by brother Riesler, we sat out for Herent hut where we ^{arrived} after a difficult journey.

Thus far our late brother.

He stayed with his wife about a year in a Herent hut from whence he was called to have the care of the Cong^e at Dublin, where they arrived in the ~~end~~ summer of 1762, previous to which they had brought their 3 sons to Cathrinenhoff to be educated in the childrens Socy. In 1767 he was called to Bedford to be the Minister and Cong^e helper in that Cong^e. It is sufficiently known from the reports of

that Cong^e with what motion and grace he served it. In 1775 he was called to the Synod at Basby and ~~was~~ consecrated a Bishop of the Brethren's Church. Before he returned to Bedford he visited his children in Upper Lusatia and Silvia and the Cong^e at Oenwick (where his former services are still remembered with gratitude). He returned from thence by way of Leist to Bedford, where he arrived Dec the 12th. From that time his strength decayed and he grew mostly blind. In 1779 he got a stroke of the palsy which lamed his right side. about a year after he had another attack of the same disorder which shewed plainly that he was near his end. He behaved himself under all these afflictions as a servant of Christ, and expected his joy at the prospect of being soon at home with the Lord, and in short he was in his last illness for an edification and blessing to all

all around him till he fell asleep in the
Lord Sept^r the 9th (1780) in the 66th year of
his age.

He lived 41 years in the married state and
has had 7 children, of which 2 sons and
one daughter are still alive.