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Halle Pietists in England. Anthony William Boehm and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

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Appendix

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Appendix

Following are two previously unpublished manuscript letters by Anthony W. Boehm, currently held in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The first to John Chamberlayne is concerned with efforts to reform prisons (see pp. 52f); the second to Henry Newman recommends George Lewis as a residing member of the SPCK (see p.122). Note: the text is printed here with no expansions or alterations.

No.1: Anth. Will. Boehm to John Chamberlaine Esq. in Petty France, St. Martins-Street, 3 March 1709 (Bodl., *Rawlinson* MSS 743:13-14)

[fo.13]
Sir.
Since you were pleased lately to intrust me with these papers, I make bold, after having perused them, to remit 'em to you, finding, I shall not be able to attend the Society this Evening. I wish y^t after some prayers, mentioned by others, two things might be added: First, a particular chaptr. How these that have been but lately clapt up in prison ought to fortify themselves, against the infectious sins of such corrupted places. For truly, 'tis plain enough, that abundance of people otherwise not ill-disposed, have been pestered & led away into sinfull courses by the inundation of all manner of vice visible in such places; or got the first Tincture at least of ill habits by being confined to so polluted company. But these Vices must onely be set out in general colours & not drawn [fo.14] too exactly to life; there being some sins which ought not be named, Eph. 5,3. The other thing which I wish might be observed in publishing a Tract of this nature, is to lay down a pathetick Demonstration of the Necessity of Reforming prisons. This might be done by way of a preface; but by one who is thoroughly acquainted with the disorders & the ill management of the prisons at London, (how it is in the Country I can't tell) & of the Necessity of Reforming them, both upon Theological and Political Accounts; There being so many filthy & profane practises in such places, that it is enough to draw down in time the judgments of God upon the whole Nation. I know well enough that declarations of this nature will never in themselves be able to bring about such a Reformation; However, every one has liberty, nay, is in duty bound, humbly to complain of such things, as anyways tend to the ruin of a Country; and God now and then is pleased, to bestow a Blessing upon a small project, & gradually carry it higher to its

accomplishment. These are my Thoughts upon this Treatise, in order to render it the more usefull to the publick; Remaining Sir

Your humbl. Servant
Ant. Will Boehm.

No.2: Anthony Will. Boehm to Mr. Henry Newman, Strand, 7 July 1715 (Bodl., *Rawlinson MSS* 743:34-35)

[fo.34]
Sir.
The Society having appointed me, to make some Enquiry into the Revernd Mr Lewis his Life proposed for a Residing Member, I thought, I could do no better than consult ye Letters of the Danish Missionaries which make frequent Mention of the said Mr. Lewis, & of the particular Marks of Kindness bestow'd by him both upon the Missionaries themselves & upon the Work they are ingaged in. This I think, is a sufficient Proof he is not of so narrow a Spirit, as to confine himself to one Nation onely or to one Party in Acts of Love and Charity; but to do Good in a manner most ample & universal, without regarding such petty Ends as use to contract a Man's Kindness into that narrow Compass, which in these Days so visibly appears among ye several Denominations of Christians. And this I thought worthy to take particular Notice of here, since I believe that a Spirit of universal Love & Benignity is one of the chief and constitutive Characters of a Member of a Society concerned about the Propagation of Christian Knowledge: Nay I can hardly believe a Man to be fit for so large a Design as the Propagation of the Knowledge of CHRIST is, except he be endued with a Mind proportioned to the Thing he enters upon. For how can a nar-[fo.35]row Soul but tolerably answer so vast and extensive a Design as the Knowledge of Christ is, which in Time shall cover the Earth as Waters do the Sea, and which will break through all these scanty Bounds narrow-spirited Men have set it. But as in this Age we too often take a Scheme of Religion for Religion itself, so we often deceive ourselves by supposing we have propagated ye Religion of Christ, whilst we propagate a certain Scheme to which we adhere; And this being accompanied again, (as too often it is) with a Disdain & Contempt of those that do not come up to it, must needs produce many Consequences destructive to mutual Love & Charity that essential Character of a Disciple of CHRIST.
May the Lord give us that Wisdom, which is without Partiality, and that Love which is without Envy, that on one Hand we may know Religion in it's pure & undefiled Lustre, & on the other convey it in the same Purity to those again, with whom we are concerned; which is the hearty Wish of

Sir
Yr. Humble Servt
Anthony Will. Boehm.