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From Walter Churchey

Hay¹
January 14, 1771

Reverend Sir,

You will excuse me for writing my mind to you in this present situation of affairs, which will be gathered from a fair state of our division at the Hay. As to Mr. [Joseph] Benson, who has obliged me with his company and assistance since he left the college, I think her Ladyship has mistaken his conduct, and know it in one respect—viz., ‘his preaching at the Hay’, which was not (as charged) calculated to make us Arminians, but Christians.

To return,²

Lady Huntingdon formerly suspected that we wanted to introduce Mr. Wesley's preachers into the Hay, instead of her students, and candidly unfolded her suspicions to me, probably grounded upon the report of some, who were neither our nor her Ladyship's friends at the bottom. However, these suspicions were happily laid, and her Ladyship satisfied before Mr. Glasbrook,³ who heard the conversation that passed between us.

I imagine you are acquainted with what further passed between us relating to Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Glasbrook, who were asked to abide at the Hay by me when we were in love with the one and were afraid to lose the other.⁴ So that I need not repeat the circumstances of this case, to turn away your attention from the following facts.

Mr. Hull (January 1), in or just after his sermon, publicly declared that ‘every man in the state of nature is an Arminian’.⁵ Mr. Thomas then as publicly asked him ‘If an Arminian could not give as much glory to Christ as a Calvinist’; which he answered in the *affirmative!* On which Mr. Thomas desired him to read a little pamphlet to the people giving an account of the nature of Arminianism,⁶ which Mr. Hull denied to do, and then prayed, in a strange manner, that ‘the roaring devil, which was coming upon us like a flood might be stopped’, or something to that purpose. After [the] sermon was over, Mr. Thomas desired me to read the said pamphlet, which I think it was best to do (without casting one *personal* reflection) that the people might not take anything for *proved* which was only positively *asserted*, and because many might then be desirous to hear what an Arminian was. As if this *had been* really the case, nine out of ten quietly stayed behind while the pamphlet was read, and then the congregation went peaceably away.

The same night, Mr. Hull took Mr. Thomas and me apart to inquire, in her Ladyship's name, whether we intended to have Mr. Wesley's preachers at the chapel instead of the students, which she had been informed of again. We answered that Mr. Wesley's preached *occasionally*, as

¹Hay-on-Wye, Breconshire.

²The indented material that follows in this letter was placed in quotation marks, suggesting that Churchey was quoting from another account.

³James Glasbrook (1733–93) became an itinerant about 1757 and continued to serve through 1774. At the 1770 Conference Glasbrook was assigned the Gloucestershire circuit (see *Works*, 10:382).

⁴William Aldridge (1737–97), who was sent to study at Trevecca by Lady Huntingdon when it opened in 1768. He served in Lady Huntingdon's connexion for some years then became minister of an Independent congregation in London.

⁵Christopher Hull (d. 1814), student at Trevecca who became minister at Bower Hinton in 1772.

⁶This was likely JW's *The Question 'What is an Arminian' Answered* (1770), *Works*, 13:406–09.

others also who went through the town (which matter was agreeably settled with her Ladyship, full to her own mind, when I had the honour of her presence before Mr. Glasbrook), but that they were not looked upon as the stated preachers, had not gathered or been countenanced to gather one collection (according, sir, to your promise to the people), and had not met the society at all. I added that neither was it our design to bring them in, if her Ladyship would send us those who would not preach *opinions*, as Mr. Hawkesworth⁷ did on Christmas Day last, who (I told him) publicly insisted on *unconditional final perseverance* in my hearing, and afterwards strenuously pursued it in the society, contrary to Heb. 6:4–6. He replied, 'Many are comforted by it', or to that effect. I answered that 'It was a false foundation for comfort, and therefore by no means ought to be said.' He said that 'the students must preach as the Lord led them'. I thought that 'The Lord *could* not lead them to preach *contrary* to his *written Word*.' We now plainly saw that a resolution to preach Calvinism was formed against us, and Mr. Thomas *honestly* declared that 'He would send his horse no more.' I was asked what would I do? I replied that if her Ladyship would send preachers, without their *opinions*, I would send *every* Sunday for them. This would not satisfy. I was *pressed* to give another answer, to contradict myself. I would not, and after many unmeaning thunderings against *self*, *self-righteousness*, the *power* of man, the *wisdom* of man (which was perhaps *kindly* delivering his soul towards *me*), he parted. And I returned my thanks and answer through him, to her Ladyship. The *next* day, to my surprise, he came from the Hay, not Trevecca, with a commission, as from her Ladyship, to inform us that 'The students would preach no more at the chapel'. This must have been without authority, or the whole was a pre-concerted scheme—that's plain.

Thus stands the naked truth. The students have complained publicly, since our separation, that *man* is preached at the chapel, and therefore could not advise *their* audience to go there. What is all this like? Where is the religion of the Bible, or the Spirit of the benevolent Jesus? For I cannot take anyone's *bare* word—be it ever so *loud*, *big*, or *positive*—without a proof, that he is a Christian; which is a term, before God, I *dare* not apply to myself. O may I truly represent all things for or against myself! If I had ever spoke ill of, or to, any *one* of the students, or our society, *on account* of Calvinism, or had been *strenuously* bent to have any *opinion* placed in the room of the gospel of peace, or desired to *press* the poor people in *soul* or *body*, I would tell you, or not write to you at all.

I am, reverend sir, with due veneration and love,

Yours very affectionately,

Walter Churchey

[Wesley added this note and forwarded to John Fletcher, stamped February 12]

Dear Sir,

Mr. Churchey enclosed this letter to me, doubting whether it was proper to send it you or no. I judged it very proper, and so send it without delay. You have need of much wisdom, courage, and patience. Write a line, if you have not quite forgot.

Your affectionate friend and brother,

J. Wesley

Annotation: by Fletcher; 'Reasons for leaving Trevecca' and 'This letter describes our reasons for parting with Lady Huntingdon'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MAM JW 2/91.

⁷James Hawkesworth (1748–1810) was one of the first students at Trevecca College and a great favourite of Lady Huntingdon. He was ordained in Plymouth, in Andrew Kinsman's Tabernacle, in 1774.

From Joseph Towers¹

c. January 24, 1771²

[p. 1]
Sir,

You may perhaps object to the propriety of my thus addressing you as the author of a pamphlet to which you have not prefixed your name. But as it has been attributed to you in the public papers,³ as it is universally understood to be yours, and as it contains the strongest internal marks of [p. 2] your being the writer, I shall take the liberty of addressing you as such. Supposing you not to be the author of the pamphlet in question, you may easily disavow it. But as I cannot entertain the least doubt of your being so, I shall hereafter without apology address you under that character.

There are some who may perhaps think that it was scarcely worth a man's while to take the pains to answer a pamphlet written by you on the subject of our political debates. But I am sensible of the great extent of your influence and connexions, and that you have it in your power to do abundantly more mischief than may be generally apprehended by propagating, in a very diffusive manner, opinions extremely pernicious to the best interests of this country.

Previous to the remarks which I intend to make on your *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*, I must observe that I do not intend minutely to consider every passage in your [p. 3] pamphlet. It consists of too great a variety of particulars, and you have artfully introduced such a number of questions that you may seem to assert little (though you insinuate a great deal), that it would fill a large volume to give a particular answer to your numerous interrogatories. I shall therefore content myself with making such observations as shall occur to me on the most remarkable passages and reasonings in your performance. But [this will be] sufficient I hope to show that your arguments are inconclusive, that your insinuations are unjust, and that your pamphlet merits the censure of every friend of freedom and the British constitution. And that it is only calculated to please a corrupt ministry and their venal partisans.

You open your performance with great professions of modesty, and of your little skill in political matters. You, however, soon inform us that you possess certain happy dispositions of mind which will the better enable you to form a just judgment respecting our political disputes. 'This advantage' (you say) 'I have over [p. 4] both parties, the being angry at neither. ... I have likewise another advantage, that of having no bias, one way or the other.'⁴ It is truly very unfortunate for the popular party that a man of your extreme meekness and moderation, possessed of an understanding so unclouded by passion and so entirely free from every improper bias, should not be able to say one word in their favour, or in that of their cause. And it is incontestably a most conspicuous evidence of your *impartiality* that every part of your pamphlet favours one side only. In short, that it is neither more nor less than a studied insult upon all who have asserted the cause of public freedom, and a defence or extenuation of the most obnoxious measures of administration. However as to your declaration of being angry with neither party, that I believe, after a perusal of your performance, will prove only this (which may probably not be considered an advantage to your character): that you are capable of writing [p. 5] very malevolent things without

¹Joseph Towers (1737–99), son of a secondhand bookseller, came to London about 1764, began to write political pamphlets, and set up a printing and bookseller's shop in Fore Street. Towers would be ordained in 1774 as a dissenting minister, and pastor first the Presbyterian congregation in Southwood Lane, Highgate, and later at Stoke Newington Green, as coadjutor to Richard Price (1723–91). He continued literary ventures, for which he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Edinburgh University in 1779. For general background on the political struggles reflected in this piece, see the introduction to JW's *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs* in *Works*, vol. 15.

²This was the day it was first advertised as published in the *Public Advertiser*.

³No surviving attributions in papers prior to this date have been located.

⁴Note in original: '*Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*, p. 6.'

being angry, or at least without having the violence of passion to plead in your excuse.

In the eighth page of your pamphlet you attempt to vindicate his Majesty from a supposed charge of want of understanding, and you endeavour to answer the facts upon which (according to you) this charge is founded. What these facts are we learn from the following passage: 'It must be acknowledged this charge' (of *want of understanding*) 'is supported by facts which cannot be denied. The first is, he believes the Bible. The second, he fears God. The third, he loves the queen.' Now either all that you have said upon this subject means nothing, or it means to insinuate that the popular party consider these particulars as marks of a weak understanding; which is saying, in other words, that they are a profligate and abandoned set of men. For none but men of that character would consider the king's believing the Bible, fearing God, and having an affection for his queen as proofs for a want of understanding. Indeed, I [p. 6] doubt whether even any of 'the beasts of the people', as you elsewhere curiously express it, would seriously urge the facts you speak of as marks of a weak understanding. For religion is seldom considered as a just object of ridicule, even by the vicious and immoral, unless it be strongly tinctured with superstition or enthusiasm. If you can put any other sense on the passage to which I refer, do so. But I confess I can understand it in no other light, and in that view it contains an insinuation in the highest degree unjust, injurious, and unchristian. And whatever may be your sentiments upon the matter, I will take the liberty to tell you sir that it is my firm opinion, an opinion not founded upon conjecture but upon fact and observation, that there are many among those who are most heartily attached to the popular cause who, at the same time that they are men of excellent understandings, are as sincere believers of Christianity, and as uniformly virtuous in their conduct and behaviour, to say the least, as Mr. *John Wesley* himself. [p. 7]

In your manner of stating and of answering the objections supposed to be made by the popular party, your conduct much resembles that of some of the writers against Christianity. They have eagerly adopted those representations of our divine religion which are the most absurd, inconsistent, and irrational, that they might be enabled to attack it with the greater degree of success. And in like manner you have selected some of the most trifling objections, and such as were urged by the weakest of the popular party, and these you have clothed in suitable language that you might answer them with the greater readiness and facility.

You have been very particular in your examination into his Majesty's character, and sufficiently lavish of your encomiums on him; in which you have only imitated some of your reverend brethren, both of earlier and of later age. For the generality of the clergy, to do them justice, have seldom been backward in offering incense to the throne. I presume however, from your present situation and [p. 8] connexions, that you have no aspirations after a mitre, and are only desirous of venting the effusions of your extreme loyalty. Your character of the king, nevertheless, certainly deserves some reward. So ample an eulogium out to be well paid for: 'His whole conduct' (you say) 'both in public and private, ever since he began his reign, the uniform tenor of his behaviour, the general course both of his words and actions, has been worthy of an Englishman, worthy of a Christian, and worthy of a king' (p. 16⁵). This is a great deal to say of any man, and a very high strain of panegyric from you, who are so angry with the ignorant vulgar for affirming more than they can possibly know, while you (to use your own words) are, 'in a manner, sure of nothing, except of that very little which you see with your own eyes or hear with your own ears' (p. 5) But all this, peradventure, you affirm from your own knowledge, and the evidence of your own senses. If so, you must be better known at court than might have [p. 9] been suspected, or than we should have conjectured from your intimations at the beginning of your performance. You supposed, however, that whatever you might say on this subject was in little danger of being publicly controverted, for it is a ticklish thing to meddle with the characters of monarchs in any other strain but that of praise, which you have wisely adopted. Living kings are always good and gracious, and the best of princes; though unfortunately, after their deaths, impartial history is often forced to tell a very different tale. I shall however say no more on this delicate subject. It is enough to remind you that the real Christian, the man

⁵Page references in parenthesis by Towers refer to JW, *Free Thoughts*.

of undissembled virtue, will not violate the sacred law of truth to gratify those in the most exalted situations, and scorns even to flatter kings.

You attempt to ridicule the propensity of the English nation to political disquisitions, and seem to think, with some others, that it is an absurdity for common people to meddle with such [p. 10] matters (see pp. 4–5). And indeed arbitrary princes and ministers, and their minions, have ever been desirous of propagating this doctrine. They would wish the people to shut their eyes and hoodwink their understandings, and resign themselves with implicit reverence, without examination or inquiry, to their mandates and to their measures. It is very true that uneducated men, immersed in business and employed in the lower offices and employments of life, may not be very good judges of difficult matters relative to the conduct of national affairs. But notwithstanding this, the bulk of people I believe seldom judge amiss in points of importance to the interest and welfare of the state. They may err in particular instances, but they form very just notions respecting the nature and tendency of public measures in general, whether matters of domestic government or treaties and negotiations with foreign nations. The people in general are sufficient judges whether their own rights and privileges are attacked or [p. 11] preserved inviolate, and whether the honour and dignity of the nation is maintained abroad. And a more pernicious doctrine can scarcely be advanced in a free state than this, that the people at large should not meddle with affairs of government. Liberty never was, nor ever will be preserved long in any country where such sentiments prevail. For such is the intoxicating nature of power that it is always necessary that a free people should guard against its encroachments, and be vigilant and active in the maintenance of their rights. In arbitrary governments all are equally slaves. But every subject of a free state is interested in public affairs. It cannot be a matter of indifference to him whether the government be good or bad, for it is at least of importance to him that his own rights should be preserved. And the lowest plebeian who has a vote for members of parliament should be at least careful to give his suffrage conscientiously, and in favour of those who appear to him to be best disposed to serve their constituents and the nation. Political inquiries, therefore, are so far from [p. 12] being the result of an absurd propensity in Englishmen that they are the natural, the necessary consequence of that constitution of government which is established in this country.

You have taken some pains to make it appear that there is little reason to suppose that the *petitions* and *remonstrances* which have been presented to the king do in fact contain the *sense of the nation*. And you pretend to give us an account of the manner in which nine in ten, or rather (you say) ninety-nine in a hundred, of these petitions are procured. You tell us that ‘a lord or squire (sometimes two or more) goes or sends his steward round the town where his seat is, with a paper which he tells the honest men is for the good of their king and country. He desires each to set his name or mark to these. And who has the hardiness to gainsay? Especially if my lord keeps open house? Meantime, the contents of it they *know nothing about*’ (p. 12) [p. 13] I fear, sir, that in this account you have not paid that scrupulous regard to the truth of facts of which you make such a parade at the beginning of your pamphlet. I should presume that you must, in this case, have advanced abundantly more than you could possibly ‘see with your own eyes, or hear with your own ears’ (see pp. 3–5). And I confess I am so far from supposing that nine petitions out of ten have been procured in the manner described by you that, till I meet with some better evidence of it than your bare assertion, I shall not believe that one petition of a public nature has been so procured from any part of this nation.

Dr. Johnson, another writer of the same side with yourself, had before you given us ‘the progress of a petition’.⁶ But his representation, it must be confessed, contained in it somewhat more probability than yours. And if it was equally destitute of truth, we yet received some amends from the wit and eloquence of the writer. [p. 14] However, after giving an account of the manner in which petitions, if we may believe you, are commonly procured, you inform us that you were not long since at a town in Kent when one of these petitions was carrying about. You asked ‘one and another’ whether they had signed the petition, and found none that had refused it. And yet you tell us that not one single person to whom you spoke had either read it or heard it read. It is truly remarkable that your Kentish friends and acquaintance

⁶[Samuel Johnson,] *The False Alarm* (London: Cadell, 1770), 41.

should all be such stupid mortals as to sign a petition which they knew nothing about. But I cannot form the same mean opinion of the generality of my countrymen. I have met with nobody who has been concerned in the business of petitioning and remonstrating but what knew at least somewhat of the matter. At all the public meetings which have been held for that purpose, the petitions or remonstrances have been always read. It is true that in a numerous meeting the whole may not have been distinctly heard by every individual. But it should be remembered that people were in general [p. 15] previously apprized of the design of such meetings before their assembling, and of the main purport of the intended petition or remonstrance. The late applications of that kind to the throne have been almost all upon the same topics, and it is hardly conceivable that there were any who signed them, or who voted for them, but what at least knew that they contained a declaration of their disapprobation of those arbitrary and unconstitutional measure of government which have been so much canvassed in all companies, from the highest to the lowest, that it is scarcely possible for the meanest artisan to be totally ignorant of them. And in this view I consider the late petitions and remonstrances as truly declarative of the sense of the nation.

But however unwilling you are to admit this, it is evident from other passages in your pamphlet, in which you seem not very consistent with yourself, that you are sufficiently convinced that a great part of the people are exceedingly dissatisfied with the measures of government. Thus you [p. 16] say that 'the general discontent of the nation now rises to a higher degree than it has done in the memory of man' (p. 8). And you go so far as to add that 'the consequences of these commotions will be (unless an higher hand interpose) exactly the same as those of the like commotions in the last century' (p. 34). Is it not evident from hence that you are well convinced that a great part of the people are exceedingly incensed against the measures of the government? Why then should you be so extremely unwilling to consider the petitions and remonstrances, which contain a declaration of the people's disapprobation of the measures of administration, as expressive of the sense of the nation? But surely the least that can be fairly supposed is that they contain the sense of a great part of the nation. As to myself, I have not the least doubt, from all that I can learn both from my own observation and the information of others, but that, notwithstanding the great numbers who are interested in supporting the measures of the court, a very considerable majority of the nation do entirely [p. 17] disapprove of those measure of government which in this reign have justly excited so much opposition.

You also intimate to us that you consider the petitioners and remonstrants as no judges of the matters of which they complain. But some observations which I have before made may, I presume, be considered as a sufficient answer to this. You then tell us what you suppose Mr. [William] Pitt, now Lord Chatham, would have said if petitions had been presented against his administration (pp. 13–14). His lordship, I dare say, will easily excuse you if you do not give yourself the trouble of making any more speeches for him, for you seem very little acquainted with his sentiments, his spirit, or his manner. And, in opposition to your suppositions respecting him, I must here observe that when he was in power he never appeared disposed to despise the opinions of his countrymen. He was always willing to make his appeal to the tribunal of the public, and the rectitude of his [p. 18] conduct enabled him to make that appeal safely. And even the common people, ignorant and stupid as you seem desirous of representing them, could easily discern the merit of his administration. They saw and acknowledged with the rest of Europe that this great minister, by his superior abilities, had raised the reputation and prosperity of Great Britain to a height not to be paralleled at any former period. And accordingly in some of those parts of the kingdom which had formerly been the most remarkable for disaffection it was observed that the people, during the administration of Lord Chatham (then, Mr. Pitt), discovered an attachment and good will to the government never known before. And indeed his conduct deservedly met with the general approbation of the whole British empire. Such was the remarkable difference between this great statesman and those to whom the reins of government have been since entrusted! He, by the wisdom of his measures, made those who had been before disaffected to become good subjects; while they have alienated from his Majesty the affections of those who [p. 19] were formerly the most attached to his person and to his family.

As to your curious collection of inquiries respecting Lord Chatham's personal character (pp. 43, 44), they deserve no answer. Indeed, they are such as I should suppose no man of common charity and

candour could scarcely read with patience. You seem to suppose that the people of England can with no propriety desire a change of the ministry, unless they can recommend persons to the king to hold their offices who possess every good quality, and every virtue that imagination can suggest (see pp. 42–43). And that till they can do this, they have no right to ‘stretch their throats’ (as you *elegantly* express it) against evil ministers. But the inhabitants of this country are not so unreasonable as to expect ministers quite so perfect. They will think, I believe, with me that many men might be found who would be much more careful not to violate the constitution, and abundantly more attentive to the [p. 20] interests of the nation, than our present ministers or any that we have had for some time past, and yet be far from coming up to your standard of *perfection*. At least they are willing to make the experiment, because they think they cannot easily change for the worse. And I believe they are also of opinion that Lord Chatham may have been, and may still be, an excellent and truly respectable minister, and highly deserving the confidence of the public, although he be not entirely free from the imperfections incident to human nature.

You do not mean, you tell us (p. 18), to defend the measures which have been taken relative to the Middlesex election. And then you immediately proceed to say all that you can in support of that obnoxious measure, which has so justly excited the indignation of the public. The affair of the Middlesex election has now been so much canvassed that it would be tedious to enter at large into the dispute, and it would be inconsistent with the intended brevity of my letter. I shall, however, make a few remarks upon the subject; though I believe that neither your sophistry nor [p. 21] the curious argumentation of Lord Mansfield,⁷ one of whose speeches you have introduced at length that you readers may ‘see this whole matter in the *clearest light*’ (as you express it) will ever be able to convince the public of the rectitude of the measure. Or that it was not a gross invasion of the rights of the people. The injustice of seating a man in the great council of the nation who had only 296 votes, in preference to another who had 1143, strikes at the first view. And it is certain that, by such a procedure, the freeholders were to all intents and purposes deprived of the liberty of electing their own representatives in parliament. But you say (p. 19) that ‘if the electors had the liberty of choosing *any qualified person*, it is absolute nonsense to talk of their *being deprived of the liberty of choosing* because they were not permitted to choose *a person utterly unqualified*.’ But unfortunately, the truth of the matter is that Mr. [John] Wilkes was so far from being utterly unqualified that he was as legally eligible as any other man. Lord Mansfield indeed says (according to your pamphlet) [p. 22] that Mr. Wilkes was considered by the laws as an *unqualified person*. But it is well known that his lordship never has produced, nor never can produce, any *law* to that purpose. And a mere vote of the House of Commons, which is all that can be produced, cannot constitute any legal disability. So that all this kind of reasoning falls to the ground.

You say that ‘A right of *expulsion*, of *putting* a member out of the house, manifestly implies a right of exclusion, of *keeping* him out; otherwise that right amounts to just nothing at all.’ To which I answer that the right of the people to elect their own representatives is of infinitely more importance to the constitution than the right—or to speak more properly, the *practice*—of expulsion in the House of Commons. For on this right of the people the very existence of the House of Commons itself depends. All the power possessed by the House of Commons is a delegated power, entrusted to them by their constituents, and it cannot be shown that the people have ever entrusted the [p. 23] House of Commons with a right of rejecting or expelling representatives, after being fairly chosen; not even for misdemeanours, if their constituents choose to re-elect them. And therefore it by no means follows that because the people have not opposed the power of expulsion, when occasionally exercised by the House of Commons in a manner not disagreeable to the people, that therefore the House has a *right* to expel a member whom his constituents have repeatedly re-elected, and declared in the most public and absolute manner their desire of again entrusting as their representative. The rights of the freeholders and electors of England are coeval with the constitution, and cannot by any power be taken away without their own consent. And certainly they are the best, and only proper, judges of the qualification of those whom they

⁷William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield (1705–93), served as Lord Chief Justice from 1755.

send to parliament as their deputies and representatives.

You also say (p. 19), 'But suppose a single borough or county were deprived of this in a single instance. How is this depriving the good people of England, the [p. 24] nation, of their birthright? What an insult upon commonsense is this wild way of talking? If Middlesex is wronged (put it so) in this instance, how is Yorkshire or Cumberland affected by it? Or twenty counties and forty boroughs besides? Much less the nation?' I will tell you sir how other counties are affected by the decision respecting Middlesex, and how the whole nation is affected by it. And [I] must at the same time take the liberty to tell you that your styling the language which you oppose 'an insult upon commonsense' and 'a wild way of talking' can only arise from your real or pretended ignorance of the common principles of a free government.

If the House of Commons had a right to set aside a member fairly chosen by the county of Middlesex, and who was not *legally* disqualified, it has also a right to set aside any member chosen by any other county or borough in the kingdom. By a decision, therefore, which in a single instance deprives the county of Middlesex of the right of election, the possession of that [p. 25] right in every other part of the kingdom is rendered precarious. And it is impossible to suppose that those who have deprived the county of Middlesex of one of their most essential rights will be tender of the privileges of other counties or boroughs, and far less of the rights of individuals. No such decision, therefore, can be made but what must materially affect the liberties of the whole kingdom. For it has been justly observed that if the House of Commons has the right to incapacitate one man, it has the same right to incapacitate two, three, or any number—that is, it can disfranchise all the electors of England. But no such power was or could be delegated to it. And as it did not make itself, it cannot make its own power. If the people look on unconcernedly and see individuals only deprived of the constitutional rights, what security can they possibly have for the possession of their own liberties? What must be the case then if they look tamely on, and see a whole county deprived of a privilege so important that the very existence of the constitution itself depends on its preservation? It is you [p. 26] therefore sir who have talked wildly and absurdly, in supposing that a decision injurious to the right of election in the county of Middlesex would not affect the other parts of the kingdom.

It was natural for the people to be the more alarmed at such a determination as that in the Middlesex election if they had good reason to believe that this violent measure was effected merely to gratify the court and ministry. You make indeed a long extract from another writer, in order to show that there is no reason to suppose the parliament to be corrupt. And that gentleman urges the passing of the bill for lessening the privileges of members of parliament, and for determining petitions about contested elections as full proof of the virtue of the parliament. The first of these bills was undoubtedly a good one, and the second was well intended, and brought in by a gentleman in the opposition. Though it has been doubted by good friends to the constitution whether it was well calculated to answer the intended purpose. But it does not appear that either of [p. 27] these bills thwarted any immediate views of those then in administration. And it must be shown that they were opposed by the ministry (which I apprehend was not the case) before their passing can be considered as any evidence of the incorruptibility of parliament.

With respect to the innocence and virtue of parliament, there is one circumstance which I would submit to your consideration. It is incontestably the business and duty of the House of Commons to be a check upon the crown and its ministers, and to guard the liberties and interests of the people from their encroachments or misconduct. Now I would ask the most venal partisan of the court whether he supposes our ministers have always done right for these ten years past? If they have in any instances done wrong, either in extending the prerogative or in squandering away the public money, it was the duty of the representatives of the people to oppose them. But what if it should appear that during that whole period the majority in our parliaments have in no one instance [p. 28] opposed the measures of the crown and its ministers? Will the most candid man breathing, upon that supposition, believe that our parliaments have done their duty to their constituents? Or will he desire a stronger proof of their corruption, and of their being under an undue influence from the crown? Whatever may be your ideas upon this subject, sir, it is certain that the people of England cannot labour under a greater grievance than a corrupt parliament, nor

one which they ought to be more earnestly solicitous to remove. Should we have a prince arbitrarily disposed, or the most iniquitous ministers, still the people would have some substantial security for their rights if our parliaments are uncorrupt. But if they are venal, and under the direction of the crown, the people have then no resources but those of the most violent and dangerous nature.

I was somewhat surprised to observe that when you were endeavouring to support the proceedings of the ministry respecting the Middlesex election you should, among so many who have spoken and [p. 29] written on this subject, single out Lord Mansfield as your auxiliary, who has in general been remarkably reserved upon this subject. You could not think that the popularity of his lordship would give weight to his arguments. But you may possibly have some partiality for his lordship, and his productions, in consequence of some little resemblance in your characters. This comparison may probably surprise those who have not observed that, whatever difference there may be between you in other circumstances, Lord Mansfield and you are both *equally* remarkable for being entirely free from *sophistry, subtlety, and craft* in your several professions. At least, I am sure the resemblance is to the full as strong between you and his lordship as between his lordship and Erasmus, to whom my good Lord Bishop of Gloucester (being well known to be fond of paradoxes) hath thought proper to compare our beloved Chief Justice, in a truly admirable dedication prefixed to the late edition of that incomparable work *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*.⁸ [p. 30]

You endeavour (pp. 9, 10) to vindicate his Majesty from the charge of ‘pardoning a murderer’. But what murderer do you mean? You must know that more than one murderer has been screened from justice in this reign. Do you mean either of the murderers who were pardoned in consequence of the influence and intrigues of their harlot sister? Or do you mean either of those ruffians Balse and M’Quirk?⁹ If you mean the latter, such hired assassins as they were must doubtless be very proper objects of royal mercy! And when we remember that ‘doubts arose in the royal breast’ on this occasion, we remember also that the crimes which these men committed, with a view of obstructing the freedom of election, were perpetrated in order to favour the cause of a man supported by the court. You ask, ‘Can you or I believe that the king *knew* him to be such? *Understood* him to be a wilful murderer? I am not sure of it at all; neither have you any rational proof. ... And if he did not *know* or believe him to be such, how can he be blamed for pardoning him?’ By what methods are [p. 31] our kings to *know* the guilt of criminals but by their being fairly and legally tried and found guilty? Is it proper that all should be pardoned whose guilt is not actually *known* to the king? But indeed your strange kind of reasoning seems calculated to justify the pardoning of almost every criminal who is condemned.

As to the subject of *pensions*, you say it is a matter that you do not understand. However, some you think are well bestowed and all well designed. You except, I suppose, the pensions that was paid to the most active of the assassins who was employed at Brentford; as well as that to Macloughlan for his good services in St. George’s Fields. But you fear, you say, that some pensions have been ‘*ill bestowed*, on those who not only fly in the face of their benefactor, but avail themselves of his favours to wound the deeper.’ And then you immediately proceed to insinuate a charge against some who receive pensions of ‘foul and flagrant ingratitude’. You mean, I presume, Lord Chatam and Lord Camden; who, though they receive [p. 32] pensions, have not been induced thereby to desert the cause of their country in the senate. There is an essential difference to be made between pensions given for real services to the public, and those given as bribes to induce the receivers of them to concur in every unconstitutional and iniquitous measure of the ministry. The number of pensions that have too frequently been given for the latter purpose is undoubtedly a capital grievance. But it would be high time that all pensions should be abolished, even those for real services, if it be once taken for granted that those who receive them, though

⁸See William Warburton, *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*, 4th edn (London: Millar & Tonson, 1765),

⁹Lawrence Balse and Edward M’Quirk were accused of the murder of George Clarke during the Middlesex election in Brentford in 1768; see the account of their trial in the *London Magazine* (Jan. 1769), 44–47.

members of parliament, ought never to oppose the court, under the weak notion of its being ingratitude to the king. A man's first duty is that to his country. All the money with which any pensions are paid is primarily the money of the people, and no honest man who has received a pension for actual services to the nation will ever betray the cause of the public from any unjust complaisance to the crown. [p. 33]

You say (p. 12) that 'this fault', that of granting so many pensions, '(if it were really such) would argue to great *easiness* of temper. But this is quite the reverse of what is commonly objected, *inflexible stubbornness*.' But however specious this argument of yours may at first sight appear, it amounts to nothing when fairly examined. Is it not easy to conceive that a prince who may lend a deaf ear to the justest complaints and remonstrances of his subjects may yet, if he entertains any improper views, be extremely liberal, exceedingly profuse of the public money to those who are ready to go any lengths to gratify his desires, to fawning parasites and unprincipled courtiers?

You say you do not defend the *killing* of Mr. Allen; 'murder' you do not choose to call it. And after relating that transaction your own way, you add, 'Now though this cannot be excused, yet was it *the most horrid villainy that ever was perpetrated*? Surely no. Notwithstanding all the tragical exclamations which have been made concerning it, what is this to [p. 34] the killing a man in cool blood? And was this never heard of in England?' (p. 18). I will tell you sir why it was natural that the murder of Mr. Allen (for so I will venture to call it) and the other murders committed in St. George's Fields (it is well known that it was not *one* only) should excite more clamour, and cause a greater alarm in the nation, than the killing a man in cool blood. If a common murder be committed, with whatever circumstances, the laws are open and the offender or offenders may be legally punished. But if murders are committed by soldiers acting in the king's name, and by his authority, under the specious pretext of keeping the peace; and if the perpetrators of such murders are afterwards protected by the whole power and influence of the crown; this must necessarily alarm ever intelligent friend of the constitution abundantly more than the most atrocious murder committed by private individuals. For in the former case the people have scarce any mode of redress, [p. 35] if the parliament refuse it. And I do not see what possible security the people can have for their liberties if it be allowable for the ministry, on every trifling occasion (with the assistance of one or two complaisant justices of the peace) to employ the military against them when they happen to discover any dissatisfaction at the measures of administration. As to the affair in St. George's Fields, it is not yet quite forgotten that thanks were returned to the soldiers employed there, in the king's name, for their alertness and diligence in putting a period to the lives of some of his Majesty's unarmed, defenceless subjects. And that all possible art and influence were employed to screen the actors in that tragedy from the punishment they merited.

Of your *charitable* character of Mr. Wilkes I will say little. I must, however, observe that a man may have many follies, and some vices, and yet it may be doing him great injustice to say that he has 'no regard to virtue or morality'. This is what a conscientious divine should [p. 36] not say of any man, without substantial evidence. However, after observing that he had abused the ministry, and aspersed the king's mother in the grossest manner, you say that he was prosecuted 'not for this, but *other achievements*', and then retired to France. What you mean by 'other achievements' is not very easy to say, but indeed it appears intended to convey something very much like an untruth. For I believe few readers would understand that phrase to mean the *Essay on Woman*, or the 45th number of the *North Briton*,¹⁰ and I know of nothing else for which he was prosecuted. But whatever may be Mr. Wilkes's private character, whether you choose to distinguish or not, other people will, between that and the merits of his cause, with which alone the public are concerned. It must be confessed at the same time that those who have been favoured by the court have been remarkable for the excellency of their private lives. The virtues of the court member for Middlesex, Mr. L—ll, are well known. And no man doubts but that for

¹⁰John Wilkes published suggestions of an illicit relationship between George III's mother, the Princess Dowager Augusta and Lord Bute in his paper *North Briton*. This was used, along with a proof of his pending copy of an obscene parody of Alexander Pope's, *Essay on Man*, titled *Essay on Woman*, to secure his expulsion from parliament.

piety, chastity, modesty, sobriety, and other [p. 37] excellencies Lord S—ch and Mr. R—d R—y are *shining* characters.

It must be admitted that for some of the injuries which have been done to Mr. Wilkes as an individual, the laws have made him compensation—which, by the way, is a demonstration that the people were not altogether in the wrong in support him, for the determinations of the courts of justice do at least prove that the laws had been broken for the purpose of oppressing him. But, with a view of obstructing as much as possible the course of justice, an order was made by the highest authority that the fine which was laid as a punishment on the offending Secretary of State for violating the constitution in the person of Mr. Wilkes should be paid out of the exchequer; an act which filled every man who had any just conceptions of law, justice, or the constitution with astonishment and indignation. For it now appears that if a minister of state should be with difficulty brought in some degree to justice, whatever expenses he may incur for injuring the people are to be paid out of [p. 38] their money—an iniquity which I would suppose, sir, even you would not attempt to vindicate. At least I am certain that any man who can defend this may defend anything.

You say you do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America, and you doubt 'whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence' (p. 25). But you think to settle the whole matter by throwing the guilt of it upon the late Mr. George Grenville. I am as little concerned to vindicate that gentleman's political character as you can be, though he latterly engaged in the opposition. But he is dead, and I will say no more of him. However, I would ask whether those who have been since him in administration have not adopted very obnoxious measures respecting the Americans? And whether his Majesty himself has not, in his speeches, taken the most absolute and decisive part against them? [p. 39]

With regard to your intimations respecting the present ministry, I must observe that you are exceedingly mistaken if you imagine the present complaints of the people are merely against the men now ostensibly in power. Their complaints are of a more enlarged nature. They complain of the general tenor of administration for near ten years past. That during that period an ungracious and impolitic system of government appears to have prevailed, irreconcilable with the principles of the English constitution. That the rights of the people have been violated in a variety of instances and the public treasure shamefully squandered, at the same time that the honour and interest of the nation with respect to foreign powers have been scandalously neglected. So that from being in the highest degree of national prosperity, and in such a situation as enabled us almost to give law to Europe, our condition is now so sunk and degraded that we are scarcely able to defend our own possessions from the insults and attacks of foreign nations. [p. 40]

As to what you say in defence of the manner in which the petitions and remonstrances have been received (p. 15), it amounts to very little on any other supposition but that of the complaints of the people being without foundation, which all your sophistry has not been able to make appear. And even on that supposition the people, though mistaken, are entitled to regard. Government was constituted for their benefit, and not merely to support princes or ministers in state and luxury. And if those in whom the powers of government are vested mean honestly, they may easily find means to convince the people of the rectitude of their intentions. But as to the manner in which the petitions and remonstrances were actually received, I feel more than I choose to express. I should however hardly suppose it possible that any man who deserves the name of Englishman could think they were received as the complaints and remonstrances of a free-born people ought to have been. [p. 41]

After having, in your manner, answered some of the objections to the late measures of government, you triumphantly exalt, 'So far we have gained. We have removed the *imaginary causes* of the present commotions' (p. 29). Perhaps not. You may possibly have reckoned somewhat too fast, and sung *Te Deum*¹¹ without obtaining the victory. I believe no impartial reader, possessed of commonsense, will think you have performed so important a service. However you add, 'It plainly appears they are not

¹¹A hymn of thanksgiving.

owing to the *extraordinary badness*' (a most *elegant* phrase) 'either of the king or his parliament, of his ministers or of the measures which they have taken.' After which you proceed to enquire, 'To what then are they owing? What are the *real causes* of this amazing ferment among the people?' And here you appear indeed to have made a most admirable discovery. You are very strongly of opinion, but not quite positive (in which I commend your prudence), that the first and principle cause of [p. 42] the present commotions is *French gold*. How this is distributed you do not explain in very direct terms. But your meaning manifestly is that it is given to John Wilkes and some of his adherents, to induce them to disturb the government (pp. 30, 31). Now after fairly considering your reasons (if they deserve that name) for this curious conjecture, I must declare that I do most firmly believe that there is not one jot more reason to suppose that Mr. Wilkes or any of his adherents are bribed by the French court than that Mr. *John Wesley* receives a pension from the College of Cardinals or the Society of Jesuits.

You appear to apprehend that a dissolution of the parliament would be a step attended with very dangerous consequences for the king. For you imagine that if a new one were to be chosen, it would probably consist of men disposed to carry matters to extremities against him (pp. 40, 45). But your apprehensions upon this head seem to be without foundation. The popular party, [p. 43] I am confident, wish to injure the king as little as you can do. They only wish to have the grievances of the people redressed. If they wish for a new election, it is only in the hope of returning men who will really consider themselves as the representatives of the people, and act as such; and not be always ready to support every measure of the ministry, however arbitrary and unconstitutional, and however inconsistent with the interest of the nation. But you say that if the king were to dissolve the parliament, 'he would be as perfectly safe as the sheep that have given up their dogs' (pp. 40–41). Your idea of a parliament seems to be quite new. I have always conceived the parliament, or at least the House of Commons, were by the very nature of their institution intended as a check upon the crown and its ministers. And that it was their duty to maintain on all occasions the rights of the subject. But you seem on the contrary to consider them as a part of the royal bodyguard. However, if the parliament must be compared to dogs, surely they ought to be at [p. 44] least as much the dogs of the people as the dogs of the crown.

You speak (p. 25) in very high terms of the liberty which the people of this country now enjoy. And it is true that a government absolutely despotic is not yet quite established among us. It was not to be expected that our ministers would be hardy enough to seize upon all our liberties at once. But without entering into a minute enumeration of the national grievances, we know that a whole county have been injured in a point of the utmost importance to the constitution, and that individuals have been arbitrarily imprisoned without either law or justice. This, according to your principles, is a matter of no importance to any but those who have been personally aggrieved. For if Middlesex is wronged, you say, how is Yorkshire or Cumberland affected by it? And according to the same mode of reasoning, if John Wilkes or William Bingley are imprisoned, without law and contrary to the most essential principles of the constitution, what is that to other people? Or, if a few [p. 45] individuals are murdered by the military, by orders from the ministry, what is that to those who are left alive? But the people of this country are not quite senseless enough to be deceived by such sophistry and absurdity. The high sense which they have of the value of the privileges which they yet enjoy animates them to oppose every encroachment on them with the greater ardour. And it is certain that if ministers of state are suffered to invade the rights of individuals with impunity, we cannot rationally expect anything better than to see ourselves stripped by degrees of all our privileges, and sunk at length into a settled state of slavery. No nation that does not guard its liberties with firmness and with vigilance will ever continue free.

In the parallel which you draw between the times of Charles the First and the present (p. 39) you say that 'the nation in general was *inflamed* with all possible diligence by *addresses*, *petitions*, and *remonstrances* admirably well devised for the purpose, which were the most effectual *libels* that could be imagined [p. 46] against the king and government.' But the truth is that these 'libels' as you are pleased to style them (in which you perfectly agree with the court-parasites of Charles's days) would have had very little effect if they had not been founded on facts known to the whole kingdom. It was Charles's arbitrary and illegal administration, and his violent attempts to rob the people of their most important rights, which really *inflamed* the nation against him, and which justly brought on him the opposition that he met with

and which he well deserved. But no writings will ever have so much effect as to excite a nation to acts of violence against a good government. Though if a people are injured and oppressed, and their liberties endangered, those who give them just conceptions concerning their situation do undoubtedly perform a real service to the community.

You likewise observe (p. 37) that the opposition in the time of Charles the First was in a great measure a contest about religion, which is far from being the case at present. And I know that the same [p. 47] observation has been before made, by scrupulous and well-intentioned people. But it should be remembered that if we once suffer ourselves to be deprived of our civil rights, our religious liberties will then lie at the mercy of the prince, and we should enjoy them only during his pleasure. I readily admit that our attention ought not to be wholly, or even chiefly, engrossed by political affairs, or any other matters that relate merely to the present life. The first object of our cares and of our solicitude ought to be that higher and nobler state of existence after which we should be constantly aspiring. But surely as all class of men, the religious as well as the vicious and profane, employ much of their time in things merely of a temporal nature, some attention is due to the preservation of our national liberty, which by every generous mind is estimated as the most valuable of all temporal blessings. And indeed it is a duty incumbent on us, as honest men and as Christians, to take every legal and justifiable method of transmitting down to our posterity those rights which we have [p. 48] enjoyed through the virtue of our brave and public-spirited ancestors.

You seem to think, at the beginning of your performance, that you have great merit and are much superior to those on the opposite side (and indeed to other writers on both sides) for the moderation with which you have treated the subjects in dispute, and because you have (as you say) given no ill words or called no ill names. You expect, therefore, to be abused by the warm men on *both* sides (p. 7). Why you should expect to be abused by the court party I cannot conceive. They can have no reason to abuse you, unless they think you have defended their cause in a weak or injudicious manner. But as to your having given no ill words, or called no ill names; if you have not done this you have done what is perhaps much worse—insinuated the worst things you could against the popular party, and attributed to them the most mischievous designs. It is hardly possible for the most rancorous of the court party [p. 49] to insinuate anything worse against the people in opposition than you have done, insomuch that you repeatedly charge them with the most traitorous designs (see pp. 8, 34, 35, 45). So that nothing can be more manifest than that your pretences to moderation and impartiality are merely affectation. I must however observe to you that I believe the generality of those in opposition are as well affected to the reigning prince and family as you, or the most loyal of the court party. Great numbers of them have been formerly eminent for their zeal for the house of Hanover, and would now sacrifice their lives in its defence—provided their laws and liberties are preserved to them inviolate. But they think that tyranny under one family is not more tolerable than under another. They know that the princes of the house of Hanover are bound by all the ties of honour and of gratitude to maintain the rights of the people to whom they owe their elevation—an act which was brought about for that purpose, [p. 50] and for that purpose only. And they are resolved not to submit to slavery under any family.

Towards the close of your pamphlet (pp. 41, 45) you intimate it to be your opinion that it is not possible for the king to do anything that will quiet the minds of the people. You think that the way that he has already taken, that of 'standing his ground' as you express it (that is, paying no regard to the complaints and remonstrances of the people), was the wisest method he could take. You have however hit on something which you think may be an improvement upon this. And what measure does the reader suppose the meek and moderate Mr. Wesley has suggested, in order to put a stop to the present commotions? Does he imagine that our honest divine has advised that some steps be taken to convince the people that no designs are forming against their liberties? That the principles of the constitution be exactly adhered to and no infringement made on the rights of individuals? That care be taken that the public money be not [p. 51] squandered, or employed in bribing the representatives of the people? Or that a due attention be paid by administration to the honour and interest of the nation? No, reader. In truth, Mr. Wesley has recommended nothing of this nature. Nothing that would be so unpalatable to our ministers. He is not so uncourtly. But the meek man, in the benevolence of his heart, can think of nothing to quiet

the minds of the people but the vigorous prosecution of libellers, and a more frequent use of Newgate [prison] and the pillory.

You have not, sir, it is true, made use of these exact words. But it is not possible for any man to mistake your meaning. You say (p. 46), 'If any' (way) 'is more likely' (to restore the peace of the nation) 'would it not be vigorously to execute the laws against incendiaries? Against those who, by spreading all manner of lies, inflame the people even to madness.' But I would recommend to the reader the perusal of the whole passage, for it is curious and worth reading. It has long been thought by many that you [p. 52] are no enemy to popery. And in truth it may be conjectured from the spirit discoverable at the close of your pamphlet that you have no aversion to the doctrine of *wholesome severities*. I mean when employed against others. For as your old friend Dr. Warburton long ago observed, you are no great friend to persecution when it approaches your own person.¹² However, when we consider your declaration at the beginning of your performance that you would not hurt either party in the least degree; nay, that you would not willingly give them the least pain—and compare it with the malignant spirit which you afterwards discover, one might be somewhat tempted to suspect that you are not badly formed for an inquisitor.

You are not, it seems, quite sanguine with respect to the success of your scheme. You are not certain that the wholesome severities you recommend would answer the intended purpose. 'It is possible' (you say) 'this might restore peace, but one cannot affirm it would.' You are right. The prosecution of libellers, or those whom [p. 53] crown lawyers and men of mean and servile principles would choose to call so, will never convince the people of the rectitude of the measures of administration. And be assured that your project is very ill adapted to the purpose of quieting the minds of a brave, a generous, and an incensed people.

It is true that you talk of prosecuting those who 'spread all manner of lies'. But I dare say you are not unacquainted that if an unfortunate author, printer, or bookseller should be prosecuted in the court of King's Bench for anything that Mr. Attorney General may choose to style a libel, it will be of very little importance whether the assertions contained in such publication be true or false. If it make any difference, there being too much truth in the production will only increase its criminality, for that is the modern doctrine upon this subject.

If therefore your reasonable hint respecting the vigorous prosecution of libellers should be adopted by the proper persons, and aided by the Mansfieldian [p. 54] doctrine of libels, it may, if the people will submit to it, contribute something towards suppressing the liberty of the press. Which many of our righteous ministers have long considered as a evil of the first magnitude. But which, if the inhabitants of this country ever suffer to be wrested from them, they will from that moment cease to have any pretensions to the character of a free people.

It is however impossible that anything like a free press can subsist long in this country, if once crown prosecutions for political publications become frequent, and the modern doctrine concerning libels be generally admitted—by which we are deprived of all protection from a jury of our countrymen, who are rendered mere ciphers, or at most nothing but instruments to execute other men's malice. It is maintained that jurymen in libel cases are bound to convict upon the mere evidence of publication, though they are in no respect convinced of any criminality in the production, or of any evil intent in the publisher, of which it seems they are [p. 55] not competent judges. It is just, we are told, to punish at discretion any bookseller or printer for selling or printing libels, though twelve jurymen, even of the best rank, assisted and enlightened by the pleadings of council, are incapable of determining what a libel is. If it be so, the situation of booksellers and printers must be exceedingly perilous. But I hope my countrymen, when they act as jurymen, will never be weak enough to be induced by the infamous sophistry that is generally employed on these occasions, or by any other means, to give up their right of determining what is called the law, as well as the fact, in libel cases; the innocence or criminality of the book or paper, as well as the fact of publication. Jurymen have a right to try the whole matter in issue

¹²William Warburton, *The Doctrine of Grace* (London: A. Millar, 1763), 2:240.

before them, and they are guilty of treachery to their country if they give up this right. For on the maintenance of this the liberty of the press essentially depends, with which the preservation of all our other rights is most evidently connected. For the freedom of the press and the liberty of the people will stand or fall together. [p. 56]

You have not sir, it is true, entered into these matters. But your recommendation of the prosecution of libellers naturally brought them to remembrance. And if any regard should be paid to this hint of yours (which is not impossible, as the most pernicious advice is sometimes preferred to the most salutary) it will then be the more necessary that every man eligible to the office of jurymen should understand the extent of his own power, and what his countrymen have a right to expect from him. And indeed when we see lawyers of the highest rank exerting their abilities, not in the maintenance of law and justice, but in quibbling away the most important and essential rights of the people, it is then time for every man who wishes well to his country to be upon his guard.

I have already, sir, extended my letter to a greater length than I intended, and must therefore now take my leave of you. But I shall first observe that I am sorry to see you, at this advanced period of life, going out of the proper business of your character and professions, to varnish over [p. 57] the most iniquitous measures of a corrupt administration, and to support the cause of ministerial tyranny and oppression. As to the profession of impartiality with which you set out, they must, after the perusal of your pamphlet, appear ridiculous even to your own party. It were however to have been wished that you had contented yourself with throwing out the worst reflections you could against the friends of freedom and the constitution, without at the same time insinuating the most pernicious and inflammatory advice to your sovereign. And it had been well if, when you were making so many artful pretences to meekness and moderation, you had discovered somewhat more fairness in your reasoning, and a little more regard to justice and to candour.

As to myself, I cannot help considering the enemies of the cause of public freedom as the enemies of my country. I think it at all times [p. 58] justifiable to oppose the votaries and defenders of unconstitutional and despotic ministers, of whatever rank, character, or profession. I am, sir,

Yours, etc.

Source: Joseph Towers, A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley in Answer to his late Pamphlet entitled 'Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs' (London: for the author, 1771).

Unidentified Reviewer¹

[c. January 31, 1771]

[p. 39]

A Sermon on the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, preached at the Chapel, Tottenham Court Road, and at the Tabernacle, Moorfields, on Sunday, November 18, 1770. By John Wesley, M.A. Price 6d.²

We cannot think Mr. Wesley most happy in his choice of a text of this solemn occasion. How could this wish of the mad prophet, who would fain cursed the people of God, 'Let me die the death of the righteous ...' (Num. 33:10), be applicable to the death of that faithful minister of Jesus, Mr. Whitefield? True, Mr Wesley did not apply, nor indeed scarce make the least use of his text on the occasion. Hence might he not as well have taken those words of St. Paul to Timothy, 'Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil'?³ This reminds us of a story, said to be related by Mr. Wesley himself, that a Quaker who lived in his father's parish, who was a clergyman, once came to hear him preach. When the Quaker saw him next, he said, 'Friend Wesley, I think there is no sort of difference between thy preaching and ours except this—thou tookest a text, but we do not. However it all came to the same point, for thou tookest leave of thy text as soon as thou hadst named it.'

Under the first head, near one half of this discourse is taken up with extracts from Mr. Whitefield's journals.

[p. 40] The second head takes some view of Mr. Whitefield's character. Just, concise, and pretty.

The third head is to improve this awful providence by keeping close to the *grand doctrines* which he delivered, and by drinking into his *spirit*.

First, says Mr. Wesley, let us keep close to the grand scripture doctrines which he everywhere delivered.

Here it could not be expected but Mr. Wesley would come exceeding short. Nor could it be supposed but that some—and those very essential points too, both to the glory of God and the comfort of his people—Mr. Wesley would not even so much as mention. Indeed we must say, considering the exceeding great difference of sentiments which subsisted between Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley it was a very difficult task for Mr. Wesley to stand forth and acquit himself on this point. For it is notorious that Mr. Whitefield avowedly held, and constantly taught, even to the end, those doctrines which are called Calvinistical. And it is also as notorious that Mr. Wesley has declared publicly in print, 'I would sooner be a Turk, a deist, yea an atheist, than I could believe them'.⁴

We now come to make a few remarks on this head. This we do without the least design of giving any offence to Mr. Wesley or any of his friends. But, laying aside all bitterness, would speak the truth in love. If these remarks fall into that gentleman's or any of his friends' hands, we entreat for a calm consideration of them.

1. Says Mr. Wesley, p. 25,⁵ 'May not these grand, fundamental doctrines which Mr. Whitefield everywhere insisted on be summed up, as it were, in two words: *the new birth* and *justification by faith*?' We answer, No. In no wise. No; no even 'as it were'. No more that the articles of our creed can be

¹While not framed as a letter to JW, this review was directed at him, and provoked his reply in a letter dated Feb. 26, found in *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Feb. 27–Mar. 1, 1771), p. 204.

²I.e., Sermon 53, *On the Death of George Whitefield*, *Works*, 2:330–47.

³2 Tim. 4:14.

⁴JW, *Preservative Against Unsettled Notions in Religion* (1758), 'A Letter to the Rev. Mr. [Hervey]', 2:311, *Works*, 13:342.

⁵*Works*, 2:343.

summed up in these two words: the crucifixion of Christ and the descent of the Spirit. For we know Mr. Whitefield everywhere insisted, both [p. 41] from the pulpit and press, on other fundamental doctrines than these. Yea doctrines from the foundation of which the new birth and justification by faith take their rise. With which they are inseparably connected. By which they are made absolutely effectual to the everlasting salvation of sinners. And without which Mr. Whitefield could not maintain this fundamental point, as Mr. Wesley well observes he did (p. 23) 'to give God all the glory, and in the business of salvation set Christ as high and man as low as possible'.⁶ Now these fundamental doctrines are: God the Father's everlasting, unchangeable love to sinners; his election of sinners by his grace to salvation; the everlasting covenant which was entered into by the holy blessed and glorious Trinity to save men. And in consequence of this everlasting love, election, and covenant, that every believing member of Jesus shall certainly persevere in holiness to eternal life, as 'being kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation'.⁷ Now these may truly be called the grand, the scriptural, the fundamental points which Mr. Whitefield taught and maintained. Says he,

If people were more studious of the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son, we should not then have so much disputing against the doctrine of election, nor hear it condemned as a doctrine of devils. For my part, I cannot see how humbleness of mind can be obtained without the knowledge of election. And though I will not say that everyone who denies election is a bad man, yet I will say it is a *bad sign*.⁸

May we not then here remark, in Mr. Whitefield's words, that as the fundamental doctrine of election is left out of this sermon, that it is a *bad sign*? How then does Mr. Wesley keep close to those grand scriptural doctrines which Mr. [p 42] Whitefield everywhere delivered? Did he not know that Mr. Whitefield, even to his death, constantly avowed and ever preached them? He did full well. But,

2. Says Mr. Wesley, 'there are many doctrines of a less essential nature, with regard to which even the sincere children of God (such is the present weakness of human understanding) are and have been divided for many ages'.⁹ We cannot but suppose Mr. Wesley means those very doctrines just mentioned. But we cannot allow him [that] Mr. Whitefield ever judged these were doctrines of a *less essential* nature than either regeneration or justification by faith. No, by no means. They are to the full equally as essential to the glory of God, to the stability of his people's faith, and to the comfort of their souls. Yea, there is such a close, such an inseparable connexion between them that they are all as links in one chain. God has joined them together, who shall dare to separate them? For thus saith the word of truth. Here is the order of grace. Here the links of salvation: 'Whom God did predestinate, them he also called; whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified' (Rom. 8:30). Hence we may truly say of election and final perseverance, they are *the first and last things*; and that regeneration of the Spirit and justification by faith are the *middle* things. For how comes any one sinner of mankind to be justified by the righteousness of Christ, or regenerated by the Spirit? It is because precious Love presided in the everlasting council and covenant. Infinite wisdom contrived the plan, and therefore sovereign grace effects the work. Says God the Father, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore' (for that cause) 'with loving-kindness have I drawn thee' (Jer. 31:3). It is not, I have drawn thee to my Son to believe on him, and therefore have I loved thee. No, but love is prior to, yea the very cause of [p. 43] the Spirit drawing to Jesus, and the regeneration of the Spirit. This is true of the church of Christ, collectively considered as making one body, of which Jesus is the head. As considered

⁶*Works*, 2:341.

⁷1 Pet. 1:5.

⁸Author's footnote: See *The Best Improvement of the Death of Mr. Whitefield*, a small tract, price 2s per dozen. Sold by M. Lewis.

⁹*Works*, 2:341.

in one covenant, of which Jesus is the surety. And also of every individual member thereof. Divine attraction to Jesus is the fruit of everlasting love. Therefore everlasting love is a most essential, a most fundamental point which Mr. Whitefield ever held dear and sacred, and ever taught and insisted on, but which Mr. Wesley has secluded.

3. Wherein does this doctrine appear less essential than regeneration and justification? Why is the everlasting love of God the Father less essential to the comfort and joy of a Christian than the justification which is by his Son and the regeneration of his Spirit? Is it less essential to faith? No, it is as clearly and as plainly taught in the Scriptures of truth. Is it not the equally as essential that we give glory to the Father for his everlasting, electing covenant love before time, as to the Spirit for his regenerating grace, and to the Son for his atoning blood and justifying righteousness in time? For is not this love of God the very essential foundation cause of, and fount spring from when flow, every spiritual blessing and eternal comfort to fallen man? Hath not our Lord assured us, 'God so loved, that he gave his only-begotten Son', etc., so that the gift of the Saviour and the influences of the Spirit are given to us in consequence of the everlasting covenant love of God. Surely then this point of doctrine cannot be of a *less essential nature* than justification and the new birth. Mr. Whitefield did not think so. He did not teach so. In the spirit of love we pray that Mr. Wesley may be taught not to esteem it so.

4. Besides, without this fundamental truth, the everlasting, unchangeable covenant love of God to us, what is this new birth and justification by faith as Mr. Wesley [p. 44] maintains them? Why only a defective, precarious scheme, which may, which does, and which certainly will prove abortive as to saving purposes. For, according to his avowed tenets a soul may be justified by faith, and be born again of the Spirit, and yet never enjoy eternal life, but be eternally damned—unless the sinner does more for himself, to make his own salvation effectual, than the blood and righteousness of the Son of God hath done *for* him, and the Spirit of God have effected *in* him. Now is this, as Mr. Wesley observes it was, Mr. Whitefield's fundamental 'point in the business of salvation, to set Christ as *high* and man as *low* as possible'? Surely not. Therefore in justice to dear Mr. Whitefield, and for a regard to the truth of those doctrines which his Lord had taught him, and kept him faithful to in preaching them, and without the least prejudice against but in sincere respect to Mr. Wesley, we are constrained to point out the divine connexion and glorious harmony between those essential revealed truths of the gospel, and which Mr. Whitefield invariably taught and maintained to the end. Therefore in the point of justification he, though dead, yet thus scripturally and comfortably speaketh, 'Those whom God has justified, he has in effect glorified. For, *as a man's worthiness was not the cause of God's imputing to him Christ's righteousness, so neither shall his unworthiness be the cause of God's taking it away*'. As for God, his work, his way is perfect, he always carried on and finished what he begun. Hence we may in point of doctrine Mr. Wesley's lines of him; he did

Stand as an iron pillar strong,
And steadfast as a wall of brass.¹⁰

But again, says Mr. Wesley, 'To improve this providence is to drink into Mr. Whitefield's spirit'. Here Mr. Wesley speaks great things and true of Mr. Whitefield's [p. 45] catholic love. O that this was more diffused among the children of God of all denominations! It was this which gained Mr. Whitefield such high esteem and great respect amongst ministers of Christ of all denominations, many of whom were his constant hearers. For as Mr. Venn most excellently observes, in his sermon on the death of Mr. Whitefield,

He had no ambition to stand at the head of a party. [...] Neither in his sermons nor private exhortations did *he* cast any disparaging reflexions upon other preachers of Christ. Neither did *he* urge rules of his own devising as necessary helps to godly living, laying a vast

¹⁰CW, 'Acts 4:29', st. 7, *HSP* (1739), 203; quoted in *JW sermon Works*, 2:340.

stress on them, as self-love will dictate. No base suggestions dropped from *his* mouth, as if to differ from him must be owing to blindness in the judgement, or coldness in the heart, for the interest of holiness. Truly cordial and catholic in *his* love, for *all* who appeared to love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. *He* never desired to see his followers increased by those who had evangelical pastors of their own.¹¹

Now this was not only speaking in words about peace, love, and a catholic spirit, but it was in deed and in truth maintaining and promoting the very genius of such a spirit. But how can it be expected this should prevail when the opprobrious name of 'antinomian' is so liberally branded upon those who hold the doctrines of an election of grace and the final perseverance of the saints, and cannot swallow that unscriptural doctrine of perfection? And hence people are warned, 'If you go to hear such and such ministers, you are fallen from grace. You want to find an easier and smoother way to heaven than we teach. You will soon drink into the spirit of licentiousness.' Alas, alas! We may, after this rate, talk till we are blind about drinking into Mr. Whitefield's spirit, and yet never have one real drop of it. The spirit of party and bigotry, blended with the spirit of self-righteousness, is as contrary to it as the haughty spirit of the self-righteous [p. 46] pharisee was to that of the humble self-abased publican. You could never bring him down from his eminence and distance to a level with the poor publican. Why? Because *he trusted in himself that he was righteous*. He was got beyond the publican's plea, '*God be merciful to me a sinner!*'¹² What was the consequence? *He despised others*. He held the poor self-condemned yet justified publican in contempt. He could not drink into his spirit. He could have no catholic love for him. He could have no fellowship with him. Similar causes will ever produce similar effects. We could enumerate many recent particulars to exemplify this observation. But to avoid giving offence, we forbear. Indeed, we must say we despair seeing a universal spread of that truly catholic spirit which Mr. Whitefield was blessed with until the wall of *party* is thrown down, the spirit of *bigotry* subsides, and people have drank so deep into the purity and spirituality of God holy and righteous law as to confess with humble Paul, '*of sinners I am chief*'. Then they will have done with this language complained of by the Lord, 'Stand by thyself. Come not near me, for I am holier than thou' (Isa. 65:5). And instead thereof they will, as the apostle exhorts, 'in lowliness of mind esteem each other *better* than themselves' (Phil. 2:3). O for a spread of this genuine spirit of Christian humility! Then would self-exalting doctrines be laid aside. Poor sinner would be laid low, even in the dust. Jesus, the precious Saviour, would be alone exalted in all his glorious offices, in his infinitely complete and everlastingly finished salvation, according to the everlasting covenant love of the ever-blessed Trinity. And seeing ourselves *complete in him*, we should unite and love one another, as saved sinners and beloved members of our ever dear and ever lovely Head, Jesus. O for this spirit of truth, which is productive of humility, and accompanied with love, let us pray and contend evermore!

Source: *Gospel Magazine* 6 (1771): 39–46.

¹¹Henry Venn, *A Token of Respect to the Memory of the Rev. George Whitefield, A.M. Being the Substance of a Sermon* (London: Dilly, 1770), 18.

¹²Luke 18:13.

From the Rev. Richard De Courcy¹

[Newcastle-upon-Tyne]
February 9, 1771

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Yesterday evening, after a very tedious journey, the Lord brought me safe to Newcastle. When I reflect on the fatigue and dangers which attend travelling, I should be astonished above measure that you have so indefatigably persevered in all the labours of an itinerant life for so many years, were I not well assured that you have been super-naturally assisted in body and mind for that extensive work to which God has eminently chosen you. May the Lord still continue to strengthen and bless you, that your very enemies may be constrained to acknowledge that 'God is in you of a truth!'²

I write this in Mr. M'Nab's chamber,³ with whom and Mr. [Thomas] Hanby I find great fellowship of spirit. I have accepted your kind invitation, and purpose taking up my abode with them till Monday, when I set out for Edinburgh. I would stay longer with your dear people here, but that I find Lady Glenorchy⁴ is particularly anxious for my speedy arrival in Edinburgh. As my situation there will expose me to diversified trials, do dear sir, pray that I may be kept,

Humble, teachable, and mild,
Patient as a little child.

Hoping to have the pleasure of a line from you as soon as convenient, and requesting an interest in your prayers, I remain, reverend and dear sir,

Your most affectionate, but unworthy brother,

R. De Courcy

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 388–89.

¹Richard De Courcy (c. 1743–1803) was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and ordained deacon as curate to Rev. Walter Shirley in 1767. Being denied ordination in Ireland, his case was appealed to Lady Huntingdon, who secured ordination for him by the bishop of Lichfield and employed him among her preachers. He eventually received the living of St. Alkmund, Shrewsbury. See JW's concerns about him expressed in a letter to Lady Maxwell, July 24, 1771, *Works*, 28:344.

²1 Cor. 14:25.

³Alexander M'Nab (or McNab) (1745–97) became a sailor at age 14 but returned to Edinburgh in 1763 and was converted under the preaching of James Kershaw. He became an itinerant preacher in 1766 and served until 1783, when he left to become pastor of a small Independent chapel in Sheffield.

⁴De Courcy was on his way to serve as chaplain for Willielma (Maxwell) Campbell, Viscountess Glenorchy.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
February 20, 1771

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have received Mr. [Walter] Churchey's letter about the Hay division, and your kind P.S.¹ The former I had seen and wondered at, the latter I humbly thank you for.

I fear we are going, or already gone, from our plan of catholicism at the college. Mr. [Joseph] Benson's affair has made me tell all my mind to our Deborah² about bigotry, partiality, prejudice, and everything that seemed to me contrary to the Christian spirit in some late transactions. The answer was that if the one half of the things objected to by me was true, there would be room for the cruelty of my charges; but facts and words have been grossly misrepresented. Therefore my mouth is shut so far.

This however I have insisted and do insist upon. [Firstly,] if every Arminian must quit the college, I am discharged for one—for I cannot give up the possibility of the salvation of all, any more than I can give up the *truth* and *love* of God.

Secondly, I will be no party-man, nor give up my connections with anyone that fears God, much less with Mr. John Wesley, who shall be always welcome to my pulpit and I make no doubt will always welcome me to his.

Thirdly, nobody shall prevent my following after an entire devotedness of heart to God, a loving him with all my heart, and a being filled with the Holy Ghost and with power,³ by baiting my Christian hopes and privileges under the name of 'perfection'.

To this I have received no particular answer. But as I set out for the college today I may get one *vivâ voce*.⁴ In the mean time, I beg you will give me leave to write to you what I have done to my Lady. You will be extremely welcome to my poor pulpit, and I shall think myself greatly honoured by the grant of my request to use it. If you can make Madeley in your way from Worcester to Shrewsbury, Mr. Williams, the clergyman who officiates here in my absence, will receive you. Please only to send him word which day and at what hour you might be expected to be here and preach.

I am not right, I am not happy, without the fullness of God. This I wait for. O might it be in the right way. The Lord strengthen, protect, and prosper you in all your labours. Though no letter writer, I am and shall always remain, reverend and dear sir,

Your ready, though unprofitable, servant,

J. Fletcher

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley / at the Foundery / Moor-fields / London'.

Postmarks: '22/FE'.

Annotation: by JW, 'Mr Fletcher / Feb 20 1771 / ad 27'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/37.⁵

¹See above, Jan. 14, 1771.

²I.e., Lady Huntingdon

³Cf. Rom. 15:13.

⁴'living voice' or orally.

⁵A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 259–60.

From Elizabeth Briggs¹

Shoreham
March 9, 1771

Reverend Sir,

I have long wished to write to you, but have been prevented by a fear that it would be taking too great liberty. However, I have at last determined to break through all and declare the loving kindness of the Lord to me.

My last journey to London was made an unspeakable blessing to me. Ever since, I have enjoyed a sense of the presence of God. But still the accomplishment of some of the promises appeared at an exceeding great distance. I could not believe that 'The word is nigh thee'.² Something seemed to keep me back from coming *now* to be made clean. At times I was greatly discouraged, through a fear that I should continue to go on at this poor rate. But for sometime the Lord has been pleased again to revive his work. Full salvation seems nearer. I now seem just on the brink of entering into that *rest* where God is loved alone. Yesterday, in prayer, the power of the Lord so rested upon me that I scarce knew whether he had not cast out all my enemies. I found such a solemn sense of his presence that I could only fall down and silently adore.

It was not long before the enemy thrust sore at me. But Jesus stood by me, and covered my head with his wings. I find him precious, and my soul stretches out in expectation of his coming. I seem as weak as helpless infancy. But this is my consolation, his strength is made perfect in weakness. I believe not one of those good things he has promised shall fall to the ground, but that all he hath told me shall be accomplished.

O sir, what abundant encouragement have I to live to God! To devote my little all to him! It is now near six years since I first knew the love of Jesus. And how often have I been ready to turn back again into Egypt, when he stopped me, by crying, 'Wilt thou also go?'³ What seasons of temptations? What fierce conflicts with the powers of darkness have I been delivered out of? Many of these I could not then see the end of the Lord in. But I praise him for them all, were it only on this account, that hereby I may have an opportunity of comforting others, by the comfort whereby I myself have been comforted of God.

When you have a few leisure moments, if you will favour me with a letter, it will be a considerable addition to the many favours already conferred on, dear sir,

Your affectionate daughter and servant,

E. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 389–91.

¹Elizabeth Briggs (1751–1822) was the daughter of William and Elizabeth (Perronet) Briggs. she was a frequent correspondent with JW prior to her marriage to Rev. Peard Dickinson on Apr. 30, 1788.

²Deut. 30:14; quoted in Rom. 10:8.

³Cf. John 6:67.

From Damaris Perronet

Shoreham
March 16, 1771

Reverend and Dear Sir,

When God poured out his Spirit a few years ago, to witness the work he had wrought in the hearts of his people, I strove to understand it. But as it did not please him to give me much light, I concluded that he had wrought the work—but not given light to know what it was.

Observing also that many professors neglected the daily cross, I began to think that imitating the pattern our Lord hath left us, in doing good to the souls and bodies of all we can, was greater than all they talked off. Yet I often wished that God would again come down and reign gloriously in the hearts of those who were willing to be wholly his.

For my own part, though I strove to live to God inwardly and outwardly, and often had the comforts of his Spirit, which emboldened me to come to him in all my difficulties; yet I was not satisfied, which often made me beseech him to pierce my heart with keen conviction.

When Miss [Ann] Bolton came here, and began to tell me how the Lord had blessed her, I did not like so much talk¹ about what is usually called 'the blessing'. I said, 'I find a nearness to God; but do not believe I am saved in this manner.' Yet I thought, Christ came to destroy sin in me; and that there is a greater salvation from it than I have yet attained. I then resolved to be in earnest for it, but little thought what pride and unbelief lay hid in my heart. The next day my distress increased, and my hope of deliverance lessened.

When my father² took this text at night, 'I will water it every moment. I will keep it night and day, lest any hurt it.'³ I began to have more hope. But all this while I saw I had a will of my own that must be given up, even in seeking after God. I therefore pleaded hard with Jesus to help me to do it, and begged that he would save me *now!* I said, in agony of prayer, 'If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.'⁴ Jesus answered, 'I will, be thou clean',⁵ and immediately I felt a mighty change through all my soul.

Since then I have been tempted to think I deceived myself. But upon the whole I have abundant reason to adore the holy Jesus for what he has done for me. I have now to set out afresh to devote my heart and life to him, to watch and pray, and bear the daily cross, and to testify my love to him, by keeping his commandments.

I am, dear sir,

Your friend and servant,

D. Perronet

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 444–45.

¹Orig., missing 'talk'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

²Rev. Vincent Perronet.

³Cf. Isa. 27:3.

⁴Matt. 8:2 and parallels.

⁵Matt. 8:3 and parallels.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
March 18 [1771]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am sorry not to have had it in my power to meet you in Shropshire and give you by word of mouth an account of what passed at Lady Huntingdon's college, respecting you, at my last visit there.

The hasty admitting of subjects that did not appear to me proper, the sanguine hopes they would turn out against probability, the divisions at Brecknock and the Hay,¹ and some things that I did not approve in Mr. [Joseph] Benson's dismissal, gave me a disgust to the college. Nevertheless I went to try to make the best of every matter, but found at my arrival that the students had been armed by Mr. [Walter] Shirley against the point I had with some success maintained when [I] was there before—viz., internal conversion by the power of the Holy Ghost dwelling in the heart by faith. He called it 'perfection' and as such baited it out of the place. I saw the college was no longer my place, as I was not likely to do or receive any good there, especially as Calvinism strongly prevailed. Under these circumstances, and humbling views of my insufficiency, I told my Lady and all around me I resigned the place of superintendent. Nevertheless, I stayed to supply the want of a master.

In the meantime an extract of your last *Minutes* was sent to my Lady,² who wept much over it, through an honest fear lest you had fairly and fully given up the grand point of the Methodists: free justification, *articulum stantis vol cadentis ecclesiae*.³ The heresy appeared horrible, worth being publicly opposed, and such as a true believer ought to be ready to burn against. I tried to soften matters, but in vain. The students were commanded to write their sentiments upon you doctrine of 'salvation by works, working for life, the merit of works, etc.', and whoever did not fully disavow it was to quit the college. I wrote among the rest, showed the absurdity of inferring from those minutes that you had renounced the Protestant doctrines and the atonement. I defended your sentiments by explaining them as I have heard you do, and only blamed the unguarded and not sufficiently explicit manner in which they were worded. I concluded by saying that, as after Lady Huntingdon's declaration I could no more stay in the college but as an intruder, I *absolutely* resigned my place, as I must appear to all around as great an heretic as yourself.

This step had a better effect than I expected. My Lady weighed with candour what I had advanced, though she thought it too bad to be laid before the students. In short I retired in peace and as a peacemaker, the servant and no more the principal of the college. I advised Lady Huntingdon to choose a moderate Calvinist in my place, and recommended Mr. Rowland Hill.⁴ The college will take quite a Calvinist turn, and an itinerant ministry will go out of it to feed the Church of God of that sentimental denomination. I strongly recommended them to set fire to the harvest of the Philistines and not to that of their fellow Israelites who cannot pronounce 'shibboleth' in their way.⁵ My Lady and her barracks

¹I.e., the church at Hay-on-Wye.

²The extract was of Q. 28 in the 1770 *Minutes*, which cautioned how they had 'leaned too much toward Calvinism'; see *Works*, 10:391–94.

³'The article by which the church stands or falls.'

⁴Rowland Hill (1744–1833), the sixth son of Sir Rowland Hill, 1st Baronet (d. 1783), was educated St John's College, Cambridge, where he came under Methodist influence. He began itinerating as an evangelical preacher while working to complete his MA (1772). After initial resistance, Hill was ordained deacon in 1773 in the Church of England and given a curacy in Kingston St. Mary, Somerset. But continued itinerant efforts led to denial of ordination as priest, and Hill eventually founded and ministered at independent chapels in Wotton under Edge, Gloucester, and London (Surrey Chapel).

⁵See Judges 12:6.

seemed quite disposed for peace last Friday⁶ when I left them.

Her Ladyship will write to you to beg you will explain yourself upon the *Minutes*, that she and the college may see you are not *an enemy to grace*, and may be friends at a distance instead of open adversaries. And now, my dear sir, I beseech you to put on all the bowels of mercy and condescension that are in Christ to hope the college and its foundress mean well, and give them all the satisfaction you can. I need not bring to your remembrance the words of the apostle, 'as[much] as lies in us, let us live peaceably with all men'.⁷ I trust they are grounded in your heart; and that, should war ensue, your moderation will still appear to all men. The points that will most stop the mouths of our friends are:

- the total fall of man and the utter inability to do any good of himself;
- the absolute necessity of the grace and Spirit of God to raise even a good thought or device in our heart;
- the Lord regarding no work, or accepting of none, but so far as they proceed from his preventing, convincing, and converting grace through the beloved;
- the blood and righteousness of Christ being the sole meritorious cause of our salvation, and a ⟨degree?⟩ of ⟨fai⟩th⁸ in his person or light the only spring of all acceptable works, whether we do them spontaneously from life or for more abundant life.

I look upon Lady Huntingdon as an eminent servant of God, an honest gracious person, but not above the reach of prejudice. And when prejudice misleads her, her warm heart makes her go rather too fast. It is in your power greatly to break,⁹ if not altogether to remove, the prejudice she has conceived against you, and to become all things to her, that you may not cause her to stumble in the greatness of her zeal for the Lord. The best way to get the Calvinists to allow us *something* is to grant them *all* that we possibly can. As your enemies will particularly watch your writings and sermons (and Satan, your heart to find an occasion against you by self-righteousness and dependance upon your great works), my prayer is that you may fully disappoint them by guarding the gospel truth in your own heart and life and doctrine, as much from the legal as the antinomian extreme, between which it invariably lies.

With respect to me, I am not yet a Christian in the full sense of the word, but I follow after, if so be I apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ. Take no notice of my scrawl. Remember, pray for, and direct, reverend and dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and unworthy servant in Christ,

J. Fletcher

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley / at the Octagone / Chester'.

Annotation: by JW, 'Mr F[lletcher] / Mar 17 1772¹⁰ / a[nswere]d 19'.¹¹

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/61.¹²

⁶I.e., Mar. 15.

⁷Col. 3:12.

⁸A small portion is torn away, affecting two words.

⁹Fletcher may mean 'brake'.

¹⁰The last number has a tail at the bottom that makes it appear as a '2'; which was either unintended or Wesley accidentally misdated. The content and context make clear it was 1771.

¹¹This likely refers to JW's letter that Telford dates March 22.

¹²A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 272–74.

From Philothea Briggs¹

[Shoreham]
March 24, 1771

Reverend Sir,

When I was about ten years old, the Lord began to work on my soul. I was justified when I was between twelve and thirteen, in 1766. About a year ago I was stirred up to seek for perfect holiness; but the world allured, and the desire of being wise and learned seemed much to oppose the work of God. Now I thought I was farther off than ever, that the little sense of religion I had was only delusion, and that I should surely perish at last.

About a month ago I became acquainted with Miss [Ann] Bolton, who encouraged me to be in earnest. On Monday, March 20, I thought God dealt hardly with me, in requiring me to live to him without imparting power so to do. When my aunt came, she told me what the Lord had done for her. I could not receive her testimony. But I saw she was in a good spirit. The more I conversed with her, the more I believed what she said. In the evening, Mr. [John] Murlin's text was, 'Let us go on unto perfection'.² This excited me to hope. After supper I retired, but had not been in prayer two minutes before I was almost distracted. I was tempted to think there was no God, nor religion; and before I could recover myself, I fell fast asleep. When I awoke I was more discouraged than ever.

About noon on Wednesday I retired again, and while I was pleading with Jesus, he said, 'I will, be thou clean.'³ I then laid hold on his word, and felt a change which I cannot describe.

At present my soul hangs on him and is very happy, and I know he will continue to do me good.

I am, reverend sir,
Yours, etc.

P. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 445–46.

¹Philothea Briggs (1753–1823), daughter of William and Elizabeth (Perronet) Briggs, was a frequent correspondent with JW prior to her marriage in 1781 to Thomas Thompson of Kingston upon Hull.

²Heb. 6:1.

³Matt. 8:3 and parallels.

From Richard Boardman

New York
April 2, 1771

Reverend Sir,

It pleases God to carry on his work amongst us. Within this month we have had a great awakening here. Many begin to believe the report, and to some the arm of the Lord is revealed. This last month we have had near thirty added to the society, five of whom have received a clear sense of the pardoning love of God. We have in this city some of the best preachers (both in the English and Dutch churches) that are in America; yet God works by whom he will work.

I have lately been much comforted by the death of some poor negroes, who have gone off the stage of time rejoicing in the God of their salvation. I asked one on the point of death, 'Are you afraid to die?' 'O no', said she, 'I have my blessed saviour in my heart, I should be glad to die. I want to be gone, that I may be with him for ever. I know that he loves me, and I feel I love him with all my heart.' She continued to declare the great things God had done for her soul, to the astonishment of many, till the Lord took her to himself. Several more seem just ready to be gone, longing for the happy time when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

I bless God I find, in general, my soul happy, though much tried and tempted. And though I am often made to groan, oppressed with unbelief, yet I find an increasing degree of love to God, his people, and his ways. But I want more purity of intention, to aim at his glory in all I think, or speak, or do. Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief!

We do not, dear Sir, forget to pray for you, that God would lengthen out your days. Nor can we help praying that you may see America before you die. Perhaps I have promised myself too much, when I have thought of this. Lord, not my will, but thine be done!

I am, dear and reverend sir,

Your affectionate son in the gospel,

R. Boardman

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 113–14.¹

¹Compare one dated April 23 in *WMM* 78 (1855): 1020–21

From Jane Catherine March

[London]
April 6, 1771

Reverend Sir,

The Lord deals very graciously with me. I can no longer doubt but his blood hath cleansed me from all sin; and that the blessing I received in the year 1761 was a deliverance from evil, as I have never since felt conflicting passions or a war in my members. Last summer at Bath I was constrained to testify what I felt, and while I was making confession with my mouth unto salvation, I was strengthened to believe more confidently with my heart unto righteousness. While I was at Kingswood S. J. (supposing I was not in this state) rather discouraged me. But the Lord came to my help, and constrained me to believe. When I retired to my room, I felt the Lord peculiarly nigh. He seemed to take me more fully into himself, and gave me power to believe he was come to make his abode with me. My soul felt the overshadowings of his power and his transforming influences.

Since then I have been variously exercised. But I have proved the goodness and faithfulness of God in all his dispensations, and never before so felt the truth of his word, 'My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness.'¹ So that when particularly tried, I have repeated those lines as my experience,

Who in the Lord confide,
And feel his sprinkled blood,
In storms, and hurricanes abide,
Firm as the mount of God.²

I live in the knowledge of Jesus as an uttermost saviour. And what I particularly rejoice in is that the Lord reserved to *himself* the *glory* of all he does *for* me and *in* me. I *feel* the privilege of being outwardly, as well as inwardly, set apart for his service. I am more desirous than ever to live for the good of others while I sojourn here below. May the Lord reward your labour of love to

Your unworthy friend,

J. C. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 501–02.

¹2 Cor. 12:9.

²CW, Hymn on Psalm 125, st. 1, *CPH* (1743), 90.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Waterford
May 7–9, 1771

Dear Sir,

I think all my expectations are only from the Lord. Nor do I desire any blessing which does not come immediately from his hand. I purposed to myself much happiness in seeing you here, and think my expectations were not from man. Then how shall I account for the deadness and heaviness of soul which I labored under whilst you were here? But since then [I] have found the Lord particularly gracious. This has caused some jealousy over myself. I fear I do not know myself aright, and am often fearful lest I should judge too favourably of myself—that is, lest I should imagine I had received that grace which I have not received. The Lord knows I would not deceive myself. And blessed be his name, he does give me to see continually that I am nothing, that I am beholden to his free grace for all things, that I cannot keep myself one moment without his special mercy. Nor indeed do I desire to be kept without him. I find it my sweetest, my most delightful experience to be poor and destitute in myself, subsisting wholly on his bounty. And at times [I] do feel myself even as water spilled before him. And yet how many thousand things do I find in my continually which seem contradictory to this, and which cause difficulties and perplexities in my mind that none but God can clear. Yesterday I corrected my little child in a hasty manner, my spirit being agitated and angry at the child. My heart smote me immediately. I was grieved and distressed, and thought 'surely in vain do I profess to be cleansed from sin, for thus am I overcome continually'. Showers of accusations came in upon me, and I had no defence to make. In this state I went to prayer, and acknowledged my transgression in much deadness and heaviness, which as a cloud fell instantly upon me; when the Lord was pleased to visit my soul, and gave me the testimony of his Spirit that I had not sinned. I was struck with surprise and cried 'How can this be?' I looked for condemnation, but found none. My heaviness of soul was gone, and the Lord did pour into my heart the sweet refreshings of his love. Indeed it is still surprising to me, for I think I was angry at the child, but would be glad of your judgment and advice, for there is a constant fear over me lest I should deceive myself.

I do find the Lord very gracious, and wonder at his love. O surely it is all free grace.

[May] 8th, I just now received a satisfactory letter from brother [Robert] Swindells.¹ He says he wrote to you the Lord has begun a great revival in Dublin, and [I] trust he will carry it on. O that he would do so here also. Since you left this, brother C[hristian]² has preached regularly, his heart seems earnest for the work and people of God. The day you left town I met the women's bands.³ The Lord did wonderfully bless us together, and I find my heart closely united to them. Last Monday I went to the room, but none of them came. I do find it a heavy cross, yet by the grace of God shall take it up. I know he can, and often does, work with the weakest instrument; though at times it seems next to impossible that the Lord should ever do anything by me.

[May] 9th, My dear sir, I have simply wrote you the workings of my mind. I know you will bear with me. I have had so many proofs of your love that I cannot doubt it. May the Lord prosper your labours, and make your visit to Limerick a blessing to his little flock. Indeed my heart aches when I think of your being there, and I at such a distance. For though I am sensible of your kindness, and thankful to you for affording me so much of your company when here, yet I think I had not that satisfaction with you which I would have in Limerick. But I am enabled to look upon every hindrance as well as every help, as

¹On this identification, see Crookshank, *Ireland*, 250.

²John Christian had been converted at Waterford in 1770 and soon began preaching locally. He would be accepted as a travelling preacher at the 1772 Conference (see *Works*, 10:406), but disappeared from the *Minutes* after 1774 when he and others at Sligo embraced Calvinist views and separated to form a Congregational chapel. See Crookshank, *Ireland*, 238, 250.

³JW had left Waterford on Monday, April 29, 1771.

coming immediately from the Lord, and equally serviceable to me. O shall I say pray for me? I hope the Lord does sometimes bring even *me* to your remembrance. My love to the select band, I hope they remember me when they meet.

I am, my dear sir,

Your sincerely affectionate,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 49-53.

From James Morgan¹

Bristol
May 9, 1771

Reverend Sir,

I have just received your favour, and sincerely thank you. It is true, I am indeed too high, too warm, too impatient of contradiction—too unlike my Lord! But I praise him that I have borne, and have been patient, and hitherto have not fainted, feeble as I am in *all* respects.

My state of health is, and has been such for above seven years last past, as utterly to disqualify me for acting as those in better health can. It *obliges* me to what others deem a state of indulgence and irregularity, with reference to a certain economy—which they may also account ‘stateliness’. And there may be something in complexion, attitude, and manner to give countenance to the opinion; to say nothing of the reserve (partly complexional) and seeming indifferency which constitutional languor and habitual disease almost unavoidably occasion. Yet if those persons knew the inconveniences of my situation, in many instances, and the daily martyrdom occasioned by acute and habitual disease, they would be far from envying me, and turn their censure into Christian tenderness. God only is witness to what I have endured for years past, and of the spirit with which he has hitherto enabled me to bear it. But I dare not boast. Nor do I attempt a justification. But so much I may say, I am ready to give every brother all possible satisfaction. Yet it suffices feelingly to say, ‘Lord, thou knowest.’

I shall have eternal reason of gratitude for whatever means he is pleased to make use of for the cure of my spiritual sickness. In this view nothing can appear formidable. But if I may judge of the future by the past, I have strong demonstrations that whatever cure my sickness needs, it can never be effected by any of the varying scenes of this poor world. If sickness or sorrows, if malice and envy, if slander and contempt could have done anything, you dear sir would not behold me at this time of day in the light you do. Though I humbly hope I have passed through no fire without losing some dross. In truth, I have little to hope or fear in this world. Nor can [I] be greatly elated or dejected at aught² it *can* ‘threaten or indulge’.³ And I have been so long inured to the furnace that really a thousand things do not move me.

Thou alone, O eternal Spirit, canst make an entire conquest of a sinful heart and subdue a soul, purchased by the blood of an incarnate God, to be wholly his! To thee I sigh in secret places. Before thee I often weep, ashamed and broken, while men pronounce thy suppliant proud and haughty. But such is thy adorable will! And by this means also thou teachest me to die!

I am, reverend sir,
Yours, etc.

J. Morgan

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 446–48.

¹This letter is from James Morgan, the former itinerant, now in retirement.

²Orig., ‘ought’.

³See Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, Night 1, line 152.

From Jane Catherine March

[London]
May 15, 1771

Reverend Sir,

Satan disturbed my quite for a week after I wrote to you that 'The blood of Jesus Christ *hath* cleansed me from all sin'.¹ But I found I could not retract anything I had wrote. Yet I choose to suspect myself in everything, because I know, 'He that trusteth his own heart is a fool.'² I am often exercised about my ignorance of eternity, and of that measure of holiness *without* which no man shall see the Lord. Are not these fearful apprehensions, sir, inconsistent with that perfect love which casteth out fear?

I often query whether I possess the meekness which no affront can move. For when persons act very provokingly, as we say, I usually feel a degree of indignation. Though I feel no difficulty to forgive, on the least relenting. But the Lord removes my fears, by reminding me of his dealings with the children of men. I remember it is said, 'Jesus looked upon them with indignation, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.'³ Yet I am afraid to take the comfort of this, lest I should extenuate my sin. I am ready to think what I feel is contrary to love. Yet I feel not the least ill-will. When I come to call myself to account, the Lord fills my soul with love to their persons.

As to my will, my heart naturally breathes, 'Thy will be done'. And that too in things which are not indifferent to me. I seem also to be set at a great distance from taking glory to myself. My heart joyfully acknowledges, 'All glory, all praise are thine, O God!'

I hope you will not fail to instruct and pray for,
Your unworthy sister,

J. C. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 502–03.

¹Cf. 1 John 1:7. This may have been part of her April 6 letter that JW abridged, or there may have been a letter after April 6 that is not known to survive.

²Prov. 28:26.

³Mark 3:5.

From Damaris Perronet

Shoreham
May 15, 1771

Reverend Sir,

As the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after God.¹ What I feel of him already, and what is still before me, makes me forget created good. I can only love that which God delights in. Yet I look on my state of grace as very feeble. What I have is God's giving, and it is marvellous in my eyes. But with regard to myself, I can only reflect on my own short-comings—that I am not more faithful, and more consistently devoted to him; and that I do not more sensibly abide in his presence.

However I mourn that I have so little of his image, and know that none but himself would deign to accept of me. But he doth it for his own name's sake! And often communes with me in a manner so gracious, and full of loving kindness, that I can but wonder and adore.

I am, sir,

Your much obliged friend,

D. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 503.

¹See Ps. 42:1.

'Candour' to the *London Evening Post*
A Reply for the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley¹

[London]
[c. May 20, 1771]

Reverend Sir,

Reading in an evening paper your appeal to men of candour, I was struck with amazement at one of your positions. I do not mean to examine the propriety of your address to Mr. [William] Romaine.² That gentleman I highly esteem, though I have not the honour of his acquaintance, and believe him capable of answering any calumniating aspersion fallaciously propagated against him; and that he would look upon it as his duty so to do if the object appeared worthy his notice.

In opposition to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, you positively affirm, 'A fiftieth part of mankind shall be saved, do what they will; and the other forty-nine parts shall be damned, do what they can.' The exactness of your calculation excited my attention, but the shocking insinuation struck me with horror. Do you mean to palm this on the public as a necessary consequence arising from the doctrines of grace, or as the language of those who are the happy partakers of so distinguishing a blessing? If the former, your assumed depth of discernment may impose on the credulity of weak minds. If the latter, your veracity can only be secured by a reference to the deluded aggressor.

Sir, I feel for your reputation as a man, and tremble at the consequences when I consider you as a divine. I wish to pay all possible deference to your age, though not at the expense of truth, which must not be sacrificed to a grave sophism ushered into the world under the sanction of a venerable character. The method you have adopted for the support of your tenets is better calculated to frighten the unwary than to inform their understandings. This I presume arises from a consciousness of your own inability. Otherwise a reasonable argument would do more honour to your character, and at the same time secure you the attention of every considerate man. Probably some recent attempts have blasted your hopes of success, and driven you to the despicable refuge of rancorous declamation. The judicious remarks of the learned and pious Dr. Gill,³ compared with your feeble attempts to weaken that gentleman's arguments, sink your reputation into the lowest esteem.

I do not mean to affirm that this is universally the case, because many of your zealots, deceived through the prevalence of your clamours, retain their former opinions. This to some may seem a paradox, which can only be explained by the ingenuity of your scheme to hide the deformity of your sentiments. It is proved beyond the possibility of a doubt that they are strictly forbidden attending to any places of divine worship but those where you or your substitutes are appointed to preach. This injunction has been repeatedly delivered by you from the pulpit, without regard either to the principles of modesty or candour. In the kingdoms of popish superstition such a mode of proceeding might appear tolerable. But in the mouth of an English divine, basking under the indulgence of a glorious toleration, it seems improper and dogmatical. By these means, and many others, your followers are kept in gross darkness and bewildered in the labyrinths of error and superstition. The tenets they are taught to profess are contemptible; because, when brought to the standard of truth, the word of God, they will be found to contradict it in every particular.

The apparent design of your letter is to represent the doctrines of grace as fallacious and odious. However, those who are brought to depend upon them for life and salvation rest perfectly happy in the knowledge of a reconciled covenant God, none being able to make them afraid. You add, 'The whole doctrine of predestination is thoroughly discussed in those three tracts lately printed: *An Answer to the Eleven Letters commonly ascribed to Mr. Hervey* [1767], *Arguments Against General Redemption*

¹Responding to JW's letter to the editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Feb. 27–Mar. 1, 1771), p. 204.

²Consistently: 'Mr. R.'

³Rev. Dr. John Gill (1697–1771), an English Baptist pastor and clear Calvinist writer.

Considered [1769], and *An Answer to Elisha Coles* [1770].’ The author of these books is Mr. [Walter] Sellon, sometime master of Kingswood School. Probably that gentleman’s former obligations may constrain him to make a tender to you of his abilities. And as he seeks to establish his reputation at the expense of truth, he will no doubt do much honour to your cause. These three pieces merit not the consideration of the serious, as the Scriptures are shamefully distorted from their proper connections to support the chimeras of a dark imagination. There is nothing new offered on the subject. The whole of his arguments have been answered times without number. Probably you thought this would be a happy expedient to lift so valuable a colleague out of his painful obscurity.

With respect to any arguments you have ever produced, they have been weak and evasive, and when pressed to the point you have always had recourse to some sophistical quirk. You go on, ‘I must aver that the excluding all from salvation who do not believe the horrible decree is a most shocking insult on all mankind, on common sense, and common honesty.’ And I must aver you are destitute of common honesty. Such a word never came from the mouth of Mr. Romaine. Such an inference cannot be deduced from the piece to which your refer. And such a fallacious comment in unworthy your ministerial function, but of a piece with the man whose perfection must be sought for in the dreary paths of falsehood and superstition.

I am, sir,

Yours, etc.

Candour

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (May 21–23, 1771), p. 1.

William Armitstead to 'Candour'¹
To the Printer of the *London Evening Post*

Sugar Loaf Court, Leadenhall Street [London]
[c. May 24, 1771]

Sir,

As you admitted into your paper Mr. Candour's reply to Mr. John Wesley, I hope you will not refuse my remarks on it. Mr. Candour is offended with Mr. Wesley for attacking Mr. [William] Romaine² in the *Lloyd's Evening [Post]* of last February. Now it is well known the editors of the *Gospel Magazine* (as it is called) have frequently attacked Mr. Wesley and refused his vindication. I am much mistaken if Mr. Candour himself, a few months past, did not write to them in favour of Mr. Wesley and his observations were rejected by them. Certainly every candid person will think, with me, that if they will not admit a gentleman to vindicate his writings, they ought not to attack him in the virulent and ungentleman-like manner they have frequently done Mr. John Wesley.

Now it is too notorious to be denied that Mr. Romaine is exceeding dogmatical in his assertions in the pulpit. Candour and I have often heard him assert that eternal generation [of the Son] is contrary to reason and Scripture, in direct opposition to Archbishop [Robert] Leighton, Dr. [William] Bates, and even Dr. [John] Gill. How often has Mr. Romaine, to the great offence of many pious and moderate Calvinists, said, 'Inherent righteousness is inherent nonsense'; contrary to the sixth [chapter] of Romans and the united opinions of the good old Puritans. Indeed Mr. Romaine's behaviour to Mr. Wesley, for these several years past, has not been agreeable to his character as a gentleman or a clergyman. I am certain his most esteemed friend, the late Rev. Mr. [Thomas] Jones of St. Saviour's, Southwark, blamed him for his narrow spirit and unbecoming speeches to Mr. Wesley. And I protest that Mr. Jones often said he thought Mr. Romaine the best man in the pulpit, but Mr. John Wesley the best man out of it. And that he wished Mr. Romaine would let his moderation be known to all men, and would speak well of those who agreed in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity and let non-essential matters rest.

Mr. Candour seems displeased with Mr. Wesley for opposing Dr. Gill's notion of eternal reprobation. It is not my design to controvert any opinions of the doctor, for these four reasons: First, I reverence Dr. Gill for his great age and superior learning. Second, I honour him for his unblemished piety. Third, I am sensible of my slender abilities. And fourthly, I am always averse to religious controversy, for (as the late dear Mr. Jones observed) it has done much harm but never did any good to Christians. I must therefore observe that as Mr. Wesley differs from Dr. Gill in his thoughts on absolute predestination and reprobation of the non-elect, so did Archbishop [James] Ussher, John Milton, Mr. Richard Baxter, Dr. [Isaac] Watts, and Dr. [Philip] Doddridge—men highly esteemed in the church of Christ for their learning, piety, and candour.

Your correspondent seems to disparage Mr. Wesley's abilities. These were never doubted of by the University of Oxford, nor by the late amiable Watts and Doddridge. I wish Candour had a quarter of Mr. Wesley's learning and humility. 'But the most ignorant are' (as Mr. Romaine himself observes) the most proud and self sufficient.'

Mr. Candour charges Mr. Wesley with deterring his followers from hearing other preachers. I am certain I have heard Mr. Wesley in his pulpit mention with great respect the names of many ministers from whom in conscience (and conscience is a sacred thing) he is obliged to differ in some principles. I believe there are not any ministers but like their congregation should attend their respective churches or societies to which they are united; and therefore the Dissenters usually are constant in their attendance at their meetings, and it is reasonable and laudable they should.

¹This letter is included as part of the longer interchange between JW and 'Candour'. Nothing has been found about Armitstead beyond this letter.

²Consistently: 'Mr. R.'

Mr. John Wesley is allowed even by moderate Calvinists to be a learned, pious, moderate, and very labourious preacher. He has been honoured by the hand of God in converting many in these three kingdoms to repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently his grey hairs should command our veneration, for Mr. Wesley is grown hoary in honourable piety. He has sacrificed his health, his ease, and his fortune to promote here and elsewhere the knowledge and love of his divine Lord and Master. And I think all lovers of God, and their country, when they acknowledge Mr. [Martin] Madan, [Henry] Venn, [Joseph] Townsend, [John] Berridge, and [Walter] Shirley, have done well. Yet then, and even Candour himself must confess, in point of labour, Mr. John Wesley has excelled them all.

I conclude with wishing Mr. Candour and myself may love all who love God; and instead of traducing good men who have defended and propagated our most holy religion, thought they may see reason to dissent from us in many particulars, let us learn to admire and esteem the meekness and image of Christ in whomsoever it is found.

Your most humble servant,

W. Armitstead

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (May 25–28, 1771), p. 1.

'Candour' to William Armitstead

To the Gentleman who signs his name W. Armitstead

[London]

[c. May 29, 1771]

Sir,

Reading your address of yesterday to the printer of the *London Evening Post*, I was much surprised at your strictures on my letter to Mr. Wesley. There are but three remarks which concern me, or the matter in hand. These I shall take notice of in their proper order. Your opprobrious aspersions thrown out against the private character of Mr. [William] Romaine I have nothing to do with; that is a matter for which you are accountable before God. The rest of the gentlemen you mention have nothing to do with the present subject, therefore foreign to the point in hand.

First, you say 'Mr. Candour seems displeas'd with Mr. Wesley for opposing Dr. Gill's notion of eternal reprobation.' It appears then that you are not positive in this particular. Probably I may set you right here by informing you my displeasure (if I was displeas'd) did not arise from this but from Mr. Wesley's evasive answer to that gentleman, and his positive denial of facts he had not abilities to disprove. If you would be thoroughly acquainted with the controversy between these two gentlemen, I would have you read Mr. Wesley's *Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints* and Dr. [John] Gill's answer, and Mr. Wesley's *Predestination Calmly Considered* and the Dr.'s answer to that piece as well.¹ This last piece has not been answer'd,² but stands as a trophy of a glorious victory over error and as an invincible bulwark for the arrows of his feeble antagonist. When you have read seriously these pieces I hope the film of nature which has hitherto kept you in the dark will be rent off from your eyes, and the bright appearance of truth flash conviction on your unbelieving heart.

Second, you say 'Your correspondent seems to disparage Mr. Wesley's abilities.' I am free enough to own I think them far short of what you seem to suggest. I have not yet seen anything from that gentleman beyond the reach of a tolerable genius, favoured with a good education. Indeed, his own genuine productions are trifling, as he has chiefly been a retailer of extracts from other authors. However, I believe a little more sincerity with his abilities might make a tolerable character.

Third, you charge me with 'traducing good men'. As I imagine you refer to my late strictures on Mr. Wesley's letter, you must undoubtedly mean him, and have unguardedly put an indefinite number for a definite. If, sir, to defend truth and oppose falsehood be traduction, I hold up my hand at your bar and plead guilty. Had not the base insinuations which I have cited in my letter to Mr. Wesley appeared in the public prints, I had never appeared in the literary world against that gentleman. You say 'Mr. Wesley's grey hairs should command our veneration, for he is grown hoary in honourable piety.' To this I shall reply in the words of my former letter, 'Truth must not be sacrificed to a grave sophism, ushered into the world under the sanction of a venerable character.' The designing subtlety of the man was too obvious not to be discerned, and the false insinuation too base to pass unreprieved. Mr. Wesley was happy, for anything I know, in the possession of his own principles. And if he had had any matter to communicate to Mr. Romaine, he ought to have done it without endeavouring to cast an odium upon the doctrines of the gospel. The truth is, he has a rooted enmity against the free grace of God, because he has generally opposed that precious truth wherever he found it strongly insisted on and maintained. The *Eleven Letters*

¹John Gill, *The Doctrine of the Saint's Final Perseverance Asserted and Vindicated; in answer to a late pamphlet called 'Serious Thoughts' on that Subject* (London: G. Keith & J. Robinson, 1752); and Gill, *The Doctrine of Predestination Stated, and Set in the Scripture-Light; in opposition to Mr. Wesley's Predestination Calmly Considered* (London: G. Keith, J. Robinson et al., 1752).

²Actually, JW did include responses to the second work in *An Answer to all which the Rev. Dr. Gill has printed on the Final Perseverance of the Saints* (1754).

of the great Mr. Hervey to Mr. John Wesley will stand a lasting evidence of this truth.³ and for the sake of the public I wish they were more read. I have only to add if you are disposed to vindicate Mr. Wesley in his last public offence, and the unscriptural doctrines he professes, I may take an opportunity of answering you—so far as you write fair and candid. Stick close to the point as a gentleman of honour and a Christian, and I hope to do this same. This, sir, will afford me an opportunity of showing you and the world more of the man and his principles.

Candour

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (May30–June 1, 1771), p. 4.

³James Hervey, *Eleven Letters from the late Rev. Mr. Hervey, to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley; containing an Answer to that Gentleman's Remarks on 'Theron and Aspasio'* (London: Charles Rivington, 1765).

From Mary Bosanquet¹

[Cross Hall, Morley, Yorkshire]

[May–June 1771]

Very Dear and Honoured Sir,

Various have been my hindrances in writing to you, but none sufficient to have kept me so long silent, had I not been at a loss on one particular subject. I wanted your advice and direction in an important point, and to know if you approved my light in it. Yet I have been so tossed between the temptations of Satan and the arguments of men, that I really could not tell what I thought myself, nor how to state the case fairly at all. But I think at present both outward and inward circumstances tend to bring me to a crisis. And my light being clearer, I will now open all my mind. And I feel a faith *God* will make you my director in this thing, so as to remove my scruples one way or the other.

My soul desires peace and would follow after it with all—but especially with God's children, and more particularly with those that act as heads among us. I would hold up their hands in every point that lies within the short limits of my power, and perhaps can say more strongly than many, 'I honour them for their works' sake.' Yet that word of the prophets has oft come to my mind, where he says 'Woe is me that my mother has borne me, a man of contention.'² And how painful is it to be forced to be contending with those with whom one desires above all things to live in peace is well known to you, sir, by experience. And my present situation is very peculiar.

When we first settled at Leytonstone, sister [Sarah] Ryan and I began with little kind of prayer-meetings, and they were productive of a blessing. Afterwards, on coming into Yorkshire,³ sister [Sarah] Crosby, brother Taylor,⁴ and I did the same now and then.⁵ Till the people, desiring us to come to such and such of their houses, the number of these meetings increased so as to return sometimes three or four times a week. And the numbers of persons that came to them greatly increased also; *hundreds* of the carnal persons coming to them who would not go near a preaching house. And it is enough to say God was with us and made it known by the effects in many places.

However, about a month ago, Mr. [John] Atlay⁶ began to express great dislike to it [in] many ways. We conversed on it in a friendly manner and I asked him if my abstaining from any more meetings in Birstall would satisfy him (though Mr. [John] Oliver had desired me to come there). He said no. He thought it quite unscriptural for women to teach⁷ in the church, and his conscience constrained him to prevent it. We had a good deal more conversation, but got no nearer, though were very friendly. Afterwards some others conversed with me on the same point, alleging the same objections, and Satan strongly persuaded me to swallow them down all together, and I found it very comfortable and easy to

¹The holograph letter sent to JW is not known to survive. The first four pages of Bosanquet's manuscript draft survive in MARC; and a transcription of the final letter by Sarah Crosby survives at Duke. We are indebted to David R. Wilson for a copy and transcription of Bosanquet's draft. Crosby's copy corrects most of Bosanquet's misspellings. The transcription provided here follows Bosanquet's draft as far as it goes (but following the Wesley Works guidelines on spelling and punctuation), drawing attention to significant differences between that draft and Crosby's copy. It is unclear whether those differences reflect changes in the final form Bosanquet sent to JW, or were Crosby's 'improvements'.

²Jer. 15:10.

³Bosanquet had bought a small farm, named Cross Hall, just outside of Morley, Yorkshire.

⁴Richard Taylor; see Bosanquet's July 1, 1769 letter to JW.

⁵Bosanquet's draft reads only '...Yorkshire, we did the same now and then. Till...'

⁶The preachers currently stationed in Birstall (near Morley) were John Oliver (the 'assistant', or supervisor), John Atlay, and Robert Roberts. Crosby's copy says only 'one of our preachers'.

⁷Crosby's copy has 'speak' rather than 'teach'.

nature.

However, on weighing the thing before the Lord, I think it appears to me thus:

I believe I am called to do all I can for God. And in order thereto, when I am asked to go with brother Taylor to a prayer meeting in any private house, to as many as their room will hold, that I may do it—may both sing, pray, and converse with them, either particularly or in general, according to the number. Likewise, when brother Taylor goes to preach in little country places in a private home, after he has done I believe I may speak a few words to the people and pray with them.

Twice it has happened, through the zeal of the people, that they gave out the meeting in a preaching house, because they had no private house that would hold the people, nay one quarter of them.⁸ When we came I was sorry, but could not tell what to do, so brother Taylor preached and I afterwards spoke to them. Hundreds of carnal⁹ were there, and my heart yearned over them. I feared my Master should say, 'Their blood will I require of you'.¹⁰ And where the *assistant* of the round does not object to it, I believe I may go as far as I have mentioned above.

But several object to this in our own round and out of it, saying, 'A woman ought not to teach, nor take authority over the man.'¹¹ I understand that text to mean no more than that a woman shall not take authority over her husband, but be in subjection. Neither shall she teach at all by taking authority.¹² She shall not meddle in church discipline, neither order nor regulate anything in which men are concerned in the matters of the church. But I do not apprehend it means she shall not entreat sinners to come to Jesus, nor say, 'Come, and I will tell you what God hath done for my soul.'¹³

Objection: But the apostle says, 'I suffer not a woman to speak in the church, but learn at home.'¹⁴

I answered: Was not that spoke in reference to a time of dispute and contention, when many were striving to be heads and leaders? So that his saying 'she is not to speak' here seems to me to imply no more than the other: 'she is not to meddle with church government'.

Objection: Nay, but it meant literally, not to speak by way of edification, while in the church or company of promiscuous worshippers.¹⁵

Answer: Then why is it said, 'Let the woman prophesy with her head covered'?¹⁶ Or can she prophesy without speaking? Or ought she to speak but not to edification?¹⁷

Objection: She may now and then, if under a particular impulse, but never else.

Answer: But how often¹⁸ is she to feel this impulse? Perhaps you will say two or three times in her life. Perhaps God will say two or three times in a week—or day. And where shall we

⁸Bosanquet's draft reads 'one half quarter of them'.

⁹Crosby's copy substitutes 'unawakened persons' for 'carnal'.

¹⁰Cf. Ezek. 3:18.

¹¹1 Tim. 2:12.

¹²Cosby's copy substitutes 'usurping' for 'taking'.

¹³Ps. 66:16.

¹⁴Cf. 1 Tim. 2:11–12.

¹⁵I.e., a mixed congregation of men and women.

¹⁶1 Cor. 11:5.

¹⁷This sentence is found only in Crosby's copy.

¹⁸Bosanquet's draft has 'here after' instead of 'how often', as is Crosby's copy.

find the rule for this?

But the consequences? (Here I acknowledge is my own objection. That all I do is lawful, I have no doubt. But is it expedient? That, my dear sir, I want your light in.) But what are the consequences feared?¹⁹

Objection: Why for forty that come to hear the preaching, one hundred and fifty will come to your meetings. Will not this cause their hands to hang down?

Answer: That only forty come to preaching, I am sorry for. But that perhaps a hundred careless carnal sinners comes to our meetings (who would not otherwise hear at all), I am not sorry for. Neither should I think this would make the hands of any sensible, gracious man hang down. He must know it is no excellence in us that draws them, but the novelty of the thing. And does it not bring many to preaching? Let any impartial person judge.

Objection: But a worse consequence than this is to be feared: will not some improper woman follow your example?

Answer: This I acknowledge I have feared. But the same might be said of preachers that come out, will not some improper man follow them?

Objection: But if an improper man comes out, the church has power to stop his mouth. But you will not let yours be stopped.

Answer: Yes, on the same condition I will. You would not say to him, 'No man must speak, therefore be silent'; but only, 'You are not the proper man'. Now, allowing women may speak, prove to me it is not my personal call, and I will both lovingly and cheerfully obey.

Objection: But is it safe to trust women to teach? Does not the apostle say, 'She was first in the transgression, therefore let her take no authority'?²⁰ And does not Mr. Wesley observe, 'She is more easily deceived, and more easily deceives'?²¹

Answer: He does, and there is much truth in it. On this supposition, the man's understanding is stronger and his passions harder, consequently not so easily wrought on. And on the other hand, supposing the woman's understanding weaker and her passions more tender, she is certainly more liable to be deceived. And probably speaking more to the affections than to the understanding, she is more likely to deceive. So far I allow. But may not all this objection be removed by this single caution: Let no woman be allowed to speak among the people any longer than she speaks and acts according to the oracles of God? And while she speaks according to the truth, she cannot lead the people into an error.

Objection: Well, but is it consistent with that modesty the Christian religion requires in a woman professing godliness?

Answer: It may be, and is painful to it. But *I* do not see it inconsistent with it, and that for this reason. Does not Christian modesty stand in these two particulars, purity and humility? First, I apprehend it consists in cutting off every act, word, and thought that in the least infringes on the purity God delights in. Secondly in cutting off every act, word, and thought which in the least infringes on humility: knowing thoroughly our own place and rendering to everyone their due; endeavouring to be little and unknown, as far as the order of God will permit; and simply following that order, leaving the event to God. Now I do not apprehend Mary sinned against either of these heads, or could in the least be accused of immodesty, when she carried the joyful news of her Lord's resurrection, and in that sense taught the teachers of mankind. Neither was the woman of Samaria to be accused of immodesty when she invited the whole city to come to Christ. Neither do I think the woman mentioned in the 20th chapter of the 2nd Samuel could be

¹⁹Bosanquet's draft ends at this point.

²⁰Cf. 1 Tim. 2:13–14.

²¹JW's comment on 1 Tim. 2:13–14 (taken from Bengel) in his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*.

said to sin against modesty, though she called the general of the opposite army to converse with her, and then (verse the 22nd) went to all the people, both heads and others, to give them her advice, and by it the city was saved. Neither do I suppose Deborah did wrong in publicly declaring the message of the Lord, and afterwards accompanying Barak to war, because his hands hung down at going without her.

Objection: But all these were extraordinary calls; sure[ly] you will not say yours is an extraordinary call?

Answer: If I did not believe so, I would not act in an extraordinary manner. I do not believe every woman is called to speak publicly, no more than every man to be a Methodist preacher. Yet some have an extraordinary call to it, and woe be to them if they obey it not.

Objection: But do you believe you have this public call?

Answer: Not as absolute as some others. Nevertheless, I feel a part of it. And what little I see to be my call, I dare not leave undone.

Objection: But if the people are continually coming to your meetings, they will not have time to attend the stated ones.

Answer: That I have often thought of, and therefore I know no place except home where I meet more than once a month—and sometimes not that, as there is so many places to go to. And that caution, not to multiply meetings, I see very necessary.

Now, my dear sir, I have told you all my mind on this head, and taken the freedom to encroach a deal on your time. And I find a liberty to say I believe your exact direction I shall be enabled to follow, and shall be greatly obliged to you for the same.

Mr. [John] Oliver is very desirous of our doing all the good we can; and indeed I am pained for the trouble he has had on our account. But it is not only on ours, for various difficulties have, I believe, interrupted some of his comfort this year. If he stays another year with us, I hope he will see more fruit of his labours. The Lord gives him a patient, loving spirit, and his preaching is very animating and profitable.

I praise my God, I feel him very near, and I prove his faithfulness every day. But I want to live as I do not, and to feel every moment that word, 'My God and my all'.

I am, etc.,

M. B.

Sources: Bosanquet manuscript draft (incomplete): MARC, MAM Fl. 13/1/67; and Sarah Crosby manuscript copy: Duke, Rubenstein, Sarah Crosby Letter-book, 55–61.²²

²²The earliest publication of an extract from this letter (focused on the arguments for women speaking) was in Zechariah Taft, *The Scripture Doctrine of Women's Preaching, Stated and Examined* (York, Richardson, 1820), 19–21; Taft included the same abridgement in *Holy Women*, 1:21–23. The first publication of Sarah Crosby's copy of the letter was in Paul Chilcote, *John Wesley and the Women Preachers of Early Methodism* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1991), 299–304.

Circular Letter by Walter Shirley

[c. June 5, 1771¹]

Sir,

Whereas Mr. Wesley's Conference is to be held at Bristol on Tuesday, the 6th of August next, it is proposed by Lady Huntingdon and many other Christian friends (real Protestants) to have a meeting at Bristol at the same time of such principal persons, both clergy and laity, who disapprove of the underwritten *Minutes*. And as the same are thought injurious to the *very fundamental* principles of Christianity, it is farther proposed that they go in a body to the said Conference and insist upon a formal recantation of the said *Minutes*; and in case of a refusal, that they sign and publish their protest against them. Your presence, sir, on this occasion is particularly requested. But if it should not suit your convenience to be there, it is desired that you will transmit your sentiments on the subject to each person as you think proper to produce them. It is submitted to you whether it would not be right, in the opposition to be made to such a *dreadful heresy*, to recommend it to as many of your Christian friends, as well of the Dissenters as of the established Church, as you can prevail on to be there, the cause being of so public a nature.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

Walter Shirley

P.S. Your answer is desired, directed to the Countess of Huntingdon, or the Rev. Mr. Shirley, or John Lloyd, Esq. in Bath; or Mr. James Ireland, Merchant, Bristol; or to Thomas Powys, Esq. at Berwick near Shrewsbury; or to Richard Hill, Esq. at Hawkstone near Witchurch Shropshire. Lodgings will be provided. Enquire at Mr. Ireland's, Bristol.

[An extract of the *Minutes* of Wesley's 1770 Conference with his preachers was appended.]

Source: published transcription; Shirley, *Narrative*, 7–8.²

¹On June 8, 1771 Lady Huntingdon sent a copy to CW, saying it was the first copy she had sent out to anyone (MARC, DDWes 1/99).

²It is unknown whether any originals of the printed circular survive; but see John Fletcher's transcription in his letter dated June 24, 1771.

From Jane Catherine March

[London]
June 22, 1771

Reverend Sir,

My present desire is to love the Lord my God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength, and my neighbour as myself. Though I am always led more to the study of the¹ first, rather than second table duties.² My state seems summed up in those words, 'I have entered into rest'.³ And that rest seems to be *God* abiding with and dwelling in me, which keeps me living in communion with him. My faith seems to stand in *his* wisdom, power, and love. And as he is unchangeable, I can expect from him what his word authorizes me to do. I feel there is in me a principle of obedience, which causes me to delight greatly in his commandments. I am kept from complainings, because the Lord abounds towards me in loving-kindness and tender mercies. My soul rejoices in him, and gives thanks for his goodness. I feel it a pleasant and joyful thing to be thankful. There are seasons when my wants are more manifest than at others. But a consciousness that the Lord hath done more exceeding abundantly above what I could ask or think, encourages me to hope in him for all I want.

I should be thankful to you for an explanation of that promise, 'My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.'⁴ And also what you suppose Mr. de Renty meant by, 'I bear in me ordinarily an experimental verity, and a plenitude of the presence of the most holy Trinity, which elevates me by a simple view to God: with that I do all his providence enjoins me.'⁵

I have been tempted at times, within these last nine months, to disbelieve everything relating to eternity. I see from hence how much need we have of revelation. Indeed I do not enter into deep reasonings on this head, but I want such a lively sense of the truths I am tempted to question as would prove an entire confutation of them.

I remain, reverend sir,
Yours, etc.

J. C. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 555–56.⁶

¹Orig., 'my'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

²I.e., the first five of the ten commandments versus the second five.

³Cf. Heb. 4:10.

⁴John 14:23.

⁵A quote from Jean Baptiste, Saint de Juré, *The Holy Life of Monsieur de Renty* (1684) retained in JW's *Extract of the Life of Monsieur De Renty* (1741), 5.

⁶JW's reply of July 13, 1771 (*Works*, 28:399) makes clear this is an extract, because it addresses items not included above.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
[June 24, 1771]

Dear Sir,

When I left Wales, where I had stood in the gap for peace, I thought my poor endeavours were not altogether vain. Lady Huntingdon said she would write civilly to you and desire you to explain yourself about your *Minutes*. I suppose you have not heard from her, for she wrote me word since that she believed she must not meddle in the affair (at least that is what I made of her letter). *Upon receiving yours from Chester,*¹ *I cut off that part of it where you expressed your belief of what is eminently called by us the doctrines of free grace and sent it to the college,*² with a desire it might be sent to Lady Huntingdon. *She hath returned it to me with a letter where she expresses the greatest disapprobation of it; the purport of it is to charge you with tergiversation and me with being the dupe of your impositions. She hath wrote in stronger terms to her college.*

*Things I hoped would have remained there, but how am I surprised and grieved to see zeal borrowing the horn of discord and sounding an alarm through the religious world against you! Mr. Hatton*³ *called upon me last night and showed me a printed circular letter which I suppose is or will be sent to the serious clergy and laity through the land. I have received none, as I have lost (I suppose) my reputation of being a 'real Protestant' by what I wrote upon your Minutes in Wales.*

This is an exact copy of the printed letter:

Sir,

Whereas Mr. Wesley's conference is to be held at Bristol on Tuesday, the 6 of August next, it is proposed by Lady Huntingdon and many other *Christian friends (true Protestants)* to have a meeting at Bristol at the same time of such principal persons, both *clergy* and *laity*, who disapprove of the underwritten *Minutes*. And as the same are thought injurious to the very *fundamental principles* of Christianity, it is farther proposed that they go in a body to the said conference and insist upon a formal *recantation* of the said *Minutes*; and in case of a refusal, that they sign and publish their *protest* against them. Your presence, sir, on this occasion is particularly requested. But if it should not suit your convenience to be there, it is desired that you will transmit your sentiments on the subject to each person as you think proper to produce them. It is submitted to you whether it would not be right, in the opposition to be made to such a *dreadful heresy*, to recommend it to as many of your Christian friends, as well of the *Dissenters* as of the *established Church*, as you can prevail on to be there, the cause being of so public a nature.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

Walter Shirley

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²There is extensive underlining in this manuscript (shown here by italics). It is not obvious whether it was original to Fletcher or by Wesley (as he read it).

³Rev. Thomas Hatton (1735–1807), a graduate of Cambridge, had been appointed rector of Waters Upton, Shropshire in 1764, and remained there to his death. He was the sole Church of England clergyman near Fletcher who was sympathetic to the Methodists. On Fletcher's death, Hatton preached his funeral sermon (though JW also published a funeral sermon later).

P.S. Your answer is desired, directed to the Countess of Huntingdon, or the Rev. Mr. Shirley, or John Lloyd, Esqr. in Bath; or Mr. James Ireland, Merchant, Bristol; or to Thomas Powys, Esqr. at Berwick near Shrewsbury; or to Richard Hill, Esqr. at Hawkstone near Witchurch Shropshire. Lodgings will be provided. Enquire at Mr. Ireland's Bristol.

(Then follows, upon the same page) *Extract* from the *Minutes* of some late *Conversations* between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others, at a public conference held in London, Aug. 7, 1770, and printed by W. Pine, Bristol.

(At full length from) 'Take heed to your doctrine ...

I think it my duty, dear sir, to give you the earliest intelligence of this bold onset, and assure you that upon the evangelical principles mention in your last letter to me, I for one shall be glad to stand by you and your doctrine to the last; hoping that you will gladly remove stumbling blocks out of the way of the weak, and alter such expressions as may create prejudice in the hearts of those who are inclined to admit it. I designed to write to you to desire you would favour us with a day of your labours in coming back from Ireland if you cross the sea our way. This unexpected letter hastens my request. If you can grant it, it will be an additional favour to all those bestowed on, dear sir,

Your unworthy servant in the gospel,

J. Fletcher

P.S. If you come this way sir, I will show you the minutes of what I wrote in Wales in defense of what is called you 'dreadful heresy'. For as to the writing itself, I have it not. Lady Huntingdon would never return it to me. *Dear sir, we can never make too much of Jesus Christ. Some may preach and exalt him out of contention. Let us do it willingly and scripturally, and the Lord will stand by us. I beg, I entreat him to stand by you particularly at this time, and to give you the simplicity of the dove, the wisdom of the serpent, the condescension of a child, and the firmness of a father.*⁴

I write to Mr. Shirley to expostulate with him to call in his circular letter. He is the last man that should attack you. His sermons contain propositions much more heretical and anti-Calvinistical than your *Minutes*. If my letters have not the desired effect, I shall (probably), if you approve of them and correct them, make them public for your justification. I find Mr. [James] Ireland is to write to make you *tamely recant*, without measuring swords or breaking a pike with our 'real Protestants'. I write to him also.

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley / in his preaching-house / in Dublin / Ireland'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Fletcher / June 24 1771 / a[nswere]d July 4'.

Source: holograph; MARC, 1977/495/36; MARC, MA 1977/461 (copy).⁵

⁴See Matt. 10:16.

⁵A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 277–78.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
[July 6, 1771]

[...¹] I have just finished Brandt's history of the Synod of Dort.² Cannot you oblige us with a short extract out of him—out of *Redemption Redeemed*?³ Or whom you choose? I verily think you are *called* to drive reprobation back to its own place.

I have no dependence on Mr. [John] Richardson that he will not leave us at a moment's warning. He preached last week at West Street against perfection, etc. Take you no notice of this till I have talked with him alone.

[[His heart is not with us, for it is quite Calvinistic.

[[Upon a false supposition that I had affronted him, he refused to assist me at the chapels. I have served them alone for several weeks. He offers to help me again at the Foundery tomorrow. I shall not refuse his help or desire it. I am apt to believe that he wants us to put him away, by his so publicly contradicting our doctrine. He that believeth shall not make haste. Who knows but William Ley may be given us back by and by?⁴ I slept last week at his house. We have none like-minded.

[[My wife and children join in love. I have much more to say, but the time flies. Write as often as you can, till you return.

[[Adieu.]]

[[‘Papist unmasked, heretic,] apostate’ [[are some of the names our old friend⁵ bestows upon you. I sent her word by Mr. [John] Lloyd, that I had forwarded her paper to you, but know not how to answer her letter to me. Now is the time to show, by our behaviour to her, whose servants we are.]]

Address: ‘To / The Revd. Mr Wesley / Dublin’.⁶

Postmark: ‘6/IY’.

Endorsement: by JW, ‘[[Charles]] Jul[y] 6, 1771 / a[nswere]d 13’.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/459.

¹An opening page or more of the letter appears to be missing, which would have included CW's salutation. The date of the letter is taken from JW's endorsement.

²Geeraert Brandt, *The History of the Reformation and other Ecclesiastical Transactions in and about the Low Countries. From the Beginning of the Eighth Century down to the Famous Synod of Dort*, translated by John Chameralayne, 4 vols. (London: Timothy Childe, 1720–23). In 1778 JW did published an extract as as ‘An Account of the Synod of Dort’, *AM* 1: 17–28, 49–58, 97–107, 145–54.

³John Goodwin, *Apolytrosis Apolytroseos; or, Redemption Redeemed. Wherein the most glorious work of the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ is ... vindicated and asserted ... with ... discussion of ... election and reprobation* (London: Lodowick Lloyd & Henry Cripps, 1651).

⁴William Ley served intermittently as an itinerant from 1759, but never appears in the Minutes. He tried unsuccessfully on a couple of occasions to obtain a curacy in the Church of England.

⁵Lady Huntingdon.

⁶CW writes the number “3” just above the address, apparently indicating this is the third letter sent to JW during his current time away.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Waterford
July 7, 1771

Dear Sir,

There has been no material alteration here since my last.¹ Mr. [Thomas] Newall paid one visit to this city, and Mr. Bredin three.² In the interims brother [John] Christian acts as usual, and I think whilst they have him they can feel no lack. I have had some opportunities of conversing with him, for which I have reason to be thankful. The cause and people of God are very dear to him, and he loves you as his father. I have heard some object to his opinions, but I think his manner of managing them is such that they do no hurt to him or the people. I spoke freely to him on this head, and find he entirely agrees with you as to the essential doctrines of justification and sanctification. He holds election but not reprobation. He believes that God is willing to save all, and that those whom he saves cannot finally fall. This doctrine he says brings great comfort to his soul. But as it might not have the same effect on others, he does not advance it, lest any should rest in it.

Mr. T[egart]³ comes on Sundays to hear, and is at times so affected as to run out of the house, not being able to contain his voice. But his convictions do not last the week out. He keeps such close acquaintance with his former antinomian intimates that his stings of conscience are quickly gone; until the next Sunday, then again torn under the word, and again careless; yet so rivetted to *those* antinomian professors that I fear it will all come to nothing. I meet the women's band regular[ly], and we generally have an happy hour.

I thank my God, I have found him very gracious since I came to this city. He has afforded me such helps as I did not expect, and has been himself to me instead of every help. O what cause have I to praise his name and record his dealings with me. It is now two and twenty years since he first made known his pardoning mercy to my soul, and oh what have my eyes seen and my soul experienced in that time! I am astonished at the sight, and ashamed at my own baseness. O surely there is not such an other worthless creature existing—so backward, so unsteady, such a dwarf amongst his people! I am not at all satisfied with myself. But at times [I] am supported with sweet expectations that my God will rectify all, will remove every hindrance, supply every want, and stay my mind continually on himself. Indeed I am weary of the constant wanderings of my heart, and deadness of my affections. The Lord only knows what I suffer on this account. And the question is continually on my mind 'Can this be consistent with an heart cleansed from sin?' The Lord knows it is the most anxious desire off my soul to be *all* as he would have me be. O that he would work his own will, and make me such. I am just returned from a general class meeting, and Mr. [Robert] Tegart was there. For the first time these six months, he seems in earnest. The Lord grant him steadiness and resolution. O may the good Lord whom you serve prosper your labours, and give you the desire of your soul, is the earnest prayer of, dear sir,

Yours, etc.

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 55–58.

¹See May 15, 1771 above.

²John Bredin (1737–1819) was a native of Ireland, serving as a Roman Catholic schoolmaster and struggling with a drinking problem, when he was converted by a Methodist preacher. He was admitted on trial as an itinerant preacher himself in 1769, and was currently assigned at Athlone.

³JW gives the full name—Robert Tegart—in his reply of July 20, 1771, *Works*, 28:402. Tegart was a goldsmith in Waterford.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

August 2, 1771

Reverend Sir,

As I find both you and your friends, as also many of ours, have objected to the *manner* or *mode* of the ministers' application to you in Conference. And that it has not had that appearance of Christian tenderness due upon such an occasion, but seems rather considered as an arbitrary way of proceeding. As Christians and those who had no such meaning, we wish to retract what a more deliberate consideration might have prevented; as we would as little wish to defend even truth itself presumptuously as we would submit servilely to deny it. We intended no personal disrespect to any, but a degree of zeal against the principles established in the *Minutes*. Such zeal we never wish to be less, and ever more desire it may be with that firmness which may most fully imply 'contending earnestly for *that faith* once delivered to the saints'.¹ But at the same time altogether under that influence which dictated the precept. Permit me to pray for no less a blessing in your last moments than that victory which faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone obtained for St. Paul, and which having *kept* was his only glory. May this faith which only purifies the heart, works righteousness, obtains promises, and is the only anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, cause you and me while living to fulfil (through its power) the whole mind and will of God concerning us; and in death and eternity to rejoice alone in the blessed author and object of it.

How sacred then does the preservation of his honour appear, from whose free bounty such mercies only flow. For this alone my fears are concerned, and becomes the righteous cause of my warmest concurrence in every faithful testimony bore against those *Minutes* (given in Conference, August the 7th, 1770) for the establishment of another foundation than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus the Lord; and of course, repugnant to Scripture, the whole plan of man's salvation under the new covenant of grace, and also to the clear meaning of our established Church to which we belong, as well as to all other Protestant churches, to whose foundations (on this account) our highest honour and respect is due.

Independent of that most important difference, which from those *Minutes* does subsist, I desire ever to remain, reverend sir,

Your ever faithful friend,

S. Huntingdon

Source: published transcription; Shirley, *Narrative*, 8–10.

¹Jude 1:3.

From Walter Shirley

August 2, 1771

Reverend Sir,

A circular letter signed by me in conjunction with others,¹ having not been thoroughly understood, and generally censured; I thought it necessary to make this apology, and explain what was originally meant in the most exceptionable part of it. What is principally objected to is our 'proposing to go in a body to the Conference and insist on a formal recantation of the *Minutes*'. It has been said that we had not right to intrude into your Conference. We did not pretend to any *civil* or *juridical* right, any more than Paul had to call Peter to account. We did not mean to exercise any authority over you, or treat you as our inferior, but as our equal, and engaged with us in the common cause of the revival of *spiritual* religion. Neither had we any thoughts of forcing ourselves into your Conference, but proposed first to send you a respectful message importing our design, and withal requesting you would appoint what day and hour would be most suitable to you, and to the members of the Conference, to receive us. The end we had in view was to prevent the necessity of publishing our protest, if haply we might prevail on you to give up the fatal errors of the *Minutes*.

With respect to those words, 'insist upon a formal recantation', the occasion of them was as follows. It was supposed by some that instead of giving satisfaction on the points in question, such a forced construction would be put on the meaning of the *Minutes* as might elude the intended opposition, and yet leave the doctrines therein contained entire, unrepealed. Providing therefore against such an attempt (as it would be an imposition on our understandings, where the plain meaning is so clear) we were determined not to rest satisfied with *such* an explanation, or with anything that should not totally remove the offence the *Minutes* have too justly given. And therefore we used the word 'insist', implying thereby that we would be firm and steady to our point. However, it must be acknowledged upon the whole that the circular letter was too hastily drawn up, and improperly expressed. And therefore for the *offensive expressions* in it we desire we may be hereby understood to make every suitable submission to you, sir, and to the gentlemen of the Conference. And I cannot but wish most earnestly that the recantation of the circular letter may prevail as an example for the recantation of the *Minutes*. But if I should be unhappily disappointed, and that no satisfaction is intended in this respect, I shall feel myself bound in conscience to yield my public testimony against such doctrines as these, which appear to me evidently subversive of the *fundamentals* of Christianity. And here, sir, I must contend, as for a rule ever to be laid down, that the *man* and his *opinions* are to be kept in a distinct view, and that an opposition to the latter is not to be considered as an injury to the former. For otherwise, from a partiality to the persons of those who have erred, we should be much hindered in that free and open disquisition of things so necessary for the investigation of truth and detection of error.

Wishing you, sir, an abundant supply of that light, counsel, and direction which is freely promised to all who humbly seek it, I remain, reverend sir,

Your faithful friend and servant,

Walter Shirley

Source: published transcription; Shirley, *Narrative*, 10–12.

¹See above, June 1771.

From Miss M. A. Phillips

August 9, 1771

Honoured Sir,

I hope you will forgive the liberty I have taken in writing to you without being desired, since I look on every opportunity of receiving instruction from you as an invaluable privilege. I trust that he who has already dealt so well with me will take possession of my whole heart, and enable me to do all things in his name, and to his glory. This alone is happiness, and to experience it is my only desire.

Indeed I am grieved when I reflect on my backwardness to magnify the Lord. Who looked upon me in my infancy, assuring me my name was written in the book of life. And who still continues to display his power, by keeping me in the way that leads to life eternal. I long to be more spiritual, that I may the better comprehend the things of God. O that I may be entirely taken up with heavenly things! Then I shall have a peace which passeth all understanding.

I remain, honoured sir,

Yours in the bonds of gospel love,

M. A. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 558–59.

From Walter Shirley

August 10, 1771

Mr. Shirley's Christian respects wait on Mr. Wesley. The declaration agreed to in Conference, August the 8th, 1771,¹ has convinced Mr. Shirley he had mistaken the meaning of the doctrinal points in the *Minutes* of the Conference held in London, August the 7th, 1770, and he hereby wishes to testify the full satisfaction he has in the said declaration, and his hearty concurrence and agreement with the same. Mr. Wesley is at full liberty to make what use he pleases of this.²

Source: published transcription; Shirley, *Narrative*, 17.

¹'Whereas the Doctrinal points in the Minutes of a Conference held in London, August the 7th, 1770 have been understood to favour justification by works: Now the Revd. John Wesley and others assembled in Conference do declare, That we had no such meaning; and that we abhor the doctrine of justification by works, as a most perilous and abominable doctrine. And as the said Minutes are not sufficiently guarded in the way they are expressed, we hereby solemnly declare, in the sight of God, that we have no trust or confidence but in the alone merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for justification or salvation, either in life, death, or the day of judgment. And that no one is a real Christian believer (and consequently cannot be saved) who doth not good works where there is time and opportunity, yet our works have no part in meriting or purchasing our justification, from first to last, either in whole or in part.' See *Works*, 10:403.

²This final sentence does not appear in Shirley's *Narrative*. It is found in the transcription in Edwin Sidney, *The Life of Sir Richard Hill* (London: Seeley & Burnside, 1839), 190.

From Jane Catherine March

[London]
September 4, 1771

Reverend Sir,

I am always delighted to hear you trace the wisdom of God manifested in his providential dispensations. There is nothing affords me greater consolation than any discourse tending to 'justify the ways of God with men'.¹

We all secretly mourn after Mr. Pawson,² which had this happy effect, obliging us to pray more. But we have reason to be thankful that providence has allotted us Mr. [Alexander] Mather.³ I think he has a message from God to this people, and is likely to do us good, both by convincing believers of inbred sin, and bringing the promise nigh, and showing them *how* to believe, so as to be saved.

Mr. Fletcher's *Letters* warm our hearts.⁴ It seems the Spirit of the Lord has stirred up many, in this day, to write against Calvinism.

What peculiar dispensation do you think we are now under? What are the chief errors to be avoided? What the blessings to be expected? And what are we called to be or do? I am amazingly ignorant of the signs of the times, which is a temptation to me.

I have often reflected on your sermon last winter, on 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints'. Many things in it were⁵ very explanatory of my past experience. 'Dying', you said, 'was the highest act of obedience a creature could pay its Creator.' I suppose it must be under that view Dr. Young speaks of the good man's death,

With unreluctant grandeur gives; not yields –
His soul sublime, and *closes* with his fate.⁶

Else dying seems no voluntary act. And I should be glad if you would please to explain wherein our obedience is shown, except it be the obedience of faith. I think it is the highest act of faith to venture on the dark unknown. I am the more sensible thereof, because of late I have been so often struck (as with a flash of lightening) with thoughts of eternity. I feel reason shudders, while faith trusts him who is my saviour in life and death.

The present is a season wherein I am exempted from temptations. Neither do I find any powerful operations of the Spirit. but I enjoy present communion with God. I seek him, find him, and live to him. But I feel I want deeper instructions, and to be more strengthened and established in the grace wherein I stand. Any help you will be pleased to give, I hope will profit

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

J. C. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 557–58.

¹See Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book 1, ln. 26.

²John Pawson (1737–1806), a native of Thorner, near Leeds, encountered Methodism in Hull while apprenticing as a builder. He was proposed as an itinerant preacher in 1762 and assigned to the York circuit (see *Works*, 10:294) and served faithfully from that point.

³Pawson was reassigned to Bristol at the 1771 Conference. Mather took his place in London.

⁴John William Fletcher, *A Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Last Minutes; occasioned by a Circular Printed Letter ... in Five Letters* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1771).

⁵Orig., 'where'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

⁶Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, Night 2, ll. 673–74.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
September 11, 1771

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As I love open dealing, I send you the substance, and almost the very words of a private letter I have just written to Mr. Shirley, in answer to one in which he informs me he is going to publish his *Narrative*. He is exceedingly welcome to make use of any part of my letters to Mr. [James] Ireland concerning the publication of my *Vindication*,¹ and you are equally welcome to make what use you please of this. Among friends all things are, or should be, common.

I am, reverend and dear sir,

Yours, etc.

J. F.

To the Honorable and Rev. Mr. Shirley

Madeley
September 11, 1771

Rev. and Dear Sir,

It is extremely proper, nay, it as highly necessary, that the public should be informed how much like a minister of the Prince of peace, and a meek, humble, loving brother in the gospel of Christ you behaved at the Conference. Had I been there, I would gladly have taken upon me to proclaim these tidings of joy to the lovers of Zion's peace. Your conduct at that time of love is certainly the best excuse for the hasty step you had taken, as my desire of stopping my *Vindication* upon hearing of it is the best apology I can make for my severity to you.

I am not averse at all, sir, to your publishing the passages you mention out of my letters to Mr. [James] Ireland. They show my peculiar love and respect for you, which I shall at all times think an honour, and at this juncture shall feel a peculiar pleasure, to see proclaimed to the world. They apologize for my calling myself a *lover of quietness*, when I unfortunately prove a *son of contention*. And they demonstrate that I am not altogether void of the fear that becomes an awkward, inexperienced surgeon, when he ventures to open a vein in the arm of a person for whom he has the highest regard. How natural is it for him to tremble, lest by missing the intended vein, and pricking an unseen artery, he should have done irreparable mischief, instead of an useful operation.

But while you do me the kindness of publishing those passages, permit me, sir, to do Mr. Wesley the justice of informing him I had also written to Mr. Ireland that, "whether my letters were suppressed or not, the Minutes *must* be vindicated; that Mr. Wesley owed it to the Church, to the *real Protestants*, to all his societies, and to his own aspersed character; and that after all, the controversy did not seem to me to be so much whether the Minutes should stand as whether the antinomian gospel of Dr. [Tobias] Crisp should prevail over the practical gospel of Jesus Christ."

I must also, sir, beg leave to let my vindicated friend know that in the very letter where I so earnestly entreated Mr. Ireland to stop the publication of my letters to you, and offered to take the whole expense of the impression upon myself, though I should be obliged to sell my last shirt to defray it, I added that, "If they were published, I must look upon it as a *necessary evil* or *misfortune*" (which of the two words I used I do not justly recollect). A *misfortune* for you and me, who must appear ill-consistent to the world—you, sir, with your sermons; and I with my title-page; and nevertheless necessary to vindicate misrepresented truth, defend an eminent minister of Christ, and stem the torrent of antinomianism.

It may not be improper also to observe to you, sir, that when I presented Mr. Wesley with my *Vindication*, I begged he would correct it, and take away whatever might be unkind or too sharp—urging that though I meant no unkindness, I was not a proper judge of what I had written under peculiarly

¹Fletcher, *A Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Last Minutes* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1771).

delicate and trying circumstances, as well as in a great hurry; and did not therefore dare to trust either my pen, my head, or my heart.² He was no sooner gone than I sent a letter after him, to repeat and urge the same request, and he wrote me word he had “expunged every tart expression.” *If he has* (for I have not yet seen what alterations his friendly pen has made), I am reconciled to their publication; and *that he has*, I have reason to hope from the letters of two judicious London friends, who calmed my fears, lest I should have treated you with unkindness. One of them says, “I reverence Mr. [Walter] Shirley for his candid acknowledgment of his hastiness in judging. I commend the Calvinists at the Conference for their justice to Mr. Wesley and their acquiescence in the declaration of the preachers in connection with him. But is that declaration, however dispersed, a remedy adequate to the evil done not only to Mr. Wesley but to the cause and work of God?” Several Calvinists, in eagerness of malice, had dispersed their calumnies through the three kingdoms. A truly excellent person herself, in her mistaken zeal, had represented him as *a papist unmasked, an heretic, an apostate*.³ A clergyman of the first reputation informs me a poem on his apostasy is just coming out. Letters have been sent to every serious churchman and dissenter through the land together with the *Gospel Magazine*. Great are the shoutings, ‘and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more!’ [Ps. 41:8]. This is all the cry. His dearest friends and children are staggered and scarce know what to think. You, in your corner, cannot conceive the mischief that has been done and is still doing. But your letters, in the hand of providence, may answer the good ends you proposed by writing them. You have not been too severe to dear Mr. Shirley, moderate Calvinists themselves being judges; but very kind and friendly to set a good mistaken man right, and probably to preserve him from the like rashness as long as he lives. Be not troubled therefore, but cast your care upon the Lord.”⁴

My other friend says, “Considering what harm the circular letter has done, and what an useless satisfaction Mr. Shirley has given by his vague acknowledgement, it is no more than just and equitable that your letters should be published.”

Now, sir, as I never saw that *acknowledgment*, nor the softening *corrections* made by Mr. Wesley in my *Vindication*; as I was not informed of some of the above-mentioned particulars when I was so eager to prevent the publication of my letters; and as I have reason to think that through the desire of an immediate peace, the festering wound was rather skinned over than probed to the bottom; all I can say about this publication is what I wrote to our common friend: namely, that “I must look upon it as a *NECESSARY evil*.”

I am glad, sir, you do not direct your letter to Mr. [Thomas] Oliver who was so busy in publishing my *Vindication*, for by a letter I have just received from Bristol, I am informed he did not hear how desirous I was to call it in till he had actually given out before a whole congregation it would be sold. Besides, he would have pleaded with smartness that he never approved of a patched-up peace, that he bore his testimony against it at the time it was made, and had a personal right to produce *my* arguments, since both parties refused to hear *his* at the Conference.

If your letter is friendly, sir, and you print it in the same size with my *Vindication*, I shall gladly buy £10 worth of the copies, and order them to be stitched with my *Vindication* and given gratis to the purchasers of it; as well to do you justice as to convince the world that we make a loving war; and also to demonstrate how much I regard your respectable character, and honour your dear person. Mr. Wesley's heart is, I am persuaded, too full of brotherly love to deny me the pleasure of thus showing you how sincerely I am, rev. and dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. F.

Source: published transcription; John Fletcher, *A Second Check to Antinomianism* (London: New Chapel, 1771), p. v–xii.

²Fletcher presented JW the manuscript when JW passed through Madeley, July 28, 1771.

³LH; see CW to JW, July 6, 1771.

⁴This friend is CW; see Fletcher to CW, Sept. 21, 1771 (MARC, MA 1977/495/37).

From Hannah Ball

[High] Wycombe
September 17, 1771

Reverend Sir,

Your last encouraged me much.¹ I see I have a large field to labour in, and I feel myself willing to labour.

The last time Mr. Wells² was here, he was made a great blessing to many. And among others the work of God was deepened in *my* soul. Whether I am sealed unto the day of redemption, in the full sense of the word, I am at a loss to determine.³ I see I have need to watch in all things, lest I should be again entangled by anything here below. At *this* moment I *feel* my heart free, and *believe* for the *next*. I daily give myself up to God, for him to dispose of me as his wisdom sees best. I feel no will but what is resigned to his—indeed his will is mine, and therefore I joyfully embrace the cross. He comforts me by saying, ‘Thou art all fair, my love. There is no spot in thee.’⁴ Yet I long to cleave closer to him. I would fain lie at his blessed feet every moment, and with the deepest humility and the most pure affection admire and adore his unbounded love to such a worm as me! Grant me this, oh my Saviour and my God, and then I shall have all I wish for, till I am permitted to worship before thy throne with angels and archangels, and all the hosts of heaven!

Dear sir, pray that this may be my lot in time and eternity, and you will greatly oblige
Your friend and servant,

H. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 613.

¹See JW to Hannah Ball, Sept. 1, 1771, *Works*, 28:415–16.

²Samuel Wells (c. 1745–80), was admitted into the Methodist itinerant ministry on trial in 1769, and granted full status as a traveling preacher the following year (see *Works*, 10:366, 379). He served faithfully until his death.

³See Eph. 4:30.

⁴Song of Solomon 4:7.

From the Rev. Dr. Carl Magnus Wrangel¹

Stockholm
October 10, 1771

Reverend Sir,

Your last, and very affectionate letter gave me infinite pleasure,² and I beg your pardon for answering so late. Indeed, sir, the sudden death of our good King afflicted me to such a degree, that I have hardly been myself since that time.³ The Lord had given me an open door to his late Majesty but a few weeks before he died. I waited with impatience for the return of our young monarch,⁴ thinking then to retire from court. But divine Providence ordered it otherwise. The King being returned, without my seeking, appointed me his Almoner, President of the Consistory at Court, and Chaplain to all his Orders (a station of great trust; but alas, a very perilous one!). I trust in the Lord, my great master, who once sent me into the highways and hedges, will also now support me when he sends me to bear his testimony before princes. Pray, dear sir, desire your society to intercede for me. I send you enclosed the letter of admission to our Society.⁵ The rules not yet being printed in English, we send them in German, as I think you are master of that language.

I sincerely thank you for the kind present you made me of your sermons and books by Mr. Charleson.⁶ I presented a copy of your sermon to the Society,⁷ which was very acceptable. The Society will have the life of Mr. Whitefield inserted in their pastoral collections, or account of the work of God abroad. If anything more particular has appeared, we would be glad to have it, as well as any account of the work of God in your society. I beg of you, sir, to remember me kindly to all your friends, not forgetting dear Kingswood.

I am with the sincerest affection in the Lord, reverend sir,
Your most humble and obedient servant, and faithful brother,

C. M. Wrangel

P.S. I have been greatly blessed in my labour amongst the great. I shall soon give you a particular account of it.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 614–15.

¹See his earlier letter of May 5, 1770.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³King Adolf Frederick of Sweden died Feb. 12, 1771, at the age of 61.

⁴Gustav III (1746–92), the eldest son of Adolf Frederick, became the next King of Sweden.

⁵Wrangel enrolled JW as a charter member (#38) of his newly formed *Societas Svecana pro Fide et Christianismo*.

⁶These included at least *Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Bristol, 1765); *Doctrine of Original Sin* (Bristol 1757); JW's extract of Janeway, *Token for Children* (London, 1769); *Prayers composed for the use of Children* (London, 1770); and *The Heinous Guilt and Destructive Consequences of Impurity* (London, 1763). See *Svenska Samfundet Pro Fide Samlingar* (1798) 89–90.

⁷This may have been JW's *Sermon on the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield*; see *Works*, 2:330–47.

From Thomas Wride

Charlemont [Co. Armagh, Ireland]
October 12, 1771

Reverend Sir,

As soon as I received your letter,¹ I took the first ship I could conveniently have, and landed at Belfast September 19th. I soon found cause to fear I should have occasion to write to you. You will probably remember that, by your desire, I let David Evans² have my mare, etc.; and (as brother Guilford,³ brother Hodgson, and others at Whitehaven told me) you promised to see that I should have it returned in as good condition as it left me.

When I found the mare was gone, I told you of it by letter, in answer to which you said 'If we live to August, the matter of David Evans might be thoroughly inquired into'.⁴ The result of the inquiry I know not; nor (when I found I was for Ireland) did I much concern myself about it, as I thought I should be provided for when I got over [here]. But I find it is settled that the preachers are to find horses for themselves. I have travelled on foot hitherto. But I have no thought of being capable to continue it. I cannot carry clothes sufficient. Much less can I carry books, that (for me however) is indispensably needful. I cannot preach without reading. I can talk *for an hour*, it is true; but if the people was as sick of me as I sometimes am of myself, they would not hear me.

I suppose these people would, but I do not find they are able to provide for me. Yesterday was our quarterly meeting, but the contributions would not quite supply two preachers. I am in debt for the saddle, bridle, and saddle-cloth that David Evans has; and although it is to my father, he will expect if from me as much as from a stranger. The weather since I have been here has been mild for travelling (one day excepted). When it comes otherwise, I know not how I shall be capable of standing it. For now, when I come to a place, I am fitter for sleeping than [for] reading or preaching.

I should not trouble you on such a subject, but needs must will be a sufficient excuse for, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son,

Thomas Wride

P.S. Brother Dixon⁵ had no certain information of his station until yesterday. Probably he will be deprived of his q[uarteri]ng at Athlone thereby. He went from hence today. He desired me to tell you that he is willing to return to England, if you think fit, as he apprehends there are too many preachers now in Ireland.

Source: Wride's manuscript draft; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box CO9, Thomas Wride papers.

¹JW to Thomas Wride, Sept. 7, 1771.

²David Evans (fl. 1770s) entered Methodist itinerancy in 1769 (see *Works*, 10:369). He remained 'on trial' until 1773, when he was granted full membership (10:415). He was stationed in the Dales from 1775 and desisted from traveling in 1776 (10:452). He was readmitted in 1779 (10:484) and served until 1783 (10:531).

³Joseph Guilford (d. 1777), previously a soldier, was converted under the influence of Thomas Olivers, and became an itinerant in 1761; see Atmore, *Memorial*, 169–71.

⁴JW to Thomas Wride, Feb. 14, 1771.

⁵Thomas Dixon (d. 1820) was admitted to the itinerant ministry in 1769 (see *Works*, 10:366) and continued through 1804, when ailment forced him to settle in Stockton, where he remained active at a local level. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1821), 5:200.

From the Rev. John Fletcher to the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

[Madeley]
October 13, 1771

My Dear Friend,

I thank you for yours. I am quite reconciled with the publication of my letters.² And as a proof of it, I shall back them by three more, and so clear my head of antinomianism.³ Lord clear my heart of it, for it overflows with that unsuspected evil. My sixth letter shall go by the next post, directed to your brother, for his and your corrections. The subject appeared to me of importance as I considered it. It is the doctrine of justification by holiness—the Quakers' doctrine placed upon an evangelical foundation. Should we be able to maintain our ground here, we should be doctrinally impregnable. What I have wrote satisfies my judgement, but whether it will yours and that of the impartial public I do not know, and leave you to decide and guess. Do not be afraid to be a severe Aristarchus.⁴ Severity here is the best extreme. What I hinted at was taking off some things which injured the connection, without restoring it. Against this you may easily guard. This letter is merely doctrinal. The next will be chiefly personal. The last chiefly practical. Attend to truth in reading the first, and to love in reading the second, and to both in reading the third. If you let blunders pass on either head, you will be partaker of my sins.

I shall send the letter by the post. It will cost three or four shillings. Whether it is worth postage, I can't tell. I should think so if it contains nothing but truth. I would stay for an opportunity of sending by a private hand, but I want to make an end of the affair. Hannibal, you know, lost all for not going directly to Rome after the victory of Cannae. We must therefore lose no time, and carry war farther into the middle of the antinomian entrenchments. If we stand it we shall have peace, by hook or by crook, by fear or by conviction.

The last page of this sheet contains a friendly note that I think it proper to insert to prevent the good Calvinists being often at some things that bear pretty hard upon their scheme. I hope you will correct and see it past[ed] in its proper place.

Offences must come, but we cannot be too careful not to give them room. Do you know that my heart fails me about my tract on original sin, though your brother has corrected it.⁵ I sent him last week 20 guineas towards the printing, and the next post I wrote the printer not to put it in the press till you return to Bristol—that you may both recorrect the manuscript and correct the press. For as I design to give it to our gentry and clergy, I should be glad they might have nothing but truth to cavil about.

Mr. [Walter] Shirley was going to print with the *Narrative* the account of the *Conversation* between the popish priest and Mr. Madan etc. about the [1770] *Minutes*. Consult with your brother about printing or not printing the copy of my last private letter to Mr. Shirley about the passage he quotes in his *Narrative* from my letters to Mr. Ireland.⁶ You are engaged in it, for I quote part of your letter. Your brother has a copy, if he has not lost it. Should it be printed, you must take off the epithet “poisonous to calumnies.”⁷

¹This letter is included here because Fletcher at the ends asks CW to share it with JW, to avert the need of writing JW separately.

²I.e., Fletcher, *Vindication ... in Five Letters* (1771).

³These appeared in Fletcher, *Second Check ... in Three Letters* (1771).

⁴Aristarchus of Thessalonica, a ‘fellow labourer’ with Paul, Philemon 1:24.

⁵I.e., Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense* (1772).

⁶See Fletcher to JW, Sept. 11, 1771; Fletcher ended up printing it in the preface to his *Second Check*.

⁷This epithet does not appear in Fletcher's published transcription in *Second Check*.

Mr. [Martin] Madan gave to a friend the answer to the *Minutes* in the words of your brother.⁸ That friend sent it [to] me. I bestow a note upon that performance in the sixth letter to Mr. Shirley. Whether it is worth printing Mr. Wesley must decide.

When I have got rid of my letters, I shall read [Richard] Baxter again. I think him the John Wesley of the last century. It is not every century that produces such. The Lord crown all his gifts in your brother, by sinking him to the depths of childlike humility!

I hope to get one of Lady Huntingdon's students ordained for the next parish to mine at the next ordination.⁹

You have your enemies, as well as you brother. They complain of your love for music, company, fine people, great folks, and of the wane of your former zeal and frugality. I need not put you in mind to cut off sinful appearances. You were taught to do this before I knew anything of the matter. Only see you abound more and more to stop the mouth of your adversaries and of your jealous friends. My Christian love to your household and Sally. I am happy in your prayers and those of our friends in London.

P.S. Let Mr. John Wesley see this letter, as it will save writing to him some parts of it.

Address: 'To Mr. C. Wesley'.

Endorsement: by CW, 'Fletcher / Oct. 13 / 1772 [sic.]'.

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), Charles Wesley Family Papers (MSS 159), 1/8.¹⁰

⁸JW's printed circular of July 10, 1771, *Works*, 28:395–98.

⁹Forsyth suggests the student was Aldridge.

¹⁰A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsyth, *Labours*, 283–85.

From the Rev. [Herbert Lewis?]¹

[Isles of] Scilly
October 14, 1771

Reverend Sir,

The last packet most agreeably surprised me with the favour of your letter;² from which I imagine, sir, you were made acquainted with what I wrote to Mr. Floyde,³ relative to the spiritual concerns of these islanders, which I have a long time considered with an aching heart.

The number of people computed to be in these islands are about two thousand. Either hundred of whom are supposed to inhabit four of them, who live without a minister to instruct them, or any good example to copy after: so that everyone is left to do what is right in his own eyes. Indeed they have churches; but then they are served by very ignorant, and, what is worse, by drunken and idle fishermen: and better cannot be procured, with the pitiful salaries allowed them; which is only one guinea, to three islands, and two pound ten to the other. I have endeavoured all I can to get their pay augmented, in order to induce some sober, honest Christians to come over and undertake the important charge; but as yet I have failed in my attempt: my Lord [Godolphin]⁴ either not considering the great importance of such a request, or not choosing to bring an additional expense upon himself and successors. But I think such a saving, though it may help to fill his purse, will not add much to his spiritual comfort here, nor to his happiness hereafter. From this shameful neglect of religion in these islands, the people in general are in a very miserable state; exceedingly ignorant, and wicked. And indeed how should they be otherwise, as they have not, nor ever had, any opportunity of being enlightened, or any tolerable example to copy after. For this reason, sir, I should be extremely glad to see their reformation attempted by some spirited and heart-searching preacher. But I fear it would not be a few days' or weeks' trial that could enable any person to make a tolerable guess what the event of such an undertaking would be. You will be pleased to consider, such an attempt would have at first, and for sometime, almost every possible discouragement to encounter with—such as gross ignorance, strong prejudices against gospel-preaching, which they call 'Methodism', and old accustomed habits of sinning. But notwithstanding all this, I firmly believe that a strenuous, good man, in a little time, would (through God's grace) do great things amongst them, and would reap fruit enough to repay him with spiritual comforts for all the trouble he could possibly take. If therefore, sir, you would be pleased to send over a person to assist me, I should be extremely thankful, and should receive him with much pleasure.

I cannot sufficiently express my thanks for your obliging offer to serve me. I have had the happiness to hear you more than once, and believe me sir, next to the grace of God, I do not know any thing this side the grave would afford me so much real comfort as to have your advice and directions to assist me in the great business I have undertaken, which proves difficult and heavy to me in this confined place, where I have many to take care of, and not a soul to advise with.

I intend (with God's permission) sometime this winter to go to London and to lay before Lord [Godolphin] the miserable state of these churches, and the changes that are absolutely necessary to be

¹It seems likely that the first initial in the signature was misread. The only ordained minister assigned in the Isles of Scilly at the time was Herbert Lewis (d. 1780), vicar of the parish church on St. Mary's island, and chaplain to Lord Godolphin.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³John Floyde (c. 1750–98) was admitted on trial as an itinerant in 1770, and assigned to the western side of Cornwall, including Isle of Scilly. Floyde desisted from the travelling ministry in 1782 and set up as an apothecary and surgeon in Halifax and then Leeds. See *Works*, 10:380, 520; and *Atmore, Memorial*, 142–44.

⁴Francis Godolphin, 2nd Baron Godolphin (1706–85), who was at the time the Governor of the Isles of Scilly.

made for the good of religion and the souls of these poor, neglected people. And if I cannot succeed, I shall think of putting somebody in my room and of quitting the place as soon as possible—when I shall be most extremely glad to have the honour of conversing with you. In the meantime, be pleased to accept of my sincere thanks for that zeal you have shown for Christ and his religion in this adulterous and sinful generation. I will not attempt to make an apology for this long letter. I could not well know how to say less, and am ashamed that I have said so much.

I am, reverend sir,

Your most obedient servant, and affectionate brother,

S. L.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 667–69.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
October 15, 1771

Dear Sir,

When I consider the many privileges I enjoy, and this not the least, that I can freely unbosom myself to you, I am lost in wonder and gratitude before the Lord. O surely I have cause to say, 'Lord what am I, that thou dost deal thus mercifully and bountifully with such a worthless worm?' Indeed at present everything around me contributes to increase my thankfulness and astonishment. The world is running mad after amusement, filling their bellies with the east wind. At present horse racing is here the business of the day (and the multitude wonders after the beasts), and balls, plays, and taverns the drudgery of the night. My heart is pained to see the poor mistaken crowd weary and fatigued to death with restless days and sleepless nights, [in] search of happiness where it cannot be found. But when I ask, 'Why am I not amongst them?' Why am I particularized, made one of that little flock to whom it is our Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom? My dear sir, who can answer this question? I never could one moment believe that God had confined his mercy to a certain number, or unconditionally elected some and left the rest to shift for themselves. Yet when I consider the particular dealings of God with my soul, there is something in it (to me) as incomprehensible as the deity itself, and which I suppose I shall never understand at this side [of] eternity. Indeed I am often obliged to withdraw my mind from the contemplation of it, and at a distance to admire and adore what I cannot comprehend!

Since my last, I have been closely exercised by trials from without and temptations from within, and at times found them as much as I could bear, being so suited to my natural disposition as to make them come with the greater force. So that I have sometimes been ready to say 'Why does the Lord deal thus with me?' I could at times see it was the work of the enemy, but not at all times. Indeed my greatest sufferings were my fears lest I had, or should, offend my God. And frequently these were attended even with terror and dismay, which sunk my spirits very much, and caused continual questionings concerning my state. That text, 'perfect love casteth out fear'¹ was often brought against me. At times a ray of hope supported my soul when ready to sin, and kept me from giving up my profession of sanctification, for this is what the enemy aimed *particularly* to wrest from me. One day at prayer, being grievously distressed at the sight of myself, and not able to conclude concerning my state, I simply told my distress to the Lord, beseeching him to answer for himself. Indeed he did put words into my mouth to plead with him, and gave me so clear a testimony of his work on my heart, as answered all doubts, and enabled me to pursue my way with more courage. This was a trying time, and continued long. But I found it was good, and know it was permitted in love. The Lord has now granted me a cessation, and my soul enjoys a calm settled peace. I see my nothingness, my extreme poverty, my numberless deficiencies; and find the Lord Jesus my great, full, rich supply; and [am] enabled to see clearly his work on my heart, notwithstanding many seeming contradictions. The inconstancy of my mind is a continual cause of grief to me. O that he would enable me to walk more evenly before him!

Brother Hern and family leave town tomorrow.² He was much blessed here, and has left an increase of sixteen to the society. He is indeed a good upright faithful labourer. His wife, finding the affairs of the society much embarrassed, refused the usual subsistence and supported herself and children

¹John 4:18.

²Orig., 'Herne'. Jonathan Hern (c. 1743–1804) was admitted on trial as a travelling preacher in 1769, and to full membership the following year (see *Works*, 10:366, 380). He served until 1791. Hern's wife was named Rachel (maiden name possibly Stead; c. 1748–1827). According to a letter from Hern to Bennis, he and Rachel were married in 1764 (see Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 182). Hern was stationed in Waterford for his first two years, but at the August 1771 Conference was assigned to move to Castlebar (*ibid.*, 398). He had likely stopped in Limerick on his way to Castlebar.

by working at her trade while here, though she had a young child at the breast. Mr. Collins³ has arrived. We do not doubt his abilities and good qualities, but we are rather cast down by having another married preacher with a young family sent to us before we could recruit our finances. We now owe a heavy debt, and the weekly collections are not equal to the weekly expenses. The bulk of the society are poor, so that the weight lies on a few, who are willing and do contribute to answer the present expenses. But the debt still lies. Could we not have a single preacher at least every other year till we are out of debt?

Your sincerely affectionate,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 60–63; abridged version in *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 669–71.

³William Collins (d. 1797) was admitted on trial as a traveling preacher in 1767 and full membership the following year (see *Works*, 10:343, 352). Having served at Castlebar and Armagh, he was assigned to Limerick at the 1771 Conference.

From Mary Stokes¹

Bristol
October 20, 1771

Dear Sir,

Glory forever be ascribed to that all-bounteous Lord, who hath set my feet upon the rock! I know that my Beloved is mine, and I am his!

Since you left us,² my soul has been gradually increasing in divine light. A temptation not to speak of what God has done for me was very strong, but Jesus helped me to conquer. And while I have been testifying his love, I have found his witness in my heart. But notwithstanding this, I feel I am yet so weak that I sometimes fear sin is going to revive. In these moments I fly to Jesus, who hides me; which unites me closer to him.

But within these few days my enjoyment has not been so great, although my peace continues. My dear Lord seems to be bringing me to my proper place—viz., into the dust; where he permits me to call him my God, and my All! The poverty and ignorance I feel is inexpressible. I seem as dependant on him as a newborn infant on its tender mother. He has indeed confounded my wisdom, and given me to *see* and *feel* that I have everything to learn. He is the spring of all my joys, the source of all my comfort! The fountain of my bliss! How suited is he to the wants of such helpless worms! I do indeed feel the need of just such a one as he is, and it is by *looking to him* that I am saved. I long to be *rooted* and *grounded* in his love, and believe he will establish and fix my soul on that rock which is higher than I.

Since he has dealt thus bountifully with me, I have been much exercised outwardly. Yet, while it is my heavenly Father's will, can I repine? No, he gives me to offer up my every concern unto him, and teaches me to submit.

I earnestly entreat you, sir, to pray that he may enable me to hold fast my confidence, steadfast to the end. And though your time is precious, I trust you will spare a few moments to direct, exhort, and reprove,

Your entirely unworthy servant,

M. S.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 671–72.

¹While this is titled as from 'Mrs. M. S.', this is JW's first surviving letter from Mary Stokes (1750–1823), the daughter of Joseph and Mary (Fall) Stokes, of Bristol (see her letter of Jan. 5, 1772). Her spiritual awakening around the time she turned 20 was precipitated in part by participation in Methodist services. She would later join the Quakers, and in 1777 marry Robert Dudley, of Clonmel. See Elizabeth Dudley, *The Life of Mary Dudley* (London: Dudley, 1825); and Taft, *Holy Women*, 2:149–77.

²After over a month in the Bristol area, JW departed on October 8, 1771; see *Journal, Works*, 22:255.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
November 14, 1771

Dear Sir,

I am truly thankful for your last favour.¹ It has proved indeed a blessing to my soul, O may I be grateful for every help my merciful God affords. I do in some degree find my soul prosper. I know the Lord has taken the bent of backsliding out of my heart, and do find it my settled purpose to cleave to him, and follow him wheresoever he shall lead me. But oh I want to live more close to him, more entirely devoted to his will. I have often admired that expression of the apostles, 'not I live'.² This is what I want to experience. That death of self that may enable me also to say 'not I live'. Indeed the trials I meet with from this 'I' makes me long for that happy period.

I am, dear sir, etc.

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 66.

¹JW to Elizabeth Bennis, Oct. 28, 1771, *Works*, 28:429–30.

²Gal. 2:20.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
c. November 18, 1771¹

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

I send you my third letter,² *μεγα κακον*.³ I call it so on account of its exorbitant length; the antinomians will call it so on account of its contents.

The plan is: an introduction; 1) an apology for evangelical legality; 2) the antinomianism of *hearers* described; 3) that of *preachers*; 4) the latter is summed up in some dangerous propositions of Dr. [Tobias] Crisp which center in *finished salvation*, with a rational demonstration of the absurdity of that shibboleth; 5) the antinomianism of *societies*; 6) that of *families*; 7) that of *individuals*; 8) a scriptural description of the process of the day of judgment, with an antinomian's plea and comment upon the answer of the wicked (Matt. 25); and 9) a recapitulation, objections prevented, concessions made, and conclusion.

The fourth and eighth parts did not at first enter into my plan. They fell unawares into it, and I cannot now spare them, as they appear to me to sap the foundation of the three main antinomian pillars: *finished salvation*, *free grace*, and *imputed righteousness* taken in the antinomian sense. I would have made it shorter, but two things hindered it: 1) a fear I should not do the subject justice; 2) Mr. John Wesley's exhortation not to cramp myself, as he would abridge if necessary. If I had foreseen the subject would have swelled so much, I would have divided it into six rather than into three letters. Should they ever see two editions, that defect might be obviated in the second.

One of the strongest proofs that antinomianism reigns among us is the *abhorrence* or *neglect* of the doctrine of Christian perfection. I had made this the subject of one of the heads of this letter. But being ashamed of its length, though conscious of its importance and reasonableness, I left it out. But to clear my conscience, and second you in your stand for that exploded doctrine, I must publish it. Query, shall I bring it after this letter as a postscript, or reserve it for a particular tract, a *Third Check to Antinomianism*? It will, I trust, establish the doctrine upon such a rational bottom as to make the opposers of it ashamed of themselves. I am glad you will both take up the sword on the occasion. Let us all shout for the battle. And let us fight it with our hearts and lives as well as our tongues and pens. Mr. Charles Wesley wants a *legal* answer. I send him this *arch-legal* one, which I beg he would have the patience both to read and correct. I am, honoured and reverend sirs,

Your unworthy affectionate brother,

J. Fletcher

Address: 'To Messieurs Wesley'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/39.⁴

¹In a letter to CW dated Nov. 24, 1771, Fletcher speaks of sending the package and this cover letter "last week."

²Of his *Second Check*.

³'great evil'.

⁴A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 285–87.

From James Hutton

Lindsey House, Chelsea
December 19, 1771

Reverend Sir,

This letter is only between thee and me, having told no person whatever that I intend writing to you.

In reading your fourteenth *Journal* I find [on] p. 96 a cruel accusation against the Brethren, where you say 'Although I make much allowance for the liberty which I *know* the Brethren take in their accounts of one another, yet I do not see any reason to doubt that some of the heathen have been converted.'¹

What an imputation is this! As you cannot possibly *know* but by hearsay that the Brethren take any such liberty, this is a breach of the commandment 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour'.²

The Brethren look upon such a liberty (which you say you know they take) as wicked and infamous, and therefore do not, nor dare, to take it in their accounts of one another. It is contrary to our heart and taste, as well as to morality.

If I should take upon me to warrant for truth any idle or wicked calumnies about you which any of those who have left you, or perhaps intend so to do, should venture to tell me, would you not justly say I was rash or wicked?

I wish you had seen my correspondence with your brother,³ or would do it still—you would judge whereabouts I am.

I am, for Christ,

Your humble servant,

James Hutton

Source: Hutton's initial draft, kept for his records; London, Moravian Archive and Library.

¹Hutton is citing JW's entry for August 18, 1767, in *An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from May 27, 1765 to May 18, 1768* (London: Oliver, 1771), 96; cf. *Works*, 22:99–100.

²Exod. 20:16.

³James Hutton and CW had met in early September 1771, and a warm correspondence followed, with Hutton writing CW at least seven times by December 19 (drafts of his letters are preserved at the Moravian Archive and Library in London).

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
c. December 24 1771¹

To Messieurs Wesley,²

I know not whether you thought it worth your while to correct my strictures upon Mr. [Richard] Hill's *Conversation*³ (for he is the publisher; at least Mr. [Thomas] Hatton saw the manuscript and the book passes as his at Salop). The preceding scrawl is designed to stop the malignant influence of the personal reflections which I had taken no notice of as being foreign to the question. But they may want a kind of guard, and the author a little rap.

I am quite satisfied with your alterations. I make no doubt but you correct and alter for God.
[small portion at bottom of manuscript torn off]

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. J Wesley / at the Foundery / Moorfields / London'.

Postmark: '26/DE'.

Annotation: by CW, 'Fletcher's PS / Dec 1771'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/40.⁴

[The 'preceding scrawl' referred to, which takes up the first two and half pages of the manuscript letter, is as follows:]

Addition to the P. S.⁵

To the *Conversation* are annexed personal reflections against the author of the *Minutes*. Poor arguments these, which injure the publisher's charity more than Mr. Wesley's character. Divest of the smart dress in which they appear and they amount just to this.

I. Mr. Wesley is undoubtedly a Pelagian, and his *Minutes* are worse than popery, for he is *inconsistent*. What! In the *Minutes*? — No, but he uses in his *Christian Library* the expression of 'imputed righteousness', which he disapproves in some of his latter works.

To refute this charge I only need inform my readers of three things: 1) that Mr. Wesley is not the author of the *Christian Library*; 2) that though he believed the doctrine it contained was sound, he never designed to defend every particular mode of speech in which it was conveyed, much less any expression that is not found in the Scripture, or any word to which he observes a sense different from his own is generally affixed; and 3) that when he admitted the above-mentioned expression (which, as I have observed, may bear a very good sense) he had not yet seen antinomianism lifting up its banner in the three kingdoms with this deceitful motto: 'The imputed righteousness of Christ'.

¹It reached London on Dec. 26, as seen in the postmark.

²Again, this letter is to both JW and CW.

³Richard Hill, *A Conversation Between R. Hill, the Rev. Mr. Madan, and the Superior of a Convent of English Benedictine Monks at Paris ... Relative to Some Doctrinal Minutes Advanced by the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley and Others* (London: E. & C. Dilly, 1771). Fletcher's strictures were published as a Postscript to his *Second Check to Antinomianism* (London: New Chapel, 1771), 107–09.

⁴A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 289–90.

⁵I.e., Fletcher was proposing an addition to his Postscript in the *Second Check*. This was a working draft, with many cross outs. We transcribe only the final text that Fletcher retained.

II. To invalidate the *Minutes*, another proof of Mr. Wesley's inconsistency is wittily produced. He formerly recommended celibacy as preferable to the married life, and nevertheless he is now married.

But does this demonstrate that 'popery is about half-way between Protestantism and Mr. Wesley'? Just the reverse. It proves that he imitated the great reformer Luther who, after having been in love with a single life, found it at last expedient to marry—and oppose popery by his practice as well as his doctrine. Again, when St. Paul *had no commandment of the Lord*,⁶ he wished the Corinthians would continue unmarried as he was, that they might live *without carefulness*, and avoid *trouble in the flesh*. But afterwards, conceiving higher thoughts of the beauty, expediency, or necessity of marriage, he wrote to Timothy, 'I will that younger women marry'. Would it be right in our severe author to charge the apostle with popery, or inconsistency, for peremptorily commanding young women to do what Mr. Wesley has done—although he had before wished his converts what Mr. Wesley once recommended to his flock; that is, the great advantages of a single life? (Reader, if a popish monk had not prepared thee for a popish jest, wouldst not thou be astonished to see the *real Protestants* forced to defend their cause as the real papists do popery—this is, by making merry about the wives of Protestant ministers?)

III. But this is not all. The author of the *Minutes* once also strongly recommended to his society the use of a decoction of sage, or some other cheap vegetable, instead of tea; and now he drinks tea himself as other people.

That may be, but what has this to do with his orthodoxy? May not he change his diet without changing his doctrine?

Well, he drinks a dish of tea, with Mrs. [Mary] Wesley too! And where is it harm? Shall I cry out he is a heretic? A Pelagian? An inconsistent divine? No, I will candidly hope he had once good reasons for trying to break the custom of drinking tea; but when he found his attempt was vain, like a wise man he submitted with a good grace to what he could not help, and thought it better to 'become all things to all men',⁷ rather than to countenance unnecessary singularity and render himself perpetually troublesome to his friends. Besides, tea is much cheaper now than it was formerly, and the poor people under his charge do not, by drinking it, hurt themselves near so much in their circumstances as he once feared they would.

And are these your strong arguments, ye zealous opposers of the *Minutes*? Think ye the religious world can be convinced by such means? Are not your cool friends themselves sorry to see the poor figure which your popish champion makes upon the stage of our controversy? And do not your thinking readers ask with surprise whether Mrs. Wesley's dish of tea, so briskly played off against us with your new fire-engine, is to put out the eyes of the public and extinguish the light breaking forth from the multitude of scriptural and rational arguments advanced in the *Vindication of the Minutes*? O how long will you make the ⟨profession⁸⟩ under the heavy, and yet unsupported, charges of popery and heresy? If to prove them you come against us with a friar's aspersions in one hand, and a dish of tea in the other; the Lord being our helper, we shall meet you with love in our hearts, a Bible in our hands, and sound arguments, honest reproofs, and calm expostulations in our mouths or on our paper!

[JW inserts between this draft and Fletcher's short letter, apparently as directions to CW, 'Pray take of the letter, and if you see good, send the rest to Strahan.' It does not appear the suggested addition was ever published].

⁶See 1 Cor. 7:6.

⁷1 Cor. 9:22.

⁸The word is faded; this seemed the most likely rendering.

From James Hutton

[Lindsey House, Chelsea]
December 27 [1771]

My Dear John,

Yours of the 26th,¹ which I received this morning, gave me pleasure indeed. It is surely displeasing to our Lord (whom gratitude for his infinite love, his death and suffering for us, as well as our best interests and every spark of true wisdom, as well as our duty, forbid us ever to displease) when Ephraim vexes Judah; or Judah, Ephraim.²

Let you and your brother, etc. and I and my Brethren consider ourselves and our several people as two different carriages travelling together on the same road, only not in the very same track. Let us not cross one another's track, but wish a safe and happy general arrival at our wished for journey's end—keeping our poor eyes on that kind Receiver of poor sinners, who has a heart wide enough for us all.

In this view of things there is no necessity for mutual *vexations*. I think all my Brethren in general are disposed as above and not only Francis Okeley and James Hutton.

You, according to the best of your judgement and with all your power, helping forward the salvation of souls and thereby giving Christ the most sensible pleasure, and we in our way aiming at the same thing. Let us for the Master's sake, for the sake of the Lord of the harvest, love all those who mean to serve him. I shall have inexpressible pleasing in seeing and enjoying this best of fine sights.

With renewed affection, I am, dear John,

Your James.

Source: Hutton's initial draft, kept for his records; London, Moravian Archive and Library.

¹JW to James Hutton, Dec. 26, 1771, *Works*, 28:447–48.

²See Isa. 11:13.

From Margaret Dale

Newcastle [upon Tyne]
January 1, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I wish you a happy new year! Happiness in that God you serve. For it is from him all comfort flows! Indeed, a conviction of this truth makes me esteem everything lighter than vanity which does not lead me to God. How dull, how insipid, is everything we meet with in life unless it is turned to eternal advantage. This end answered makes life a blessing. But indeed without it (to me) life would be a tedious round of vanity, a thing not to be desired. To think of living any longer would indeed be irksome if I did not hope to improve life to my eternal advantage. This I can say is my one design, my only aim to live to serve my God.

Your first query,¹ 'Who am I acquainted with?' There are many in the society I am acquainted with, though many I do not converse with unless they are sick. Others I sometimes freely converse with, though not often. And I have my sister's company, who I prefer to any other.²

'What time do you take daily for private exercises?' In the morning, after getting up, I always spend some time in prayer and other exercises. And very often about one o'clock, and five o'clock at night, and at going to bed; and at other times of the day as I see needful.

'At which time do you go to bed?' About eleven, and rise between seven and eight o'clock; though in lighter mornings, earlier.

'What opportunities have [you] for visiting the sick?' We have all the opportunities we could desire. And I think we seldom neglect those we hear of, for I generally find it profitable to my own soul. When I came from London, Mr. [Peter] Jaco made me band leader, which I still continue to meet. And I praise God I find it is not a vain thing to wait upon the Lord, for I am always more or less blessed by meeting of it.

I can answer your last question with pleasure—that my heart is firm, and disengaged, and free, and seeking (if I seek anything) all my happiness in God. And I think it is my greatest ambition to (<square?>³) my whole life by that rule—the *Bible*. For I am persuaded that all his precepts are right concerning all things; and that if I am happy, it mainly be by walking in them.

I thank you, dear sir, for your inquiries after me, that you still continue to care for me. May the Lord reward you for all your kindness. I am,

Your affectionate daughter,

M. Dale

Address: 'To the Revd Mr Wesley / at the Foundery / London'.

Postmarks: '4/IA', 'Newcastle'.

Source: holograph; London, Wesley's Chapel, LDWMM 2001/8318.

¹Dale is replying to, and excerpts, a letter that is not known to survive.

²Apparently her sister Anne, who never married; her sister Mary (Dale) Collinson had moved to London.

³The word is partially obscured.

From Mary Jones¹

Bath
January 1, 1772

Reverend Sir,

Encouraged by your condescending answer to my former letter,² I take the liberty to write again, and to tell you just how I am, as well as my mean capacity enables me.

And first, Jesus is altogether lovely to me. He is my God and my All. This is the mountain on which I stand, and behold his foes beneath his feet. Nevertheless, I find Satan will strike, though he cannot destroy. The Lord, for the establishing of my faith, has permitted his work to be tried as by fire. Both by outward trials and by inward crucifixion, for which I can praise him, and say with humble boldness, in the midst of all, his yoke is easy and his burden is light. My temptations are various. Sometimes I am tempted to believe all the work in my soul is a delusion; at other times, that I shall fall from grace, and bring a reproach on the gospel; and again, to reason 'Why am I thus, if God had done this for me?' But they are as a flash of lightning. They have not the least rest on my soul, being quenched by faith in Jesus.

But oh, how shall I paint my own weakness and helplessness? My entire dependence is on the blood of Jesus! I do indeed feel a momentary salvation: 'Every moment, Lord, I want the merit of thy death.'³ I deeply feel it is Jesus, not me, that keeps my garments unspotted from the world. It is now I feel I am nothing, I have nothing, and must fall if I do not continually receive strength from an inexhaustible fountain.

My soul is sometimes led to meditate on the depths of redeeming love, God manifest in the flesh, to destroy the works of the devil. But I am soon lost in wonder, love, and praise, and cry out, 'O the length, the breadth, the height!'⁴ There are seasons at which my soul is taken from all but Jesus; as it were shut up, abstracted from all earthly objects. These are seasons of solemn, silent love, in which I feel there is a rooting and grounding. My soul longs for them, and in the enjoyment of them is ready to cry out with Peter, 'It is good to be here';⁵ but is silenced with those words, 'Not my will, but thine be done!'⁶ I am continually offered up as a sacrifice, feeling I am not my own. I long for more of that life which is hid with Christ in God. I never in my life saw my fall from God so deep as I see it now. It is the case in all things, and particularly in the body being a clog to the soul. Sometimes I long to lay the burden down. But I fear that is my own will. Lord, let thy Spirit teach me in all things! Satan leaves no stone unturned, nor art untried to shake my confidence, and to make others shut their eyes against the truth. But the Lord will fight his own battles. I have often a sight of the pit from whence I was taken, which sinks me into nothing, and I conclude there never was one saved from such a depth before.

I beg leave to subscribe myself

Your most unworthy follower,

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 53–55.

¹This correspondent is a relatively new acquaintance of JW; not Mary (Forrest) Jones.

²None of JW's letters to Mary Jones of Bath are known to survive.

³CW, Hymn on Isaiah 32:2, st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 146.

⁴Cf. Eph. 3:18.

⁵Matt. 17:4.

⁶Luke 22:42.

From Benjamin Smith

Worcester
January 4, 1772

This brings an account of the sudden death of our worthy assistant, Mr. John Ellis.¹

He preached here last Wednesday night, a most affectionate and useful discourse on Luke 13:7, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground!'

This morning he ate his breakfast, went to prayer with the family, went up into his room, took a book into his hand, read a few minutes, and dropped down in a fit! The family, hearing him fall, ran upstairs immediately and found him on the floor, where he gave two or three sigh, and instantly expired.

We found in his pocketbook a will signed with his own name only,² signifying how he would have his effects disposed of—viz., ten pounds to his father, five pounds to one daughter, and the residue to the other. There was also an account in whose hands his effects were to be found.

He was an affectionate, labourious servant of Christ, who was much esteemed by those who knew him and is greatly lamented in this city. May the Lord of the harvest send forth more such labourers into his vineyard, and crown them with equal success!

Benjamin Smith

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 144–45.

¹A native of Liverpool, John Ellis was apparently active as a local preacher from at least 1752 (cf. *Works*, 10:253). He entered itinerant ministry in 1762 (10:294) and served faithfully until this, his death. See Atmore, *Memorials*, 118–20.

²Note in orig., 'It appears by the date, that his will was made but last Thursday.'

From Mary Stokes¹

Bristol
January 5, 1772

Dear Sir,

Blessed be God for the great help your last letter afforded me!² Your very kind caution with regard to Satan's devices I acknowledge with thankfulness. I find him a subtle foe, watching every opportunity of assaulting my confidence. But *the Lion of the Tribe of Judah* has hitherto been victorious. I do not know but I have, in some measure, listened to the enemy in the point you mentioned; and, through a fear of arrogating anything to myself have not acknowledged the work of God as I ought.

I have been reading your *Thoughts on Perfection*,³ and have found great assistance in so doing. Many things that I could not account for you have clearly explained.

I desire to praise God that I experience an increase of spiritual life, and feel greater union with the holy Jesus. I can now give him my whole heart. I find my every desire centre in him, and rejoice in feeling *I am not my own*. Prayer is the element of my soul. By it, my heart offers itself to the Redeemer, and makes all its requests known unto him. He makes the throne of grace easy of access, and it is by continual coming to it I feel my heaven begun.

With regard to zeal, I praise God, I feel a desire to spend and be spent for him. I never found so much of this as I have lately. My heart is enflamed with strong desire to speak for him I love, who has done so much for me. The mourners in Sion are peculiarly near to me. O, how ready do I see Jesus to bless them! How willing to receive them!

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 55–56.

¹This is again titled 'Mrs. M. S.' but the endorsement 'Answered 5 January' on JW to Mary Stokes, Dec. 26, 1771, makes clear its author.

²JW to Mary Stokes, Dec. 26, 1771, *Works*, 28:448–49.

³See *Works*, 13:57–80.

From Margaret Wood

Bristol
January 7, 1772

Reverend Sir,

It has long been on my mind to give some account of God's dealings with my soul.

About the year 1745 I first heard you preach. Under the third sermon I was cut to the heart. When I went home, I said to my mother, 'Mr. Wesley has told me all things that ever I did', and asked her, 'Have not you been writing to him concerning me?' She answered, 'No, my dear child; it was the Spirit of God that told him.' From this time I continued under the word, and was enabled to lay aside my besetting sin. After some weeks the Lord manifested himself unto me. I retained my confidence for some months, and it was my meat and drink to do his will. I had a desire to join the society, but my husband would not let me. He also insisted on my not going to hear you preach. On my obeying him, my besetting sin got dominion over me—in which state I continued seven years, drinking in iniquity like water. O the long suffering of God to such rebel! Why did he not cut me down?

About the year 1752 God took away my husband, and having four children I was obliged to sell one piece of furniture after another to buy bread for them. Having only the furniture of one room left, I set up a school, which was a little help to me but not sufficient for such a family. Therefore I often went to bed hungry, and continued so all the next day. My eldest son, who was a dutiful child, being abroad, news came that he was dead. Being swallowed up of grief, I heard a voice saying 'If thou wilt return, return'. Then these words were brought to my mind, 'Weep not for *me*, but for *thyself*.'¹ On this my sins were brought to my remembrance, and I mourned on my own account. In a short time my second son was taken from me by the hands of cruel men. Three months after, the Lord took my youngest son. I now began to cry aloud, Lord, my sins have found me out! My distress so increased, that I almost forgot to eat what little food I had. My former acquaintances stood afar off: I had no one that cared for me. I now remembered my mother's dying words. 'My child, if thou wilt seek the Lord with thy *whole* heart, he will raise thee up friends where thou little thinkest.' I now came under the word again, and entreated God to look in mercy upon me. On hearing a sermon on these words, 'And Jesus looking on the young man, loved him',² I received a spark of hope. Yet I went on for some months, sometimes hoping, at others despairing. One evening as I was going to the preaching, all the way I went my cry was, 'Lord, what must I do to be saved?'³ As soon as I entered the room Mr. H—s named *that text*, which was made a great blessing to me. I went home, begging for faith, and continued doing so for some weeks.

About this time the Lord brought you to Bristol, and as you were preaching from, 'Behold, now is the accepted time',⁴ the word went to my heart, and I did receive him as my Lord and my God. Now how sweet was his word to me! I read the Scriptures with delight. I could believe all the promises were for *me*. But all this time I was not joined to the society. I had so high an opinion of it, that I thought it was not for such a vile creature as me. However I was prevailed on to give in my name, and found the class and band-meeting of great use to me.

I now went on praising the Lord for his restoring love. But he showed me that he had a greater work to do; and on his uncovering my inbred corruptions, my soul was weighed down. O what strugglings did I feel! It was hard travail indeed!

¹Luke 23:18.

²Mark 10:21.

³See Acts 16:30.

⁴2 Cor. 6:2.

On Sept. 21, 1761, you preached on the second verse of the 107th Psalm. I went home and prayed all night. At last these words were brought to my mind, 'I will cleanse thee from all thy filthiness.'⁵

Tuesday the 22nd, your text was in the seventeenth chapter of the first Book of Samuel. Glory be to God, that night my Goliath was slain! But I thought I would not tell it to anybody. But when I went to meet my band, my dear leader said, 'Sister W. the Lord has done great things for you. Your very countenance tells me so.' She went to prayer, and oh what a fire of love did the Lord kindle in each breast! I was constrained to cry aloud, 'Jesus is my King! My God and my All!' O what a testimony did the Lord give us of his love! We could not part, but continued four hours praising our dear Emmanuel.

For these three years past I have not found so much of that joy as I used to have, yet an awful sense of the divine presence rests continually on me. O how does it abase my soul before God! And I feel such a desire as I cannot express, to attain the full measure of the stature of Christ. O may I never rest till he has moulded and fashioned me according to his will in all things!

I am, dear sir,

Your dutiful daughter in the Lord,

M. Wood

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 56–59.

⁵Ezek. 36:25.

From John Southcote¹

Bristol
January 9, 1772

Reverend Sir,

Last Monday morning, that old servant of God, Daniel Jenkins fell asleep in Jesus.² Two or three hours before he went, he called his daughter Molly³ and said, 'The beast is so dull I cannot get her along. I never rode so dead a creature before. I must be up yonder by *four o'clock*. Molly, what shall I do? I cannot get the beast along. What shall I do?' She replied, 'I know not what you can do.'

Shortly after, he cried, 'It is finished! He is come! He is come! Praise him! Praise him! O, bless the Lord! Thank the Lord!' Thus he went on for sometime, blessing and praising God, for his love to him a sinner.

A little after, he had a kind of vision, wherein he saw all his family, both the dead and the living in their several present and future states; and on seeing one of his children in glory whom he had been doubtful of, he cried out, calling her by her name, 'And is Hannah there! What, Hannah! Blessed be the Lord! Thanks be to the Lord! I shall soon be with thee!' Accordingly, about *four o'clock*, he took his flight to the regions of immortality!

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord! for they rest from their labour, and their works follow them. May I follow this servant of God in all the paths of duty, and like him receive a reward!

We thank you for those blessed men, Mr. [John] Murlin and [John] Pawson. Their labours cannot be in vain in the Lord. We are at present like a city which is at unity with itself. Not the least misunderstanding having happened among the preachers. What a token for good!

I have been at Kingswood twice lately, and stayed all night. I met the children each time; and the last, while I was speaking, former times occurred to my mind and made a deep impression on me.

At present I feel a secret hope for the little ones. If the masters should again recover their strength, we shall see greater things. We took sweet counsel together. S. H.⁴ is athirst for the living God. How different is this woman!

O what a mercy, that the Lord should have begun with me, even with me, a poor backslider; and that he should have engaged my soul and body to serve him! Blessed be his name, I still love him! Wishing you more than I can express,

I am, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son and servant,

J. Southcote

Source: published transcriptions; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 145, 114.⁵

¹John Southcote (c. 1739–1777) was a master at the Kingswood School until 1760, when he opened his own school in Bristol, initially in the Horse Fair and from 1764 over the old assembly room in St Augustine's Back; by 1775 he is listed at 33 Broadmead, where he died aged 38 on July 3, 1777. See *WHS* 18 (1932), 127–28; and Jonathan Barry (ed.), *The Diary of William Dyer: Bristol in 1762* (Bristol Record Society, 2012), 212.

²Daniel Jenkins was born in Kings Stanley in 1702. He and his wife Jane were close friends of Charles and Sarah Wesley, and supporters of Methodism in Bristol

³Mary (Jenkins) Tidd (1730–1812). Born in 1730, she married William Tidd in 1764.

⁴Possibly 'sister Hindmarsh'; i.e., Phillis (Laing) Hindmarsh, the wife of James Hindmarsh.

⁵The opening account of the death of Jenkins was published separately from the rest of the letter in *AM*, but the dates and author are the same, so they were likely a single letter originally.

From Sarah Pywell¹

Stenson²
January 17, 1772

Reverend Sir,

After a long season, I have set about to answer your last favour.³ And first, you ask if I find any decay in faith? I answer, No. I rather find that my faith is strengthened, daily and hourly; and that, in the same proportion, my love to God and man increaseth. And no wonder I should find it so, seeing my constant prayer is, 'Lord, increase my faith! And thereby enlarge my heart to love thee more and more, till I am all immersed and lost in love!' O what a favour is it that God should thus hear and answer the prayer of such an unworthy creature!

As to my hopes, they are more firm and lively than ever. For every fresh deliverance in an hour of temptation is an additional proof that according to my day my strength shall be; and that he will be my guide unto death, and my portion for evermore.

You enquire secondly if I feel any pride or anger? I feel nothing contrary to pure love. But when I am evil spoken of, I am kept in perfect peace. I find nothing but what is subordinate to the will of God; and I have the witness in myself that all my ways please him.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

S. Pywell

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 115.

¹Sarah Pywell (1744–86), was baptized in Mickleover on the outskirts of Derby, buried in Littleover nearby, and apparently lived during this time in Stenson, a couple of miles south of there. Little is known of her beyond her correspondence with JW.

²Orig., 'Stenton'.

³Apparently JW to Pywell, April 23, 1771, *Works*, 28:373.

From James Hamilton, M. D.¹

c. February 1772

When I was on board the Isis, said he, we had a most amazing deliverance. On the first of August, 1761, the ship being then in the Gulf of Lions, we were struck by lightning. It shivered the main topgallant, and main topmast nearly to shivers, and took large pieces out of the main mast. I was, at the time, in the cockpit, close by the powder room. The lightning penetrated that length. I saw it perfectly plain. It gave a loud crack, and filled all the cockpit full of smoke. The wonder was, first, that the ship was not blown up; and secondly, that although we had thirty-two men struck down by the lightning, yet they all recovered!

J. H[amilton]

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 157.

¹James Hamilton, M.D. (1740–1827), a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, built a major practice in his hometown of Dunbar. He joined the Methodist society there (while remaining a member of the national church) and became a life-long local preacher. He eventually moved to Leeds, and then to London. See *WMM* 52 (1829): 433–40, 505–13.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
February 13, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Glory be to God! He continues to carry on his work among us, by adding to the witnesses of his utmost power to save.

Since I wrote last, seven have received a clear witness that the blood of Jesus hath cleaned them from all sin—who now rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. And what heightens our joy on their account is that the truth of their profession shines forth in their humble, loving behaviour and zeal for God's glory.

We had a profitable opportunity in the select band last Monday night. I believe I may say for each it was such a time as we never before experienced. Glory be to God! He did fulfill his promise, by pouring out his Spirit upon us. Within these last four days, five have received a clear sense of God's pardoning love. and appear to hold fast whereunto they have attained. And blessed be God, the dead in sin likewise hear his voice and enquire the way to Zion.

The hearts of our exhorters are much enlarged, so that they speak the word with boldness, in the absence of the preachers.

With regard to myself, I am more established in the grace of God since he has brought others to enjoy like precious faith. When I hear of a soul finding deliverance from sin, it causes my thanksgiving to abound. I find it exceeding profitable to converse with those hearts are penetrated with divine love. It kindles a greater ardour, and causes the pure flame to burn stronger in my own soul.

I have lately had some delightful views of my glorious privilege, and see it necessary that I should, by vigorous acts of faith, from moment to moment, take deeper root into Jesus. I find I am sill called to walk in the way of the cross. And although some tell me it is legal, I experience it to be the way of pleasantness. I think I never more sensibly felt that Christ is my strength, and that without his help I can either *think*, *act*, nor *speak* agreeable to his will.

I long to increase with all the increase of God; to be swallowed up in him. To this end I humbly beg an interest in your prayers, and am, dear sir,

Your much obliged and affectionate servant,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 277–78.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
February 13, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

In reading over Mr. Hill's book¹ I find in the fourth and fifth pages some plausible sophism which I did not think worth notice at first reading. I now think they should *by all means* be answered, and I shall set about it as I have time and send you the answer as soon as I can.

If you have not time to correct and polish my rough draught, I beg you will let brother Benson about it. I am tired of controversy. I do not see the least prospect of good from it now. Some cannot judge of an argument; others that could are too much prejudiced to do it with candour.

Be so good as to send me word what other part of the five letters I have not sufficiently answered, and send me back what is weakly answered that I may strengthen it. I beg the manuscript may be burned twenty times over, rather than to appear to expose the truth I would defend.

One of my late pupils² sends me word that unless I give up the doctrine of the *Second Check* I cannot be saved. He adds that, like Haman, I expose the college because they would not pay me honour. What constructions!

The Lord give us peace within—I see no prospect of peace without. I recommend myself to your directions, prayers, and advice; remain with truth,

Your obedient though unprofitable son and servant in Christ,

J. Fletcher

My Christian love to your brother.

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley / at the Foundery / Moor fields / London'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Fletcher / Feb 13 1772 / ad 18'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MAW Fl., 36.1.³

¹Richard Hill, *Five Letters to the Rev. Mr. Fletcher relative to his Vindication of the 'Minutes' of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley* (London: E. & C. Dilly, 1771).

²This was likely Noel Hill (1745–89), cousin to Richard Hill, whom Fletcher had tutored.

³A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 293–94.

From Hannah Ball

Wycombe
February 19, 1772

Reverend Sir,

Glory be to God, my soul has no clog! I am disengaged and free, and feel myself every moment ready to be offered up. Not that I think the time of my departure is at hand; no, I believe I have much to do before my work is fully done. I find his grace sufficient for this day, and I *believe* for tomorrow. Hence no anxious care arises in my breast.

I feel more power to live to God than ever. I believe he has given me the full assurance of hope, a confidence of receiving all his promises. I trust nothing shall separate me from his love, either in time or in eternity! Yet I feel the need of watching unto prayer. I find as much need as ever to use the means of grace, feeling that I want watering every moment, that I may have strength to go forward.

Glory be to God, his work prospers in this place! I believe the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and that the wilderness will soon become a fruitful field, to the honour and praise of God.

I hope, reverend sir, you will always remember in your prayers,

Your most unworthy friend and servant,

H. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 278–79; slightly shorter version in Ball, *Memoir*, 101–02.

From Benjamin Rhodes

Grimsby
February 26, 1772

Mr. Cappiter was converted when he was about eighteen years of age, and was then one of the most zealous young men in the country.¹

When he became a preacher, though his gifts were not very extensive, he spoke in such a lively manner, as frequently made deep impressions on his hearers.

He was about eleven weeks ill. In this whole affliction he never appeared to have the least doubt of his acceptance with God, nor even showed the least impatience. I visited him several times, and found him quite resigned and very happy.

As death approached his joys increased, and he seemed like a celestial inhabitant, full of life, love, joy, and praise. He exhorted all who came near him, in a very moving manner, to prepare for a better world. Indeed he was so filled with the divine life that his very countenance shone, which all who were near him could not but behold!

Having called for his wife,² he took leave of her in a very affectionate manner, exhorting her to live to God and keep close to the society. And finding God had made her willing to resign him, he seemed quite in an ecstasy. They then parted with a tender smile, well-knowing that they should soon meet again.

He then spoke to the family, one by one, and gave them very wholesome counsels, and offered up fervent prayers for them. He had also some of the most serious people in the society sent for, that they might sing and rejoice with him. Thus he continued full of love and joy, till Sunday the 16th instant, when he fell asleep in the Lord.

Benjamin Rhodes

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 199–200.

¹Thomas Capiter (1720–72) was a native of Lincolnshire and served the area around Grimsby as a local preacher. In addition to these comments on his life a work, see JW's letter to Capiter of Feb. 6, 1753 (*Works*, 26:500) and JW's comment on his death in his *Journal*, July 22, 1772 (*Works*, 22:342–43).

²Thomas Capiter married Ann Dauber on July 21, 1763 in Waddingham, Lincolnshire.

From Sarah Pywell

Stenson³

February 28, 1772

Reverend Sir,

From your farther encouraging me,⁴ I take the liberty to tell you that I am always sensible of the presence of God, which is never interrupted by company or hurry of business, though I am often much exposed to both. In the midst of all Jesus is my rest and my support. O that I may be always ready to speak of his goodness! I am enabled to pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. My heart is lifted up to God, whatever my hands are employed in, so that I am always happy. I never fret at anything so as to interrupt my happiness. Nothing hinders me from praying without ceasing.

Indeed I sometimes find lowness of spirits, which I think came first upon me by grief occasioned by a brother and a sister leaving the good ways of God. This lay so heavy upon me that I feared I should never more be capable of acting in the manner I had formerly done. At that time I was very ignorant of Satan's devices. At last I found it my wisdom to cry to God, that I might leave it all to him. Since then, when things have come on me in an unexpected manner, I have been ready to start. But at present, my soul is kept in perfect peace. While I am telling of his loving-kindness towards me, I find he is with me.

I am, dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

S. Pywell

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 115–16.

³Orig., 'Stenton'.

⁴JW to Pywell, Jan. 22, 1772, *Works*: 28:456.

From Mr. John Hallward¹

Worcester College [Oxford]
February 29, 1772

Reverend Sir,

There are a few names even in our Sardis, which have not defiled their garments,² and I am happy to inform you, they still increase. Mr. Sclater who entered at my College, is very promising³. He informed me he saw you at Chesham,⁴ in company with Mr. J. and another serious youth, and was encouraged by your friendly exhortation. Not long after, another sincere young man repaired to Oxford, and entered at Worcester College. I was apprehensive—another presented through my hand so speedily might rather alarm the College, and therefore previously sent a letter to my tutor, wherein I conveyed to him some sentiments I wanted to express more explicitly. He behaved with the greatest kindness, and got our business done without the least objection. This was Mr. Owen.⁵ He was intended for a Counsellor. But seems now to bid fair for being an able advocate for God.

Several others begin to put forth promising blossoms. May the dew of heaven ripen, and cause them to bring forth fruit to perfection! I hear too of more expected soon to enter. O that from this fountain, streams may ever flow to water a thirsty land!

I little thought of seeing, by this time, a triumvirate of the despised followers of the Crucified, within our unhallowed walls. Pray for us, my dear Mr. Wesley, that we may be indeed like a threefold cord, never to be broken; that we may have grace to order our conversation aright; that they of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us.

As to myself, dear sir, I have great complaints to make. However, I find Jesus more precious than rubies, and am at times happy, very happy in his love. O for more faith, that I may be more constantly so. Any kind endeavour of dear Mr. Wesley's to contribute to this, will be very thankfully received, by

His ready and willing servant, even to bonds, for Jesus's sake,

J. H.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 165–66.

¹John Hallward (1749–1826) of Worcester, was converted as a boy by Rev. Edward Davies, matriculated at Worcester College, Oxford in 1766, taking his BA in 1770 and MA in 1773. During this time he was a leader of the evangelical group at Oxford. He served as a fellow of Worcester and curate at St. Giles's in Reading. In 1780 he was appointed rector of Milden and vicar of Assington, Suffolk, serving until his death.

²See Rev. 3:1–6.

³Bartholomew Sclater (1752–1804) matriculated at Worcester College, Oxford in 1769 and took his BA in 1773.

⁴JW preached in Chesham on Oct. 18, 1771; see *Journal, Works*, 22:293.

⁵John Owen (1754–1824), the son of John and Hannah Owen, of Portsmouth and Publow, matriculated at Worcester College, Oxford in 1771 and took his BA in 1775. He would eventually serve as Archdeacon of Richmond.

From Damaris Perronet

Shoreham
February 29, 1772

Honoured Sir,

My soul is pressing forward, and seeking deeper acquaintance with Jesus. I long to abide in the secret of his dwelling, that I may learn every lesson of his love. I wait for all my Lord is willing to bestow. O, for greater faithfulness to God!

I am willing to wait for my good things hereafter. Therefore I turn from many a lawful enjoyment, as well as from all that God hath forbidden, so I may be brought nearer to himself. I count it a privilege to have a right to the Tree of Life, by keeping the commandments of God. I long to get lower and lower still, till there is nothing in my soul that opposes the working of his power. I would forget myself and only adore him, whose name is as ointment poured forth.

We rejoice that the Lord is here drawing sinner to himself, and that he hath stirred up several devoted souls, not only to war a good warfare for themselves, but earnestly to seek after the salvation of others. And we have daily encouragement to do this, as he is working among us by his Word and Spirit.

As for you, sir, we rejoice in your joy. I trust you shall see the good of Jerusalem all your days. It may be that after you have gone through great conflicts, and gained strength and purification by suffering, you will be admitted to nearer fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, after this flood cast out upon you!¹

I commend myself to your prayers, and hope you will continue to instruct and caution,
Your constant, though unworthy friend,

D. Perronet

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 166–67.

¹In *AM*, JW added the explanation: ‘By Mr. Toplady and others’. That is, the flood of criticism of JW’s Arminian views by Calvinist writers.

From [Benjamin Rhodes?]¹

c. March 1772

Jane Ogleby² was born in the parish of Bishopwearmouth, in the county of Durham, in the year 1752.³ Her father and mother both dying when she was about seven years of age, she was taken home by an uncle, where she continued about seven or eight years. After this she went to service, and lived with four masters for about fifteen years. She then married and settled in the said place.⁴ But all this while she was an utter stranger to true godliness—having neither the form nor the power of it, but lived after the course of this world.

About this time she was drawn to hear the gospel, and seemed to be so affected that she would often express the concern of her mind in such expressions as these: ‘Lord be merciful to me! What will become of my poor soul!’

She still continued to hear the word preached; although the more she heard, the more she saw herself in a deplorable condition. Having the eyes of her understanding opened in some measure, she could now discern the things that are excellent, and accordingly made it the main business of her life to pursue after them until she found the peace that passeth all understanding and could rejoice in God her Saviour.

She now embraced every opportunity of meeting with those that feared the Lord, and was much comforted and strengthened, and went on her way blessing and praising God for what he had done for her. But this did not last always. For, giving way to unwatchfulness, the enemy gained such advantage over her that she grew careless and secure. Yet she continued meeting with her brethren, though neither so constant nor yet with that fervency she had done in times past. While she was in this state the Lord often laid his hand upon her, and sometimes threatened her with death, which used to make deep impressions on her mind for a season. But being naturally of a light spirit, they wore off again.

She took her last illness sometime in May. It began with a weariness in her limbs and a shortness of breath. She was also afflicted with pains in her bowels to such a degree that what she took was immediately thrown up again. After this she swelled exceedingly. All which she bore with such patience and submission to the divine will that she would often say, ‘Had I nothing else to bear but these, I should think myself happy. For great and heavy as they seem to you, and as indeed they are, they are nothing to what I labour under from the guilt and horror of my soul. This, this, far exceeds all the rest. And what is worse still, I fear it is but the beginning of sorrows. I am afraid the Lord will not have mercy on me any more. Could I have any hope of this, it would support me under all my bodily afflictions.’ On one saying, ‘Fear not, the Lord will have mercy on you after all you have done’, she replied, ‘I wish I could think so. It would make me rejoice amidst all my afflictions, in hopes of better days to come.’

Thus she continued till within two months of her death—despairing, yet crying for mercy. One day she said to a friend, ‘I have been looking for the Lord to speak peace to my soul, till I am quite out of all hopes. I have drawn the curtain back, late and soon, in hopes to see or hear something to comfort me, but all in vain.’ Her friend replied, ‘You are not to expect any outward appearance. You know peace and comfort are inward things. Look up to the redeemer and he will give you rest, by removing your burden and by giving you the witness of his Spirit that your sins are all done away.’ ‘O’, said she, ‘what a poor, blind creature I am! I have been looking wrong all this time. But, through the grace of God, I will not expect it any more in that way.’ Soon after this the Lord set her at liberty once more. And then she told

¹The author of this account is not named in *AM*, but Benjamin Rhodes was currently sending JW many such accounts and was currently assigned to the circuit that included Bishopwearmouth.

²Orig., ‘Ogilby’.

³Orig., ‘1752’; a printer’s error, as she was 39 at the time of her death.

⁴Jane Taylor married John Ogleby on Mar. 1, 1763 in Bishopwearmouth.

me with great pleasure, 'The Lord hath taken away my burden, and hath given me peace of conscience.' She also said, 'I have now nothing to fear; all is peace, peace!' At Christmas Mr. T. visited her.⁵ When he discoursed with her about the state of her soul, she bore a clear testimony of the power of God in saving her from all sin! 'This', said he, 'confirms the doctrine I have just now delivered; and it gives me abundant satisfaction to see and hear one just on the verge of eternity, and nothing but skin and bone, witness that God's promises are fulfilled even at this day.'

Sunday, January 5, Mr. [Peter] Jaco visited her. When he spoke to her about the state of her soul, she said, 'I find nothing but peace.' He said, 'You are not afraid to die then?' 'Die!' said she, 'I desire nothing so much. Yet I could be content to lie here and suffer ten thousand deaths if God saw fit.' She spoke so much while he was with her, and joined so fervently in singing a hymn, that after he was gone she grew very weak. In the evening, when the house was still, she sung, 'Come Lord and help me to rejoice.'⁶ After she had sung as long as she was able, she desired those in the house to sing. Accordingly they sung the same hymn; and when they came to these words, 'O that I might at once go up! No more on this side Jordan stop!' she interrupted them, and said, 'Yes, that is what I want.'

On Monday, after receiving the sacrament, she called the minister and said, 'Sir, I have something to tell you before you go.' On his stooping down to hear what it was, she said, 'I have found peace to my soul'. On which he shook her by the hand, and said, he was very glad. After he was gone, she said, 'I thought it was but fit I should tell him, because he had said he thought I was in utter despair.'

On Thursday she desired the doctor might be sent for to draw some of her teeth. Accordingly he came and drew out three, which she bore with great patience. On Friday she was seized with a violent pain in her arm. At night, she often said, 'I shall not live to see the light. This is surely come to deliver me.' On Saturday morning she was quite easy, but her arm was swelled as stiff as if it had been a piece of wood, and was turned quite black. About noon she desired the maid to call in the neighbours, some of whom she mentioned by name. Her husband being in the house said, 'No.' 'Yes', said she. 'I am just now going.' He then took her in his arms, and when the neighbours came she endeavoured to speak to them, but could not be heard. She then clasped her hands, and fell asleep, on the 11th of January, 1772, in the thirty-ninth year of her age.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 574–77.

⁵Likely Thomas Tennant, currently assigned to the east Lincolnshire circuit.

⁶I.e., CW, 'Desiring to Love', Pt. II, *HSP* (1742), 244–45; published as a distinct hymn in *Hymns and Sacred Songs* (1753), 86–87.

From a Concerned Layman

March 3, 1772¹

Reverend Sir,

I think I can truly say in the presence of God that I desire to do good and to glorify him. For this only I desire to live, and from this motive alone I offer the following things to your consideration; which I hope you will receive with *candour*, and pardon what you observe *weak* or *wrong* in them. I look upon you as a person whom God has peculiarly chosen and raised up to be the chief instrument of the *present* revival of his work among us. He has exalted you to an higher station in his church and kingdom than any man living upon the face of the earth. He has made you instrumental of more good, has committed more to your care, and consequently more is required from you. It is peculiarly your province to inspect the affairs of the church, and to determine of the expediency and fitness of everything that is proposed as a mean of the increase and prosperity of the work of God. Considering things in this light, I was the more encouraged to trouble you with these lines.

We all know of how vast importance it is in the work that the preachers should be truly alive unto God, that they enjoy a sense of his favour, and the witness of his Spirit within them that they are his children and heirs of his glory, and that their hearts be earnestly engaged in this great work. Yet I think it is too plain to be denied that there are some preachers in the connection whose tempers and private character strongly indicate that they are neither alive to God nor heartily engaged in his work. Of this I believe you are sufficiently sensible, and doubtless mourn on account of it. Whatever therefore tends to remedy this must be of universal advantage, and tend to the benefit of the whole body of the Methodists.

The most probable means to remove the evil, and to promote this universal good, I think, is for *you* to meet all the preachers once in twelve months, and spend an hour with three, never more than four at once, in the closest conversation possible, by way of band meeting. This you may with great ease do, without breaking in upon your settled plan in any respect (excepting a few preachers who remain in Ireland) partly as you go your long journey, and partly at the Conference. For as you lay the plan of your journey, before you set out, you might give every assistant timely notice when you will be on his circuit, and what places you intend to visit, with orders that he shall appoint the most convenient place for all the preachers on his circuit to meet you. The few that you could not see this way, you might see at the Conference. The usefulness of this plan would be unspeakably great. It would surprisingly awaken the minds of the preachers. It would endear you to them, and them to you. It would engage them more seriously and earnestly in the work of the gospel, and I am persuaded would not be without its comfortable effects on your own mind.

But in order to do this effectually (pardon dear sir my great freedom, which proceeds from a fulness of love and desire of good) you will need to call in to your *assistance* all your *wisdom*, your *zeal*, and your *firmness* and *resolution* of mind. A few general questions will be of no service. To meet them in a loose or general way will be nearly as bad as not meeting them at all. Their consciences must be well searched, and their private conduct strictly examined. And this will exercise all the wisdom and penetration of one as well versed in divinity as yourself. So that I know of no other man living that is capable of the work. Here you will have an opportunity of speaking to everyone, without any apparent design, what you either know or hear concerning him. And this will prevent that disagreeable and *pernicious* method of appointing one person to reprove another. They will receive *your* reproof and advice as from the mouth of God. It will break their heart in pieces. It will humble them in the dust, and make them more deeply concerned for the salvation of their own soul, and of those that hear them. O who can conceive the blessed fruit that would attend this labour of love. In speaking to the preachers, you speak, as it were, to all the people at once, and effectually profit them. In being a means of quickening and stirring up a preacher, you are perhaps instrumental of the conversion of hundreds. Surely no time

¹Dated from annotation in Wesley's hand.

could be spent with equal advantage to this. I am confident that you would do ⟨more²⟩ good by speaking to the preachers in this manner for one hour, than by ⟨?⟩, writing and preaching for a whole week. In the ⟨station where God has⟩ placed you it is certainly a duty which he requires at your ⟨hand.⟩ O how will you give up your account with joy, to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, if you should omit so principal a part of your charge? You are indeed the father of the people, but the preachers are in a peculiar sense your sons in the gospel. They therefore claim your first attention. For according to their spirit and temper, their zeal and diligence, all your other labours will be rendered more or less extensively useful. It seems therefore a piece of necessary prudence to pay a particular regard to their state in the first place, that every other thing may be done with success. These, sir, are the thoughts that have occurred to me on this subject, which I do not dictate as a certain rule for your conduct, but only offer to your consideration, that your superior wisdom may determine of them as shall appear most for the general good.

I am dear sir with great sincerity,

Your friend and admirer

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley / at the new Room / Bristol'.

Annotation: by JW, 'Of x all o[ur] pr[eacher]s in each circ[uit] / March 3, 1772'.

Source: holograph; Drew University, Methodist Library, Archives.

²Two small portions of the manuscript have been torn away; they are reconstructed as possible.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
March 17, 1772

Dear Sir,

Since my last to you,¹ I have had some opportunities of conversing with Mrs. Dawson. In her I see what I have often thought—that God has his hidden ones unknown to the world, even among the rich and great. And surely she is one of them. She has living faith, and a tender feeling of her corruptions, but cannot yet comprehend a total deliverance from them. But oh my ignorance! What shall I do with her?

The select band in particular, and the society in general are much stirred up since brother [William] Collins came here. He appointed several days of fasting and prayer for the revival of the work of God, and these were happy, blessed, seasons indeed. The class meetings are lively. The prayer-meetings through the city are revived.² The public congregation is in general much larger, and a deeper seriousness and spirit of enquiry observable on outward hearers. I think brother Glasbrook³ will also be made a blessing. You sent him just in time, he preaches a full and present salvation, and is liked by all.

Mr. [Robert] Tegart of Waterford, seems now in earnest, I have had two letters from him, he has bought a horse for brother [John] Christian and sent him out on the circuit, he has joined the society, and prays at the prayer-meetings. God does graciously throw in a rich person here and there, to bear the needful expenses of his poor followers.

As to my own state, every day brings new trials, and Satan does dispute every inch of ground with me. But through the infinite mercy of my God, I am preserved. So far as I know of my own heart, it is wholly devoted to his will. Yet many things arise which appear contradictory to this, and causes much pain. At times I do find a testimony from God that my heart is cleansed from sin. But I want the abiding witness. Indeed I want a steady faith. The constant sight I have of myself keeps me continually disputing. Perhaps the Lord sees it needful to keep me down, that I may seek my *all* in him. Oh may he perfect his work in my soul, by whatever means he sees fit. Dear sir, cease not to pray for

Your affectionate child in Christ Jesus,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 67–69.

¹Her previous surviving letter was Nov. 14, 1771, above.

²These were a new emerging new form of corporate Methodist worship, devoted entirely to prayer. Since there was no exhortation, a preacher need not be present. The prayer focused on supporting those seeking justification and Christian perfection.

³James Glasbrook had been assigned to Cork at the 1771 Conference, but JW had apparently recently moved him to Limerick; cf. JW to Elizabeth Bennis, June 16, 1772, *Works*, 28:492–93.

From John Henderson

March 25, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

You have always been so ready to assist me, in whatever I applied to you about, that I cannot doubt of your kindness. Therefore [I] send you these few lines, which I beg your Reverence will be pleased to answer for my information.

I have often heard it said, and read it, that Christ has fulfilled the law of God for us, or in our stead. But I never heard or read it proved to my satisfaction. But of late I have thought pretty much of it, and have had the following arguments occur to me against it. Therefore, before I quite reject it, would be obliged to your Reverence for your direction.

I cannot prove it by Scripture. I find some scriptures to which I think it is repugnant. As those that command inward and personal holiness, and that command us to work out our own salvation; for which, if Christ has already done it for us, I can see no need.

I can see no good purpose it can answer. For we know God can—and for anything the Bible says to the contrary, he will—give *us* power to fulfill the law of God. I therefore think Christ's life was not a fulfilment of God's law, but in order to show that he was a proper person for the office of mediator and to set us an example.

I see some bad purposes it answers. It takes away all necessity for the death of Christ. The death of Christ, I apprehend, was in order to obtain pardon for our breach of the law and power to keep it. But if the law is already fulfilled *for* me, what need of pardon or power? It opens a great door to licentiousness; God grant it may not be an effectual one! If Christ has fulfilled the law for me, it must be because I cannot do it. If then I can't do it, and it is done for me, what need of me endeavouring to do it? Why should I try at what I know to be absolutely impossible, when my best efforts are but sin and I have no reward? For so they generally think. They say indeed it is impossible for man to fulfill the law. And as an unanswerable argument to prove it, they say: 'Show me the man! That man than can, where is he?' But why should I think that because a man *does not* fulfill the law, he *cannot*? Or that God mocks his creatures by commanding them to do things with he knows they cannot?

I was once talking upon this subject with one I thought was of my own opinion, who said 'I believe I can't fulfill the law. But Christ has done it for me. Therefore, in gratitude to him, I'll endeavour to fulfill it.' Are not these words, though a little barefaced, properly expressive of the doctrine? Those universalists, so called, who are of this opinion will be put to a hard shift if they don't own that all men will be saved. Because as they believe redemption to be general, by one opinion; and inevitable, by the other; they believe all men must be saved. The Calvinists indeed may be of this opinion without any inconvenience, save that of proving Calvinism, which I believe they never will be able to do.

I rather chose to write to your Reverence about this, because whenever I entertain a sentiment, I like to hear all that can be said against it. And meeting in the fourth page, I think, of your *Doctrine of Salvation, etc.* extracted from the Homilies the expression 'Christ hath fulfilled the law for us',¹ it set me on thinking more deeply about it—when these few things occurred to me which I have now wrote to you.

Mr. and Mrs. Peacock, Mrs. Fargison, with my father and mother,² join me in most dutiful respects to your Reverence, and would be very much obliged to you if your Reverence would please to spend some time with us.

Annotation: by JW, 'Jo. Henderson, March 25, 1772 / of Xt's fulfillm. of law in us / 'ad. May 30'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/68.

¹*Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works*, I.3, *Works*, 12:30.

²Richard and Charlotte Henderson, now settled at Hanham, Gloucestershire, running a school.

From Samuel Sparrow¹

London
March 27, 1772

Dear Sir,

Your favour of the 26th last I received, and also the kind present of your book on original sin;² for both which I return my sincere and hearty thanks. As it is one of my warmest wishes to have the approbation and friendship of the wise and good, when I cannot see things of importance in the same light as they appear in to them, it necessarily occasions pain and uneasiness. Permit me therefore to lay before you the real motives which induced me to embrace two opinions so different from yours, and which still bind them upon my conscience, and then tell me by what means I can possibly receive more satisfaction and evidence concerning the truth.

In the early part of life I was so zealous for and so tenacious of the doctrines of the trinity and original sin, by being educated in those principles, that for many years even to question the truth of either appeared, if not damnable, at least a malicious suggestion of the devil. Which thought made me so confident, and deaf to any reasoning on these subjects, that it appeared to me the height of presumption, and great impiety, to doubt the truth of doctrines which had stood the test of ages, had received the sanction of venerable antiquity, the suffrages of the renowned Fathers of the Church, and the broad seal of modern orthodoxy. And it is very probable that if I had been educated for the pastoral office I should implicitly have adopted the opinions of fallible men, and have satisfied my mind with their subtle distinctions and peremptory decisions in favour of these doctrines—so that no reasoning, no arguments, would ever after have had any weight in the contrary scale.

But being engaged in business, I had no leisure for polemical disquisitions. And attending public worship where no human authority was exercised to enforce belief in disputable doctrines, I was induced to read my Bible (when I had time for reading) rather than bodies of divinity and books of religious controversy; by which means I was, and still remain in a great measure, a stranger to those religious disputes which unhappily divide the Christian world and give such melancholy occasion to the enemies of our holy religion to triumph and blaspheme. In the Scriptures I found many truths, many lessons of instruction, plain, clear, and easy to be understood; and on them I built my belief of those which appeared less plain and easy. Till at length, nothing appeared to be required as matter of belief and practice but what my reason approved as intelligible, rational, and good, clearly conducing both to my present and future happiness.

I could easily see that some errors were slipped into our translation, by the fallible men who engaged in that service. Therefore I conclude that where difficulties occurred in other places, the translation might be imperfect, and I cannot but think it is a great reproach to men of learning, professing godliness, that they will not concur in the spirit of meekness and love to restore to mankind the true primitive sense and meaning of dubious texts of Scripture. The more I see and hear of religious disputes, the more I am convinced of the danger of leaning to human authority, and the necessity of keeping close to our Lord's injunction to call no man master upon earth. And I firmly believe that if the teachers of the gospel would adhere to that rule, and not insist upon the opinions of Fathers, councils, synods, or any of the glosses and illustrations of learned men, to establish tenets and controverted dogmas, but press upon their hearers with all their force and vigour moral duties, as our Lord did, and vie with one another in inculcating those two capital commands of love to God and love to man, our clergy would grow into

¹Sometime earlier Sparrow had sent JW a copy of a book he had written: *Family Prayers, and Moral Essays in Prose and Verse* (London: R. Hett, 1769). JW's letter of acknowledgment (Feb. 26, 1772, *Works*, 28:469) raised questions about the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of original sin, which motivated this letter in response.

²*The Doctrine of Original Sin According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience* (1757), *Works*, 12:117–481.

reputation, be more united, respected, and useful, than at present they are. Their influence would be much greater with all rational men, and their auditors more numerous, wiser, and better. I doubt not but you will agree with me that this appears a means of silencing the artillery of deists and infidels, of healing divisions, and giving a wider spread to the truths of the gospel throughout the trading part of the world. Why then will not our teachers let the Scriptures speak their own sense? Why will they not be contented with their Master's advice, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear'?³

Were our translation ever so perfect, and the divine will ever so clearly revealed and easy to be understood, yet if the people are not permitted to read it but through the coloured spectacles of fallible men, whose clerical power, classical learning, and rabbinical knowledge afford no security against prejudice, error, and passion, then the laity may as well return again to the See of Rome and, with their eyes shut, embrace all the absurdities of that corrupted church. I hope you do not think that I mean to reject the aid and assistance of pious learned men. No, far from it. I esteem them much, and am thankful for their ingenious and useful labours. I only object to our spiritual guides assuming any authority over the consciences of men in matters of religious opinion and belief, being persuaded that whoever reads his Bible with attention, and with a sincere desire to know and do the divine will, and humbly looks up to heaven for direction, and assistance, will not only be very safe and secure against all hurtful errors, but experience such conviction of the truth of sacred things as no human learning or ability can ever communicate.

Though I fear that I have already tired your patience, yet I hope you will excuse me for adding two short questions. First, do you really think that if a hundred sincere, plain, morally honest men were with attention and care to read over the New Testament, uninfluenced, unbiassed, and quite ignorant of the opinions of commentators, that so many as two persons out of that number would be able to discover in this revelation of the divine will that our adorable Redeemer, the appointed mediator between God and man, is indeed and in truth himself the great Jehovah, the only living and true God; or a being of equal perfections with him?

Second, if, when the sense or meaning of any text of Scripture appears uncertain or dubious, I then make choice of that which appears most humiliating to myself, and most honourable to the Deity—as when I charge to actual personal guilt all that is evil in my temper, life, and actions—what good end can it answer to persuade me that the plague of sin which I complain of is not from myself, but originates from one wicked action of my first parents?

Amidst all the obscurity, anxiety, and trouble which flesh is heir to, it is a pleasing and consolatory reflection that the time is hastening when all the faithful servants of God shall have their imperfections, their prejudices, and errors for ever done away, and shall unite in the strongest affection, in the sweetest accord and harmony, in songs of triumphant praises to him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. That the best of beings may long continue your health, soften your cares, and increase your usefulness; that his Holy Spirit may lead you into all truth, and guide your steps to glory; is the sincere and fervent prayer of

Your affectionate friend and obliged humble servant,

Source: published transcription; Sparrow, *Essays*, 138–45.

³Matt. 11:15, etc.

From Jonathan Bryan¹

New York
April 1, 1772

Reverend Sir,

By a letter from Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd, of London, we are informed that you incline to visit America. Mr. [George] Whitefield's preaching was of unspeakable use to many. Thousands will praise God that they ever heard him.

But he preached mostly in the seaport towns and the most populous parts of the provinces, where the gospel was known, though not preached with power. But in the back parts which are now grown populous, the inhabitants are in a state of deplorable ignorance still. If some zealous and able teachers would engage heartily in the work of their conversion, how soon might rivers spring forth in the desert, and these owls and dragons of the wilderness give honour to God!

No doubt but many in England and elsewhere who abound in wealth would contribute towards erecting schools to teach the children, and also towards the support of preachers to lead them and their parents into the knowledge of Christ, if such an undertaking was properly set on foot. But who is qualified for this work? I know none except yourself.

But dear sir, what concerns me more than all is the unhappy condition of our negroes—a people born as free as ourselves, and whose minds are as capable of improvement as our own, yet are kept in worse than Egyptian bondage. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, and all the superfluities we possess are the produce of their labours. And what do they receive in return? Nothing equivalent. On the contrary, we keep from them the key of knowledge, so that their bodies and souls perish together in our service!

But if the knowledge of God could be imparted to them, it would make more than ample amends for all their other hardships. Therefore, dear sir, if you are not quite too far advanced in years, I say to you, in the name of God, come over and help us. In doing which you will greatly oblige many thousands, and among the rest,

Your friend and brother,

Jonathan Bryan

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 167–68.

¹Jonathan Bryan (1708–88) was born in Charlestown, South Carolina. In 1733 Bryan was part of a group accompanying James Oglethorpe when the site for a new colony was chosen that would become Savannah, Georgia. It is unlikely Bryan had any contact with JW or CW during their time in Georgia, but in 1740 he was converted under the preaching of George Whitefield, and became a leader in Presbyterian and Baptist settings. In 1752 Bryan moved his family from Carolina to Georgia, establishing a plantation there and emerging as a prominent early force in the colony/state. See Alan Gally, *The Formation of a Planter Elite: Jonathan Bryan and the Southern Colonial Frontier* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989).

From John Horton¹

London
April 17, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

When I was last favoured with your company, I think you intimated I was one you designed entrusting with the management of some of your affairs, in case I should survive you. Should a concern of such consequence ever be entrusted to [me], I hope a determination to follow your directions would be my rule of action, and that nothing might prevent it. I doubt not but you have named such other person or persons to assist on whose fidelity you can depend. Though I should be very far from desiring a trust of this nature, yet I would not wish to be excused accepting any appointment I was capable of, in the execution of which I could serve you, sir, to whom I am indebted more than I can repay.

Since you mentioned the affair to me, a fear has arisen in my mind lest your will should be deposited in a place where it might fall into the hands of any interested to conceal it, especially should they have the opportunity of examining your papers immediately upon your decease. I would therefore submit it to your consideration whether it would not be proper to have what is of so much consequence securely deposited and your executors, or some of your friends, acquainted therewith, that immediate recourse might be had to it on notice of the melancholy event that would make it of force.

I should not have troubled you on this occasion, but that it appears to me a matter of moment when I considered the great confusion and many disagreeable consequences that might otherwise arise for want of some little precaution. Should there be any ground for my fears on this occasion, I am persuaded you will remove them and suffer nothing to be left undone that may in any measure lighten the load that must one day fall on many whose love for you and the cause you so eminently promote is not small.

That you may long b(e assu²)red to the prayers of the faithful, and strengthen(ed for) the great works whereunto you are called is the fervent daily petition of

Your most obliged and affectionate servant,

John Horton

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jn Horton / April 17. 1772 / a[nswere]d 25'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/71; MARC, MA 1977/461 (copy).

¹John Horton (1740–1802), a merchant in Islington, a merchant, was active in leadership at the Foundery and later City Road chapel. In 1771 he married Mary Bowtell. After she died in 1779, Horton married Mary Durbin in 1780, and in 1800 retired to Bristol. See *MM* 26 (1803): 211–15; Stevenson, *City Road*, 569; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 164–65.

²A small portion is torn away by the wax seal; the general sense of the missing text is suggested.

From Charles Perronet¹

Shoreham
May 1772

On Communion with the Father and the Son

1. The answer I gave you before was too concise for the importance for the subject. It is worthy of all our thoughts, demands all our time, and should be the whole pursuit of life. 'To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, is eternal life.'² He that redeemed us hath purchased the most perfect grace for all that believe, and with every other gift bestows *himself*.

2. Gifts, graces, manifestations, are small things without God dwelling in us and making all we receive to center in himself. The image of God is too divine for less than God to satisfy its wants, or employ its large capacities. Our fall is too great to be repaired by anything short of indwelling Deity. Nothing can restore the soul but Jesus descending as Lord of the soul, and actuating the graces he bestows.

3. Our creation was the act of *three* divine persons in *one* undivided Jehovah. So is our redemption. Each undertakes a particular part; each bestows his gifts, and vouchsafes distinct manifestations of the Godhead. Man had at first free admission to God, yet not without a mediator of access. All we receive now is through a mediator of atonement. Sin separated from God. Only by a mediator could favour be restored. There is no mediator without equality. Restoration implies that equality, and equality proves the possibility of restoration. We are sent to the Lord Jesus. The Father gives us to the Son. Thus we draw nigh to God through Jesus Christ. The Son reveals the Father. Thus we know God, enjoy his favour, have free access, and become one in the beginning. The whole is by the Father giving the Son to us, and bringing us to the Son. Jesus transacts all with God. And whatever he did on earth, or doth in heaven, is brought into the soul. We die, rise, live with him, and his Spirit prays in us.

4. The same will it be in glory. But we are first with Christ in paradise. Then the Son presents us to the throne of his Father, where we shall behold his face for ever.

Our fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. We equally adore the eternal Spirit; apply to him, with the Father and Son, for grace, and receive peculiar manifestations from him. He blesses, sanctifies, and reveals himself, in them that come unto God through Jesus Christ.

5. Each divine Person vouchsafes to bear a peculiar relation to us, assumes a peculiar character, and acts a distinct part in our redemption. God is undivided in his essence, but distinct in personality; and what in one part of Scripture is ascribed to the undivided Godhead is in other parts ascribed separately to each person. The Son sends forth *grace*, which implies the whole of our redemption, pardon, and holiness—all *purchased favour*. The Father sheds abroad his *love*, opposite to the *wrath* which is due to disobedience. The Spirit vouchsafes *communion*, which through his agency we receive with the Father, and the Son. And this communion is opposed to *separation* from God.

6. So in future glory: God is eternally one, but each Person will communicate a peculiar part of our joy. Yet whether in this or the world to come, whatever is the act of one is the act of the whole Trinity. 'The Son can do nothing of himself',³ because of his perfect unity with the Father. And the Father and Spirit do whatever the Son doth, because of an undivided essence.

7. Under the old covenant God appeared distant and more severe. In the new, he draws nigh and is more benign. In the old, God is most spoken of; in the new, Christ. In the former dispensation, Christ is

¹This document, which Perronet never finished, came into JW's possession after Perronet's death (see the quotation in JW to Hester Ann Roe, Feb. 11, 1777, *Works*: 29). While not addressed to JW, we include it here because JW published it in *AM*.

²Cf. John 17:3.

³John 5:19.

peculiarly considered as a *governor*; in the latter, as an *advocate* and *atonement*. This the apostle has an eye to, when he ranges the 'general assembly'.⁴ First, and remotest from God, are the 'myriads of angels'; then the 'church of the first-born', the Old Testament saints, who are nearer. These he places before God as a *judge*. Last the 'spirits of just men made perfect', by 'the bringing in of a better hope',⁵ the Gospel-dispensation. These he gives to Jesus, as a saviour, mediator, and sacrifice. Thus the order of the united host is preserved, and the climax raised as high as it can go, God dying to redeem!

8. It is undeniable there is one spoken of in the Old and New Testament, called 'Jehovah of Sabbaoth';⁶ and all that the most High God is or doth is ascribed to him. It is certain he is described as acting subordinately, and at the will of another. And it is as certain, there can be but one Jehovah, and that Jehovah can be no less than himself. Infinity admits of no degrees or multiplicity. It is one. It is equality. The least inferiority makes the distance infinite. *But he that ascended, first descended*. He 'descended into the lower parts of the earth'⁷ (a term for human conception) he 'came down from heaven'.⁸ Yet, as God, *he was in heaven* while on earth. He 'came not to do his own will',⁹ but the divine nature could do no other will; nor be *sent*; nor *serve*; nor be other than equal, undivided Jehovah. Therefore, the nature spoken of is the created existence of him who is Jehovah, 'the beginning of the creation of God';¹⁰ by whom God created all things; who 'appeared to the fathers'¹¹; led Israel through the wilderness; was 'manifested in the flesh',¹² died, ascended, and will judge the world.

9. When I first sought the Lord, I found no intercourse open with him, though his Spirit daily changed my heart, and drew me from all outward things, to seek my all in Uncreated good. The first six months I was refreshed by various influences of grace, which drew me after heavenly things, but discovered nothing of him from whom they came. I was all desire, all fervour; and, on the stretch for divine communications, as one dead to all below. Outward things could not allure me, because I had renounced them and devoted myself to the love of Christ. But it was not till after much joy and sorrow that I knew the mighty ALL, for whose sake all was and is, the first, eternal spring of all things, in whom they begin and end.

10. After this, I was three months in deep distress, through the loss of those meltings of heart, of that light, and joy, and power to approach God in prayer. Then Christ restored the graces I had possessed with double increase, and the revelation of *himself*. The grace I received came now with Jesus Christ himself in so clear a manifestation that, from what I daily experienced, I could have preached him to all the world. *If* I had never heard the name of Christ, I could have declared him to be God and man, and the mediator between both.

11. Now I sought grace—but Jesus above grace, and all that could be imparted. Whatever help or strength I obtained, it seemed a small thing if he came not with that he bestowed. The Son of God was now my refuge from every storm; my friend, my hiding-place on all occasions. I talked with him. He seemed to look upon me with precious smiles, became my delightful abode, gave me promises, and made all my existence glory in himself, fixing all my desires upon his love and the glorious display of his own person. I could relish only Jesus. To have been a moment with him, I would have given up all besides. I

⁴See Heb. 12:22–23.

⁵Heb. 7:19.

⁶1 Sam. 1:3, etc.

⁷Eph. 4:9.

⁸John 6:38.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Rev. 3:14.

¹¹See Jer. 31:3, and 1 Pet. 3:19.

¹²1 Tim. 3:16.

was so engaged with Christ that the thought how he had been despised while on earth drowned my eyes in tears; and the thought that now he possessed all fullness, so satisfied my largest desires that I had no choice whether to exist or not. Whatever was *myself*, was no more. It seemed to make no part of my happiness. All centered in Jesus, and him alone.

12. Before I experienced this, I had never known that prayer was offered up *to Christ*, but only *in his name*. But now all my cry was to him, as he was the only person of the Godhead I beheld. At first he discovered himself as the Holy Lord, and Ruler over his redeemed; then as a Father of his adopted children, a Friend, an intimate and condescending Companion; last of all, as the Spouse of his church, of all believers; which character exceeded every other. Every manifestation more abundantly knit my heart to himself, his word, and commandments. I could truly say, 'How dear are thy counsels to me, O God!' ¹³ 'All my study is in thy commandments.' ¹⁴

The Scriptures displays the relation God stands in to his people, in a multitude of sacred characters. Some of these relate to this world; some to the other. But all prove diversity of experience, and that 'one star differeth from another', ¹⁵ both in grace and glory.

13. Just after my uniting with the Methodists, the Father was revealed to me; and soon after, the whole Trinity. I beheld the distinct persons of the Godhead, and worshipped *one* undivided Jehovah and each person separately. After this, I often had equal intercourse with Christ and with the Father; afterward, with the Spirit also. But after four years my usual communion was with Christ only; though at times with the Father likewise, and not wholly without the Spirit. Of late I have found the same access to the Triune God. When I approach Jesus, the Father and Spirit commune with me, but not in the degree as before. Whatever I receive now centers in taking leave of earth and hasting to another place. I am as one that is no more. I stand and look back on what God has done – his calls, helps, mercies, deliverances – and adore and devote myself with new ardour.

14. In speaking of these things it is hard to find utterance. And human weakness, intermixing much of imagination, causes the truth to be rejected. If it be asked, 'In what manner I beheld the triune God?' I answer, It is above all description. It differs so much from what is human. Who can describe light, so as to make him understand that has never seen it? And he that hath thus seen God can no more describe what he has seen than he that hath not. In two of these divine interviews, the Father spake, while I was in agony of prayer for perfect conformity to himself. Twice more, when I was in the depth of sorrow. And each time, in Scripture words.

15. The manifestations to the patriarchs were outward and therefore admitted of being described. But what I relate was not outward. It was not any external vision. It was not what we commonly call faith. It was not an impression upon my mind, but different from all. While the soul is under the power of faith, the person of Christ is often presented to the imagination. But what I speak was not this. Rather I suppose it was a similitude of what is seen in eternity. But still only a similitude, for while we are in the body, all the operations of God's Spirit are wrought upon our body and spirit, inseparably conjoined. We are now composed of a material and immaterial part, and nothing can possibly act upon one without affecting both. But by and by we shall be, for a season, pure spirit; afterwards, joined to a spiritual body, so totally different from this corruptible body that what we then perceive will be different from all we perceive now.

16. It may be asked, 'Was the appearance glorious?' It was all divine. It was glory I had no conception of. It was God. The first time the glory of him I saw reached even to me. I was overwhelmed with it, body and soul, penetrated through with the rays of deity.

'But was it light?' It was not brightness, more than darkness. Our common acceptance of glory above is that of something *glittering*, and something that is *our own*. But here are two mistakes: 1) We do

¹³Ps. 139:17.

¹⁴Cf. Ps. 119:97.

¹⁵1 Cor. 15:41.

not consider the difference between this and the other world. To us, that is excellent which is bright and shining; but what is excellent to them is of a kind which hitherto we have no conception of. 2) We imagine glory to be something that is *our own*; whereas it is all things centering in God. Separate from him there is nothing glorious. Spotless souls would loath themselves, and their grace and glory, could it be possessed out of God. But there he is the first and the last, the mighty All. All things are *by* him, and all things are *to* him; flowing back to their first rise, and resting in him as their eternal Center. There the clamour of self-seeking and self-complacency ceases, or it would not be heaven. We only know that God is; and he, being what he is, is our All.

17. In consequence of this I could never rest in grace absent from God. After I had beheld him, nothing but his presence could suffice. This wrought in me much thankfulness that the darkness of the Mosaic dispensation is past, that the true light shines on us, and we are admitted within the veil to see what many prophets and righteous men could not. The feeble now exceed in communion with God the chief under the old covenant. And the least in the gospel state enjoy more of the divine nature than the greatest before Christ came. It also caused me to give up all thoughts of an heaven that was not God himself above all things, and all things him—his presence making the blessedness of the outward mansion prepared for us.

18. Though 'it doth not appear what we shall be',¹⁶ yet the things of earth are patterns of things above. Whatever is now will be hereafter, only existing in a different mode. And that which we were in our first creation, the same will remain forever. Man is compounded of body and soul, and will be so to eternity. He has now many faculties and capacities, and so he will have hereafter. And this diversity of powers requires diversity of employment. The outward man was formed for the outward things, which God displayed in the creation. But all blessedness lies in union with his Spirit. Here is the rise and center of all enjoyment, the channel through which all descends, and what alone constitutes heaven. Whether on earth or in heaven, we derive nothing from God separate from himself. But by being one spirit with him, we receive the gift through union with the giver.

19. Our understanding rises higher than the senses, contemplating the works and the attributes of God. But the soul has capacities higher than this, capacities of admitting an immediate intercourse with God. Here, indeed, human language fails. But, if I may be allowed the expression, this part of the soul cannot stoop to anything less than union with God. The understanding, meantime, can rise no higher than to contemplate his perfections. And the senses can rise no higher than to be employed in remote, indirect participations of God, through those outward things which are so many vehicles to convey the knowledge of God by the manifestation of his power, wisdom, and goodness in these his lowest works.

20. Let it not be conceived from anything which has been said that the soul possesses God's incommunicable essence, or enters into that union by which the Three are one Jehovah, or that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we partake of the divine nature in the same manner that God exists in himself. The former is the error of Jacob Behmen, and Mr. Law; the latter of such spiritual writers as Arndt.¹⁷ All that God is, is incommunicable and incomprehensible. Therefore, we cannot partake of it in¹⁸ the least degree; no, nor conceive what it is. Only it is something divine, which bears a correspondence with the perfection of the divine nature. And our redemption is a restoration by being united to Christ, not as the Father and Son are united, but as branches in a vine.

21. But as we were made for externals as well as internals, and for intercourse with creatures as well as the Creator, one alone does not complete our happiness, without both. Only with¹⁹ this difference: immediate participation with God exceeds what is received through the medium of creatures, and himself dwelling in us is more than all outward displays of his divinity.

¹⁶1 John 3:2.

¹⁷I.e., Jakob Böhme, William Law and Johann Arndt.

¹⁸Orig., missing 'it in'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

¹⁹Orig., missing 'with'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

22. When Adam was formed, it was in the likeness of God. First, a divine resemblance of God in his natural and moral perfections. His similitude in the natural is the ground of it in his moral perfections. Whatever wisdom and power is in God, we have something correspondent therewith in ourselves. Again, as truth, justice, and mercy are in God, so there is the similitude of them in us. What God really is we have no direct perception of, and can receive no real communication of. But by looking into ourselves, we know the same must be in God, only in a manner suitable to his infinite nature, and infinitely differing from ourselves, in kind as well as in degree.

Secondly, the divine Image we were formed in was the nature of the created existence of Christ, as he is 'the beginning of the creation of God'.²⁰ We are not of the nature of angels, but of Christ in his finite existence. This made the church capable of being his spouse. And this relation seems to be a cause why we were redeemed. The sacred nearness to himself made it worthy of Christ to suffer for us.

This image consisted, thirdly, in man's being the vice-god, or head of the creation. 'Let them have dominion', said God, 'over all the earth.'²¹

23. Paradise was an earthly²² resemblance of the glorious place of God's abode. Adam took possession of it, and was set to 'dress and keep the garden'.²³ But as paradise must have been a large place, and as God's vice-gerent must have had no employ unfit for a divine station, his office must have promoted, not hindered, the design of his being created in the likeness of God. To 'keep the garden' was to preserve it in the order wherein God had planted it. To have made this the 'work of his hands' would have been sinking him into earth—something like the toil allotted to him after his transgression. Neither could the hands of one man have dressed such a garden. Nor does it seem to have been a work that hands could have any part in.

24. Adam was endued with intuitive discernment. Reason was beneath him, and was the serpent's prerogative; bearing the same proportion to Adam's knowledge as groping in the dark does to walking in the clear light. By his authority he gave names to all creatures, and by his intuitive discernment he suited the name to something peculiar in the nature of each.

25. The creation seems to be hieroglyphical, portraying the Creator. All that which affected the outward senses was emblematic of some attribute of God, and a vehicle to convey a delightful communication of it—so that through the creatures the Creator was conveyed, and man made to center in God.

26. His supreme joy consisted in direct intercourse with God; the next, in contemplating his excellencies; the lowest, in what he beheld of the outward manifestation of God, or tasted in the hieroglyphic garden in converse with Eve, and exercising his office of ruling over the creation. These completed his joy, and were the type of what he was to enjoy more perfectly above.

27. Hereafter the soul is to enjoy the fullness of God, and to dwell in his immediate presence, having abilities to contemplate his excellencies and, by means of the resurrection-body, to enjoy the local heaven and the fellowship of the saints. These conjointly will complete the joy, which no one of them alone would do.

28. What the resurrection-body is, and what its capacities are, we know not. But we know its powers will be amazing, and these employments equal and suitable to them. And both the body and all its offices are subservient to the soul's receiving its full happiness.

²⁰Rev. 3:14.

²¹Gen. 1:26.

²²Orig., 'early'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

²³Gen. 2:15.

The house not made with hands is all divine. The city 'has the glory of God, and her light is like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.'²⁴ 'The wall is of jasper, the city of pure gold.'²⁵ The gates have angels for ever and ever attending on the favoured inhabitants, and each is said to be made of one pearl, to show that the work was beyond estimation. God and the Lamb dwell in the city, and are the light and temple thereof. The *light* and *walls* are jasper, to which he that sitteth on the throne is compared. The light of the city enters not in, but flows out on those that are not holy enough to enter. Nevertheless, they walk in the light of it, as the inhabitants of its suburbs.

29. The same may be said of grace as of glory. Many are so engaged with outward things that, though they are spiritually employed, yet their dwelling is not within the city, but in the distant light of it. I long for better things for *you*, and wish you to be engaged in securing to yourself a place where God and the Lamb dwell for ever!

30. In the internal heaven is God the Spirit, under the emblem of *pure water*, termed 'a river', for its abundance, 'proceeding out of the throne'.²⁶ The experiences of grace below are from the Father and the Son. And the enjoyment of glory will be 'from God and the Lamb, and from the throne'.²⁷ A throne is the highest glory of kings; and to reign is the highest office, and the most active part of kingly greatness. This we shall possess with Jesus, as co-heirs of his kingdom. For, as one experience of grace, so does one manifestation of glory differ from one another. And that which 'proceeds from the throne', is the highest that is communicable. This is from the Father and the Son, in glorious, eternal fellowship, through the spirit of *one undivided Jehovah*. 'There is no curse',²⁸ but all is now as if God had never been offended; no sin, sorrow, grave, but the beatific vision and immediate access to it.

31. 'The throne of God and the Lamb is in the city.'²⁹ So the *place* out of which the living waters issue is itself their abode. 'They see his face';³⁰ which implies access, and a nature capable of knowledge, fellowship, and union, with him we behold. 'His name is on their foreheads';³¹ his nature in their essence, and appearing in their countenance. On this is founded the possession of all they enjoy.

32. In our state of probation God was our center, yet not so fully but there were appetites as well as capacities for other things. In heaven, he is so our center that there remains no appetite, nor capacity for anything but God; therefore, no possibility of falling. Not that the place makes us immutable, neither our holiness, but when God engages his omnipotence on our behalf, that is our immutability.

33. Many are the hindrances of our communion, at least of our full communion with the Father and the Son: unobserved sloth, secret unfaithfulness to the grace we have received, not perhaps doing what God forbids but omitting to do what he requires. Hereby³² insensibility steals upon us, and our garment is destroyed before we find it is hurt. It is hurt by our not pressing near, but being content to live at a distance from God; by our ceasing to watch or to strive by our thrusting away the cross, or neglecting to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. If we fall, we do not rise instantly, and fly to be reconciled to the Son. When 'his wrath is kindled but a little',³³ then we might draw near; but we keep off, till our heart is hardened.

²⁴Rev. 21:11.

²⁵Rev. 21:18.

²⁶Rev. 22:1.

²⁷Cf. Rev. 22:1.

²⁸Rev. 22:3.

²⁹Rev. 22:3.

³⁰Rev. 22:4.

³¹Ibid.

³²Orig., 'Hereby a dying'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

³³Ps. 2:12.

34. Some lose all their communion with God at once; but most by slow degrees. They do not add the graces of the gospel to faith, and so gradually lose their spiritual sight, forgetting that the design of grace is to purify nature, and that all is vanity but the love of Jesus. Hence they indulge themselves in the common things of life, as food and dress. They allow themselves all they like, and only sacrifice the offals to God. Can these retain communion with him? How few will make themselves poor with Christ, and share poverty with his members? So God cannot deal bountifully with them, because they are straitened in their own bowels.

35. Other hindrances are: We do not humble ourselves as little children. We do not bear, yea, in a sense submit to, the froward, giving place unto wrath. We do not study to improve by the daily cross. We do not see the need and the use of it.

We do not behave to those under us with proper mildness, and as considering the greatest among us is to be the least. We do not see the good of being of no reputation, of being despised and rejected of men. Nay, perhaps there is a grosser hindrance. We are not exactly temperate. Even in the advanced stages of grace this may be the case. When nature is decayed by age or trials, then we endeavour to repair it by drink. Nay, let Christ be our cordial. Be content with him and let him do what seemeth him good.

36. In the beginning of my conversion, I was much led by divine impressions in sleep. Some warned me of temptation or sin; some of approaching affliction. Others quickened me in the way, or comforted me through hope of seeing the promises fulfilled. When my experience was least, I had most of these. But they were never wholly withdrawn.

I seemed in my sleep to be often with Christ. I carried him as³⁴ an infant in my arms. I heard him speak. I walked with him, and saw him work miracles. I helped to support him in his agony, saw him crucified, and was crucified with him. I saw the approaches of the Last Day, and waited the trumpet's sound. Another time we all stood before Jesus. I cried in an agony to be made fit. I was made so, and rejoiced.

37. In September 1761, I returned from the west to Brentford. One for whom I had been sorrowing for years had greatly sinned in that place, and I knew it not. I dreamed, and saw a glorious building. None might enter into it that were not holy. At my first going in, I saw many looking one way, and attending to one thing. I looked the same way, and saw our Lord surrounded by a smaller company. I went near, but there was a partition that encircled them, and none might go in that had not on white robes. Christ Jesus was speaking. I got near him, and asked where I was to be. He pointed near to his feet. Immediately a door opened, and a white robe covered me. I went in and fell at his feet; and, in an agony of prayer for that man, awoke.

38. Now seek ye the Lord! And all ye that love him, see that ye hate the thing that is evil. All that have communion with him, follow righteousness. Ye that are Jesus's sheep hear his voice! He calls you to die with him, to rise and live forever! O let us devote body and soul to him! And let us part from all that is unlike the resurrection-life of both the outward and inward man! Be willing to suffer, that ye may reign; and patiently overcome, that ye 'may inherit all things'.³⁵

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 199–212.³⁶

³⁴Orig., missing 'as'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

³⁵Rev. 21:7.

³⁶Charles Perronet's manuscript original remains in MARC, MA 1977/281.

From Hannah Ball

Wycombe
May 12, 1772

Reverend Sir,

Since I saw you last, I have been called to suffer the will of God in several respects. However, he has been graciously pleased to give me strength to stand my ground hitherto.

In my late sickness my relations did not, for sometime, so much as send to know how I was. But at last the Lord turned the hearts of my two nieces, who became more kind.¹ When I got up again and began to use the means of grace, Mr. [Samuel] Wells came to see me. The morning he came our conversation was more general than I desired. After a time, he seemed to intimate that he thought I was not what he expected to see me. I was tempted to despair while he talked with me. But I durst not complain, lest I should show a want of patience. Since then, though I have walked more in the spirit of true religion, yet I feel the need I have of being watered every moment. And I feel as much need of using all the means of grace as ever. But I have not been able to fast so often this winter as I have done before. But I am thankful when I can use that ordinance, as I always find it a great blessing.

Upon the whole, I desire nothing but to do and suffer the will of God, and I believe I was never so well prepared to suffer as I am at present: seeing I am more saved from softness of spirit, which has formerly often hurt both my body and soul.

As in obedience to you I have troubled you with these lines, I hope you will favour me with your advice and prayers, and believe me to remain, reverend sir,

Your friend and servant,

H. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 223–24; Ball, *Memoir*, 102–03.

¹Ball, *Memoir* omits the first two sentences of this paragraph.

From Ann Bolton

[Witney]
May [c. 15¹] 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have been grieved lest my not writing should have given you any pain of mind, especially on consideration of your requesting my diligence therein. It has been chiefly owing to my dear father's illness.² He has been confined for near eight weeks with the gout and gravel, and most part of the time carried to and from bed. This has called for my brother's³ attention more to outward business, and mine more closely to the counting house. So that this and every evening being engaged in the means, together with visiting the sick, I find very little time for writing.

But thanks be to God for every mercy. Surely this also shall work for my good. I praise him whose love and power is always nigh the helpless, to defend and raise. Truly God is loving unto Israel and no good thing will he withhold from them that love his presence. All my wants [he] supplies. I could not desire a more suitable saviour, more adequate to all my wants.

In him my vast desires are filled,
And all my powers rejoice.⁴

O sir, how empty, vain, and insignificant is earth's sublimest good compared with that we find in God! How insipid all terrestrial joys to the soul whose taste is elevated by the love of Jesus, who feeds from day to day on angels' food! Adored, forever be adored the God of love who deigned to die that we might never die; that we (transporting thought!) might here begin to live that life that never shall end. Surely 'tis heaven's anticipation! 'Tis glory in the bud to live by faith and walk with God. More of this delight I fain would prove. I long for a greater depth of parity, to live in all things more like my living head. 'Tis all I wish for. I see such beauty in humility I can't express, and trust I shall partake of more of this lovely fruit of the Spirit.

Hoping to be instructed by you how to attain it speedily, and increase with all the increase of God, I remain, dear sir,

Your much obliged servant,

A. B.

Source: Bolton's manuscript letter-book, privately held by the Bolton family in Pudlicote, Oxfordshire (transcribed by Cindy Aalders).

¹JW's answer of May 27, 1772 address this letter and the one that follows at the same time. It is quite possible that Bolton recorded only part of her letter in her letter-book, and that JW published in the *AM* a second part of the same letter, as of more public interest. Or Bolton may have sent the two letters together.

²Edward Bolton (1716–91).

³Edward Bolton (1747–1818); see his obituary in *WMM* 42 (1819): 142–43.

⁴Isaac Watts, Hymn 101, st. 5, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (London: John Lawrence, 1709), 223.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
May 15, 1772

Reverend Sir,

Truly God is loving unto Israel, and no good thing doth he withhold from them that love him. I could not desire a more suitable Saviour, or one more adequate to my wishes. O sir, how empty and insignificant are all earthly things, compared to what we find in God! How insipid are all terrestrial joys to a soul who tastes the love of Jesus, and feeds, from day to day, on angels' food! Adored forever be the God of love, who died himself that we might never die! I long for a greater depth of purity, to live in all things more like my living Head. This is all I wish for. I see such a beauty in humility as I cannot express, and trust I shall partake of this lovely fruit of the Spirit more and more.

Of late I have been more particularly led to consider the nature of that salvation which is received by faith. I have thought, suppose I am speaking to one newly justified, who feels the love of God shed abroad in his heart, and who has no desire contrary to the will of God, whether it would be expedient to exhort such a one to hold fast what he has attained and to tell him he never need feel evil more? Is it not, sir, because we lose some degree of the light, power, and love at first given that we again feel evil tempers? And suppose, through unwatchfulness, weakness of faith, etc. we feel something spring up that troubles us; might we not come immediately to the fountain, and never expect to experience the same to spring up again?

Several of our friends have lately had these thoughts, without being suggested to them by any person. As to myself, I am quite wavering, and therefore I hope you will favour me with a few lines. In so doing you will, reverend sir, greatly oblige

Your's affectionately,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 224–25.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
May 26, 1772

Dear Sir,

Shortly after my last, Mrs. Dawson, her husband, and the children, were visited with sickness, This affliction has been made a blessing to her. She is now preparing to go to the salt water, and I go immediately to Waterford (where I shall expect your next). Our society is in a happy prosperous situation. The Lord sent a blessing by Mr. [William] Collins and has seconded it by Mr. [James] Glasbrook.¹ There are several added, some converted, and some made perfect in love. The conversions are deep and solid, and chiefly amongst the young men, three of whom are added to the select band, Mr. Glasbrook's deportment has gained him the hearts of all, and his manner of enforcing holiness makes it desirable even to its opposers. Indeed we now feed on the sincere milk of the word. ...²

That sower of discord James Deaves is expected here! May God frustrate his coming, or the evil which I dread from his visit. His conduct to brothers Glasbrook and Horner³ was so inconsistent, and I saw such mischief likely to proceed from it, that at my in[si]stance they lay the whole before you (which I now inclose). In cases which so materially affect the church of Christ, and the evils resulting from which you may prevent, the wounding your feelings must be made a secondary matter. God knows I would not wound them by this or any other disagreeable information, did I not think it much more a breach of duty to screen these circumstances from you.

As to myself, I thank God my soul is happy. The Lord is pleased to make himself the desire of my heart, and it does as by a natural propensity cleave to him. I certainly do find many things both in my heart and life contrary to the perfection of the Adamic law. But are they not also contrary to the law of love? And I have been told that every breach of that law is sin. How shall we reconcile that with St. John? If *every* wandering thought, *every* forgetful interval is a breach of that law, and every breach is sin, how is it that they who are born of God sinneth not?⁴ There has been so much said to me lately on this head that I would be thankful for your thoughts on it, and *positively* what sin is. I request this, not so much for my own sake as for the sake of others.

I am, dear sir, etc.

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 71–73.

¹Collins had been assigned to Limerick in August 1771, and Glasbrook to Cork (see *Works*, 10:397).

²The published transcription marks this elision.

³William Horner (1752–1826), a native of Ireland, entered the itinerancy in 1770 (see *Works*, 10:397). His first few appointments remained in Ireland.

⁴See 1 John 5:18.

From Sarah (Ward) Nind¹

c. June 1772

I believe I first found peace with God, when I was about three years old. In what manner I cannot tell, but I remember that I was quite happy, and had no painful fear of God. How long I retained that peace I do not remember, but it made such an impression on my mind that I frequently wished (even since I grew up) that I had died at that time.

When I was about six years old I saw that I was a hell-deserving sinner. This often made me very sad, and caused me to wish I had never been born, or that I had never committed sin. For I thought if the Lord required of us all that is commanded in his word, it would be exceeding hard, if not utterly impossible, for me to be saved. But sin still appeared so dreadful that I was determined to try to escape it, not doubting but God would forgive what was past if I served him well for the time to come. Therefore I made strong resolutions to avoid all I knew to be evil, and to do all the good I could. But these resolutions soon vanished away, and though often renewed they were as often broken, which made me very uneasy when I was alone.

As I grew older my convictions became stronger. And sometimes I spent several hours together in prayer and self-examination. I also wrote down those sins which I knew I was guilty of, and confessed them to God, sometimes with much brokenness of heart, though at other times my heart was so hard that I could scarce be sorry for what I had done.

I used to wish to know what believing was, because the Scripture testified that he that believeth not shall be damned. And I was exceedingly solicitous to know what was meant by being born again, and used frequently to consider our Lord's answer to Nicodemus, but in vain.² For this same purpose I turned over many religious books, and listened to the discourses delivered from the pulpit, but received no satisfaction from anything I heard or read.

When I was about nine years old I went to a boarding school in the neighbourhood, where I spent the summer seasons. While I was there I seldom felt much concern about my soul; or if I did, I banished it from my mind as soon as I could, to which the levity of my companions greatly contributed. But during the winter seasons I was often under great distress, which made home very irksome, as everything in that solitary way of life conspired to fill my mind with gloomy ideas.

I left school soon after I was fourteen years of age, when I thought myself completely wretched. For though I was naturally of a serious disposition, I had contracted such levity of spirit that solitude was my aversion, and my father's house almost as insupportable as poison. But I was soon convinced that it was possible for me to be more miserable. For in a few weeks the Lord laid his afflicting hand on me, and seemed determined to bring me back to himself by multiplied afflictions, since I would not be won by love. But I was like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. For instead of hearing the rod, and him that appointed it, I flew in the face of God, and charged him with dealing hardly with me. Nor would I humble myself before him, till I despaired of relief from any other quarter. But being convinced of this, I at last gave myself up to much prayer, and promised to serve him in future with my whole heart, if he would restore me once more. But as my disorder rather increased than abated, I was often tempted to destroy myself, that I might put an end to my wretchedness. And so stupified was my mind that I do not remember I had any fear of hell, or thought of going there if I died.

¹Sarah Ward (1747–83) was baptized in Oxhill, Warwickshire in July 1747, and married there on Feb. 26, 1772 to James Nind (1741–1822), of Ramsbury, Wiltshire. The couple lived on a farm called Ramsbury Park, and hosted JW there (see JW to CW, Oct. 17, 1775 and Oct. 28, 1775). James was a paper-maker, a local preacher, and general steward for the local Methodist circuit, while Sarah became a frequent correspondent with JW until her untimely death in 1783.

²See John 3:1–11.

I continued in this unhappy condition about two years. But meeting with the *Death of Abel*, then newly translated,³ I read it with astonishment, being amazed at the goodness of God to mankind as there set forth in a variety of instances. The pleasing ideas it conveyed to me greatly elevated my spirits. And while my thoughts were wholly taken up with this new discovery, a ray of divine light darted into my mind when I saw the unspeakable goodness of God in creating me, and in sparing me to the present moment. I also saw my exceeding sinfulness, in living in open rebellion against so indulgent a being. On this I fell upon the ground (which I then thought not low enough for me) to adore him, for suffering me to be out of hell, who had so much deserved it. From that time it was all my care to be reconciled to God, and therefore I cried for pardon day and night. In doing which I can truly say I found more pleasure than ever I had done in the enjoyment of the world.

At these times many sweet portions of Scripture were brought to my mind; especially Jeremiah 31:9. I found great encouragement also from [John] Bunyan's *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ*, and from a little book called, *A Guide to Heaven*. And also from Fox's *Time and End of Time*; particularly from those words, 'Assuring faith is attainable: pray for it, and vigorously press after it.'⁴ While I was doing this, it came to my mind that in baptism I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. On recollecting this I was ready to leap for joy, and wondered I had never been sensible of it before. I now seemed to be in a new world, and thought myself the happiest creature breathing. Now I could bear with patience what before I looked upon to be the greatest affliction, and only wished for the society of those who lived in the primitive times. For I thought religion was now either banished from the earth, or else confined to monasteries and nunneries—to which I should gladly have gone, for the sake of having some to converse about the state of my soul.

For some weeks I was more happy than I can express, and longed exceedingly to depart and be with Christ. But after awhile I found less pleasure in secret prayer, and by degrees was brought, in a great measure, to neglect it. By which means I lost the sense I had of the favour of God. And though I often strove to regain it, yet for want of persevering in prayer, etc., I strove in vain. And though my heart was sometime melted a little, it soon became hard again, and as much averse to duty as ever. In short, I was now very miserable. And finding no power to extricate myself, I thought my day of grace was ended, that the Spirit of God had done striving with me, and feared that I was one of those whom St. Paul says, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance.⁵ These thoughts occasioned me many melancholy hours, and caused me to envy the birds and the beasts, and to wish I could change conditions with the meanest reptiles, that I might not live forever.

When I was about eighteen I again felt the drawings of the Father, and was enabled to be very conscientious in the discharge of secret duties. I was also more circumspect in my behaviour, and found at times great sweetness in reading and praying, but could not obtain the peace I once enjoyed. Which made me sometimes think God dealt hardly with me, as I had sought his favour much longer now than I did before. At other times I feared he had cast me off forever, and would no more have mercy on me. So that I thought it was in vain for me to seek him, which made me grow very remiss.

A little before I was nineteen years old my mother desired me to receive the sacrament. But I was not willing, knowing myself to be in a bad state, and having no mind to be at the trouble of mending. But as I could not tell how to refuse, I took up my cross and went, after striving to repent of my past conduct and resolving to live better for the future. But I received the bread and wine with fear and trembling, feeling a great sense of my own unworthiness. But when it was over, I was in such a solemn frame of mind that I thought I could never be light and trifling any more. The rest of the day I spent in reading and prayer, and in the evening the Lord was pleased to shed his love abroad in my heart and to give me an assurance that he had accepted me through the Son of his love, which made me rejoice with joy

³Salomon Gessner, *The Death of Abel. ... A new translation* (London: Dodsley, 1767).

⁴John Foxe, *Time and the End of Time* (London, W. Rawlings, 1671), 24–25.

⁵See Heb. 6:6.

unspeakable, as he had accepted me at a time when I thought myself the most unworthy of his favour. Thus I continued very happy for a little time. But alas, through unwatchfulness and levity I again lost this pearl of great price.

In the winter following my friend and relative Miss Eden,⁶ who was then just awakened among the Methodists, asked me to hear one of them, which I had a desire to do. I thought if they were what they pretended to be, I should like them, and had often wished to be acquainted with some of them, to know if they were such as I wanted to find. By what I had been told concerning the strictness of their doctrines I expected to have heard a sermon just to my mind. But on the contrary, it so disgusted me that I could not be prevailed on to hear them again. However I knew, whatever they were, I was certainly wrong. And being provoked to jealousy by their behaviour, I determined to amend.

In consequence of this, on February 1st, 1768, I began to alter my way of life, and to seek the Lord afresh. I retired as much as possible from the rest of the family, was very conscientious in observing my set hours of prayer, denied myself of those things which I thought would be a hindrance to my leading a religious life, and took much pains to keep my mind fixed upon divine things. I went on in this manner till Easter Eve, when the Lord broke in upon my soul, and gave me to know that my sins were all forgiven and that he had again received me into his favour. For sometime I rejoiced greatly in the sense of this. But after a while I was again, I know not how, deprived of it, which made me very uneasy. For now I concluded that it was impossible that such a creature as I should keep such an invaluable blessing.

About this time Mr. Thomas Eden [Jr.] (who was converted a little before) asked me if I knew my sins were forgiven? I told him I believed I did sometime ago, but had no clear sense of it at that time; but knew not the reason why I had not. He said I had certainly grieved the Spirit of God, and thereby caused him to depart. He then exhorted me to seek it again, and told me I should receive it as soon as I could believe; and that when I had received it I never need lose it any more, as it was the will of God we should always enjoy it. These were good tidings of great joy to me, for now the Lord called me as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and all I wanted was a constant sense of his favour. From that moment I was resolved to seek him with my whole heart. And oh how did I rejoice to think I might be always happy in him, if it was not my own fault! And doubting not but I should soon obtain his favour again, I gave up the world entirely.

Soon after, going to Stroud and Bristol, I was fully convinced that the Methodists were true Bible-Christians, for they appeared to me to have the same mind in them which was also in Christ. On this I was fully determined that this people should be my people, and their God should be my God. But still,

This was my grief, my curse, my shame;
I could not love the bleeding Lamb.⁷

On this account I was sometimes in great distress, at others in patient expectation that the Lord would return, and heal my back-slidings. Sometimes I thought he was a respecter of persons, and that I had done much more to obtain his favour than many others who had obtained it, or than I myself had formerly done. At other times I thought he would not give me this blessing for many years, or till just as I was dying, to punish me for my past abuse of his grace. These thoughts greatly augmented my distress, and I thought if I was again pardoned it would be the greatest miracle of mercy that ever was known.

My trouble now daily increased, and hell appeared open before me, and destruction without a covering. I went mourning all the day long, for the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast within me, and his hand pressed me sore. But this was the constant language of my heart,

⁶Alice Eden (1747–1820) was a sister of Thomas Eden Jr.

⁷Cf. CW, Hymn 43, st. 5, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 54

I'll wait, perhaps my Lord may come,
If back I go, hell is my doom:
If I ne'er find the sacred road,
I'll perish trying out for God.⁸

I continued seeking the Lord till November 10, 1768, at which time my father was reading an account of an Indian in the *Life of David Brainerd*, who said he had often tried to give his heart to God, and thought that sometime he should be enabled so to do and then he should be accepted; but now he saw it was forever impossible for him to do it, and that he must perish after all that he had done, or could do. I had been striving to make the same bargain with God, and he in like manner convinced me of the utter insufficiency of all my endeavours to procure salvation. I was much shocked at first to see myself stripped of all, and left naked and helpless in the hands of God, till I remembered Mr. Brainerd's mentioning his being stripped of all his own righteousness about two days before he was justified.⁹ And then I was exceeding glad, thinking the time of my deliverance was near. The next morning, while I was at prayer, I saw in a manner I cannot express that Christ was the way to the Father. But I did not know this was the blessing that I wanted, and still strove to mourn for it; and when I could not (for frequently my heart was filled with joy) I was afraid I was quite hardened, and by grieving because I could not grieve, I sometimes lost sight of Christ as the way, and then I was wretched enough, without using means to make me so.

November 20th, the Lord removed the mist from my eyes, and gave me to see that I had refused and slighted his grace, which distressed me unspeakably. On this account I wept almost all day, and in the evening retired to give full vent to my grief, which I did with many tears. When I could weep no longer, I remembered two verses I opened upon in the morning, which were the 8th and 9th of the 16th chapter of Ezekiel. I read them over and over, striving to believe. But finding I could not, I laid down the book; but taking it up again, I read them once more, when I was enabled so to believe as to go on my way rejoicing.

I was no sooner brought into the liberty of the children of God than I began to seek after the full renewal of my soul in righteousness (which I was determined to do as soon as I heard it was attainable). And this I was constrained to do more and more, as the Lord discovered to me the depths of iniquity that remained in my heart. And though I frequently met with many discouragements, yet I was enabled to persevere in seeking this blessing, in good earnest, till the first of April, when, as I was agonizing in prayer, it seemed to be brought very near. I then thought, if the Lord would speak to me by his word and say, 'Thou art made whole, go in peace, and sin no more,'¹⁰ I would believe. And for this purpose I took up the Bible. But to my no small surprise I opened on the following words, 'This is an evil generation; they seek after a sign, but there shall no sign be given them.'¹¹ I closed the book, and was afraid that the Lord was angry with me. But at that instant he caused me to enter into this rest, when I seemed to be awed into a little child, and my soul (which till that moment was vehemently agitated) enjoyed a profound calm. But through the cunning craftiness of Satan, I was soon deprived of this blessing. And for half a year (or something more) I received and gave it up many times—partly through the temptations of Satan, and partly through the treatment I met with from some of the children of God, who set this salvation far from them. But after I had thus gone without the camp, bearing the reproach of Christ, and suffered many things too tedious to relate, the Lord raised me up friends who had experienced this great salvation, to take my part. Since which time I have been enabled to hold fast the profession of my faith without wavering. The last time I received a sense of his renewing love was October 14, 1769, while I was reading these words in one of Jane Cooper's *Letters*, 'One thing is needful for you in your present

⁸Cf. Samuel Stennet, 'Jehovah Speaks', st. 2.

⁹See Jonathan Edwards, *An Account of the Life of the Late Reverend Mr. David Brainerd* (Edinburgh, 1765), 10–13.

¹⁰Cf. John 5:14.

¹¹Cf. Matt. 12:39.

situation, even to cast yourself upon God, just as you are.’¹² On which I was enabled to venture my soul upon Jesus; and I felt somewhat of ‘that prostrate awe which dares not move, before the great Three One’! From that time my heart daily owned and rejoiced in the kingly power of the Lord Jesus, and my delight was to sit at his feet and to love and obey him.

Since I received the blessing of the Lord’s constant presence (which I did rather more than two years ago) I do not remember that I ever lost it above once. Though I have been often perplexed with the temptation of ‘Where is now thy God?’,¹³ which has been an interruption of my happiness. But the vicissitudes of life interrupt *me* not, nor deprive me of a moment’s joy in God. I daily use both vocal and mental prayer, and prove the truth of this assertion, ‘He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him.’¹⁴

S. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 525–30, 581–85.

¹² *Letters wrote by Jane Cooper; to which is prefixed some account of her life and death*, edited by John Wesley (London: [R. Hawes], 1764), 23.

¹³Ps. 42:3.

¹⁴1 John 4:16.

From Christiana Simpson

Aberdeen
June 6, 1772

Honoured Sir,

The gentlemen of the Musical Society here are so urgent with me to bear a part in their concert that I could not absolutely refuse to take it into consideration. This I would have willingly declined, not only on account of the biases of my own inclination but more expressly because of the little hint you gave me when here. But as I did not know how to dispense with the obligation their generosity laid me under any other way, I promised to take it into consideration and give them an answer in time. The proposals they make are (as I am not so well acquainted with the notes as they could wish) that I would go either to London or Edinburgh to an able master in order that I might learn to read music. They at the same time are willing to bear all my charges. And that the time may not be entirely lost to myself, they also propose that I should be learned to play the harpsichord, which might be an advantage for me, to teach others. They also are willing to allow me a salary of £20 a year, together with the chance of a benefit which may probably amount to near the same sum. This they are willing to agree to for a number of years, or otherwise, as I may think proper to agree to. And if I should see it needful to have it augmented afterwards, they will readily grant me what I shall demand, only they make these proposals as it is only two hours in a week that I will have any need to be engaged with them.

The reason of my being so particular is not so much to inform Mr. Wesley that these offers are made me as to beg his advice, which I am determined to take. I think I am resigned to the will of God either way—that I may be more useful or helpful to my poor brethren and more independent is the height of my ambition. If it shall be thought that the temptations that may attend it shall more than overbalance these, I am well satisfied to remain as I am, honoured sir,

Your contented and happy,

Christian Simpson

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr John Wesley / at the Orphan house / Newcastle upon Tyne'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'C. Simpson ! / June 6. 1772 / a[nswere]d 13'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/71.

From the Rev. Matthew Graves¹

New London
June 19, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

At last I have met with a favourable opportunity of acknowledging your truly Christian letter.

We have lost a great and good man;² a faithful labourer and sincere friend. O for a double portion of his spirit! Zion laments his absence, and finds such labourers are few.

I have been earnestly pressed to take a tour into Maryland and Virginia by a rich Presbyterian minister, who has offered to bear my charges; and have had three parishes successively offered me in Virginia. But not being able to persuade my brother, I was (entirely against my will) obliged to deny each offer, as I thought it cruel to leave him, who left England and a vicarage at my request. However I yet think my Master will send me there. His will be done! I long to be in the society of true preachers, and among a willing, loving people. I do little good here, and therefore frequently visit three parishes, or rather societies, which I have formed—one from seven to twelve miles off, another twenty-four, and a third, thirty. These I attend very often, and in the last, I preach. Six times in the week I am among them. So that though I am a fixed missionary, I imitate the dear Lover of souls, by becoming a voluntary itinerant. I ride above eight or nine hundred miles a year, preaching up Free Grace and Universal Redemption to all the sons of Adam. For all which trouble of body (but the delight of my soul) I receive not the least recompense. But he who sets me to work, and enables me to perform it, will repay me in due time.

I thank you for the large tract, the extract and sermons, which I shall properly dispose of. Your offer put me to the blush, as being conscious of my barrenness and demerit. Alas, alas! I am wholly unfit for this mighty combat. Fitter to sit at their feet and learn, than dare to preach or pray before such masters in Israel.

It is true, I expound the oracles of God, and preach and pray in distant societies; sometimes in meeting-houses (for I do duty when and wherever I am asked) as I am enabled by the blessed Spirit. But oh, unclean, unclean! Nevertheless I hope the power of Christ appears in my weakness. Blessed be the Lord, he gives me a will and endues me with power, so that my spirit and strength never fail. I can do duty three times each day. And the more I labour, the stronger I grow. Yea my strength increases with my years. I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. Hallelujah!

My Christian love waits upon your brother Charles, and the rest of the dear brethren. Pray tell them I greatly want, and earnestly desire their prayers. You are all interested in those of, dear sir,

Your very affectionate brother,

Matthew Graves

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 279–80.

¹Matthew Graves (1712–80) was born on the Isle of Man, of Irish descent. In the early 1740s, while master of a Latin grammar school and rector of a church in Chester, England, he was drawn into the Methodist revival and inspired to volunteer for foreign mission service through the SPG. In 1745 he took the pulpit of St. James Church in New London, CT. His brother John (d. 1785; see John Milner to JW, Jan. 11, 1750) also volunteered and was sent in 1754 to a church in Providence, RI. Matthew Graves served in New London for 33 years. When he refused in 1778 to change the traditional prayer for King George to a prayer for the new American Congress, he was summarily ejected from his church. In 1779 he asked to be allowed to move to New York, where he acted as a pastor to Loyalist refugees and died suddenly the following year.

²A note in *AM* indicates the reference is to George Whitefield, who died Sept. 30, 1770.

From Christiana Simpson

Aberdeen
June 20, 1772

Honoured Sir,

At present (by the grace of God) I am able to do anything. But what I shall be able to do tomorrow, I know not. 'It is a delicate point'¹ and one in which I cannot proceed one step unless you lead me. I therefore wish you had not left me to my own choice. It is with fear and trembling that I have gone so far as to hear their proposals, and I am determined to go no farther unless you desire me. I have more against it than for it. I would not hurt the meanest name that seems to follow Jesus and perhaps there are some that may be hurt. I never saw myself in so despicable a light. I am sunk into nothing before God. His light and love flows into my soul. I am willing to become anything or nothing, so that I may be but his without reserve. O do not leave the matter undetermined, but lay me under a lasting obligation by choosing for, honoured sir,

Yours, etc.

Christian Simpson

Endorsement: by JW, 'a[nswere]d July 8'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/72.

¹Simpson is likely quoting a phrase in JW's June 13 response to her letter of June 6 (as noted in JW's annotation of that letter). JW's letter is not known to survive.

From George Williams

Pembroke
July 23, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I congratulate you on your recovery; and most sincerely thank God that he hath been graciously pleased to snatch you from the very edge of the grave.¹ I would willingly hope that ere now your health is thoroughly established, and that the Lord will enable you to visit your little societies in Pembrokeshire. I must beg, yea, insist on your taking up your lodging with me, during your stay in Pembroke; where you may be assured of finding a hearty welcome.

I am desired to inform you of a gentleman in the upper part of this county who has expressed an earnest desire of seeing you at his house, and having you to preach in the neighbourhood; and, indeed, it is much to be wished that you could comply with his request. He is a man of large property, and resides within a few miles of the town of Cardigan. Our brother E—² spent a week with him, and met with great civility from the family. The gentleman, whose name is Bowen,³ contributed handsomely to the building at Haverfordwest.

That the work of God may yet greatly prosper in your hands, and that you may daily see of the travail of your saviour's soul and be satisfied, is the earnest prayer of, dear sir,

Your unworthy brother, and obedient, humble servant,

George Williams

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 334.

¹JW had injured himself in a fall from a horse in Mar. 1772, that led to the development of a swollen testicle. He consulted with three physicians about this condition in Edinburgh in May. While this did not limit JW's travelling and preaching, the news got reported in the *Lloyd's Evening Post* on June 15 that he had suffered a 'dangerous fit of illness'; cf. Tyerman, *John Wesley*, 3:123,

²Possibly Robert Empringham (d. 1792), who was currently stationed in Brecon.

³George Bowen (1722–1810), on Llwyn-gwair estate, between Nevern and Newport in north Pembrokeshire. JW visited Bowen on Aug. 20, 1772 (see *Journal, Works*, 22:346–47), and several subsequent times.

From Jane Salkeld¹

Weardale
July 24, 1772

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter, which was a great blessing to me. As you desire to know the dealings of God with my soul, I will relate the naked truth to you.

In the year 1767 I was awakened, and was in great distress till March 15, when these words were applied to my soul, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee. Go in peace. Thy faith hath made thee whole.'² On this I was filled with the love of God, and rejoiced day and night for about six weeks. About this time I found pride and anger, and many other evil tempers; yet God gave me many tokens of his love.

In June I heard Mr. [Jacob] Rowell preach, and was convinced of my need of purity of heart. My soul was in great distress till August 5, when these words were applied to my soul, 'I will, be thou clean.'³ O, the heaven that was then opened in my heart for some months, till I read Mr. [James] Hervey's books! Then I lost that measure of love which I had enjoyed. I then read your *Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection*⁴ and saw what I had lost, and had no rest till the Lord restored me, which was in March 1770.

Since that time I have found constant peace, and am enabled to rejoice evermore. Notwithstanding this, I have the clearest sense of my own weakness, and see that without Christ I can do nothing. I am with all respect, reverend and dear sir,

Your obedient servant in Christ,

Jane Salkeld

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 335; MARC, MA 1977/486 (19th century transcription, identical to published version in *AM*)

¹This is a response to a letter JW wrote after meeting Salkeld in June. Jane Salkeld (1742–83), born in Stanhope, Co. Durham, was running a school for children in Weardale; see JW's account in his *Journal*, June 5, 1772, *Works*, 22:334–35. Jane married John Rodham in Sept. 1772, in Stanhope, and died in Apr. 1783. JW comments on her death also in his *Journal*, though he gives her married name as Natrass (perhaps a second marriage); see June 10, 1784, *Works*, 23:316.

²Cf. Matt. 9:2, 22; and parallels.

³Matt. 8:3, and parallels.

⁴*Works*, 12:95–131.

From Mary Stokes¹

[Bristol?]
July 29, 1772

My very Dear and Worthy Friend,

For once I can say, the receipt of a letter from you has given me inexpressible pain.² I am therefore constrained to address you in this manner, before we personally meet, as I fear my spirits would not enable me so freely to speak as to write the undisguised feelings of my heart. I believe the apprehension of my valuable friend and father arises from a tender affection for an unworthy worm, of the sincerity of which he has only added a fresh and convincing proof. Whether I may give weight to, or dissipate your fears, the most unreserved declaration of my sentiments will determine.

Your reviving in my remembrance the many favours I have received from the liberal hand of mercy, since my connexion with our dear friends, is kindly proper. I think I have some sensibility of the love of God towards me in this respect, and esteem that memorable hour when I heard the gospel trumpet among them, the happiest of my life. Yes, my dearest sir, my heart burns while I recollect the attraction of heavenly grace! The many, the innumerable mercies since then received, I desire with thankfulness to acknowledge; and which, unless the spirit is separated from the gracious Author, cannot be forgotten.

'Beware of striking into new paths', says my revered friend. Much, very much, should I fear exploring any of myself, or taking one step in so important a point, without the direction of him who is emphatically called, 'Wonderful Counsellor'.³ To his praise be it spoken, he has given me the desire to be guided by him. And I humbly hope, in obedience to this holy teacher, I have at some seasons lately attended the Quakers' meeting—but not at the time of our own worship, except Sunday evenings when, with truth I say, the excessive warmth of the room was too much for me to bear.

I am obliged to testify the Lord has clothed his word delivered there with divine power, for which the heart of my dear father will rejoice, since

Names, and sects, and parties fall,
And thou, Christ, art all in all.⁴

With regard to *silent* meetings, I apprehend their authority may be known by the power they are attended with. I have not been at such, yet in my own experience find the *unutterable* prayer to be the most profitable, and am led much into what is so beautifully expressed in one of our hymns:

The speechless awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.⁵

I long to be more internally devoted to that God, who alone is worshipped in spirit and in truth; and find, in order to keep up a spiritual intercourse, there must be a deep, inward, silent attention to the secret intimations of divine love. For which my inmost soul aspires to him who has promised to fulfil the desire of them that seek him.

¹This letter marks a juncture where Mary Stokes was drawn toward Quaker worship, and she soon joined the Quakers meeting in the Friars.

²The letter to which she is responding is not JW's letter of June 16, 1772, but a subsequent letter that is not known to survive.

³Isa. 9:6.

⁴CW, 'The Communion of Saints', Pt. IV, st. 5, *HSP* (1740), 195.

⁵CW, Hymn on Luke 14:7, st. 10, *HSP* (1749), 1:260.

And is this, my dear sir, 'stepping out of the way'? Surely it cannot, while I find a peace that passeth all understanding. Can this lead me to think slightly of my old teachers? Oh could my heart be opened to my friend, he would see far other characters impressed. Will this teach me to neglect my meetings? I esteem them great privileges, where not custom but a sincere desire for God's glory is our principle of action.

What further can I say to my honoured friend, after disclosing so much of that heart which holds him in most affectionate and respectful love. I can only add the request that he would join me in that emphatic prayer to the God of all grace, 'Thy will be done';⁶ to which an attention and obedience will, I trust, divinely influence

His very unworthy, but gratefully affectionate,

M. Stokes

Source: published transcription; Elizabeth Dudley, *The Life of Mary Dudley* (London: Dudley, 1825), 15–17.

⁶Matt. 6:10.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Waterford
August 8, 1772

Dear Sir,

Your last favour reached me here,¹ it came timely to quiet many fears, blessed be God who has in mercy restored you again to his people.² I request to know particularly how your health is at present. This society is increased in number and grace since I was last here. I do meet a band and a clas; we all speak with freedom. I love the people, and I believe they love me. There are three preachers on the circuit and all have work enough. James Deaves is now in Limerick, but as yet quiet. Why did you not write to himself also? Your answer to my last question has given me much satisfaction, as I would always chose to have your authority for anything I should advance. I think I am ever learning, and still a novice. I am even astonished at my own blindness. Yet my greatest defect does not lie here. I find I do not want the light of truth so much as the fire of love. Here indeed I am miserably deficient. My cold, dead, stupid heart is seldom lively or active after God. How is this, if it be wholly given to him? (Which indeed I think it is.) In short, I think I am the most inconsistent of all creatures; and amongst all I converse with, can meet none like myself. My mind is prone to wander, or rather it is seldom stayed. And though I feel almost continual distress for this, yet still it continues the same. This makes me less useful than I might be, and is often a reproach to me when I speak or act for God. Amongst the number that do request, and are in some degree worthy of your prayers, may the Lord sometimes bring to your mind

Your weak unworthy sister,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 75–76.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²See the first note on the letter from George Williams, July 23, 1772, above.

From Mary Bishop

Bath
August 10, 1772

Reverend Sir,

You would be glad to hear that my soul prospers, but I know not whether it does it or not. My joys and sorrows are far less than usual, though I am kept in peace, and blessed with a general attention to God, and have a desire to approve myself to him in all things.

I have lately been called to consider my latter end, by a swift decay of my health. But by means of the Bristol waters I am now in a great measure restored. O may my life praise him! I am taught to 'pierce beyond an hour',¹ and to see myself a stranger and pilgrim. Earth daily sinks in my esteem.

Providence has also increased my school, in which I feel the need of that 'wisdom which dwelleth with prudence',² to know how to behave aright to my friends (I mean chiefly, the young women of our society). I believe they have a great affection for me, but I fear it is not a right one. They are often charging me with partiality, etc. So that I hardly know how to look or speak. I feel a tender good-will for them—not only as God's workmanship, but as created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. They are not by 'nature formed to please',³ nor so deeply spiritual as some are with whose friendship and correspondence I am favoured.

Will you be kind enough, sir, to point out what you think amiss in me. to teach me how to endure aright. and to lay down the likeliest rules for me to be made of some service to their souls?

I remain, reverend sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 393.

¹Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, Night 1, ln. 308.

²Prov. 8:12.

³Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Friendship in Death* (London: T. Worrall, [1728]), 101.

From Cornelius Winter¹

Brecon
August 10, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

In our last interview, as you desired to hear from me, I am unwilling that dear Mr. Wesley's request should be treated with the least neglect.

Do you ask what I have been about? I answer, 'Preaching Christ, wherever a door hath been opened to me.' And my labours have met with a kind reception in general, about England and Wales. And I trust the devil's kingdom hath been weakened, while the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, hath received some little addition.

Sometimes I have cast a handful of seed in your ground, and should it ever come to a harvest you are welcome to it. It will become Jesus's property at last. What melancholy consequences from late productions!² They forbid me to be any longer an idle hearer, or a careless reader. I have been obliged, from conscience, to make a stand against dear Mr. Fletcher's groundless arguments, and most bitter invectives.³ Yet with that tenderness which I hope will bear me up when my motive comes to be tried. Many things he hath said are a proper antidote applied wrong, and to improper objects, and thereby become poison, whereas they might have been a healing medicine. But I must say no more upon the subject. I am writing to one who will give it little attention.

Doctor Owen's *Death of Death* hath been my favourite study of late.⁴ And in consequence of embracing the doctrine therein contained I must agree to disagree with Mr. Fletcher's thoughts, and dear Mr. Wesley's *friendly pen*. Excuse my open and frank acknowledgments, and give me leave to differ and love. God bless you to your latest period, and make your last days your best! So prays, reverend and dear sir,

Your's most respectfully and affectionately in our dear Lord Jesus,

Cornelius Winter

P.S. A line directed to me at Mr. Cam's, Wotton-under-edge, or to the Tabernacle House, London, will always be esteemed a favour from dear Mr. Wesley.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 336–37.

¹Cornelius Winter (1742–1808) was converted under the preaching of George Whitefield in 1760 and became Whitefield's secretary and understudy as a preacher. He travelled with Whitefield to North America in 1769, and after Whitefield's death in 1770 he returned to England to seek ordination in the Church of England. This being denied, he served for several years as an itinerant lay preacher on his own. Winter was finally ordained in a dissenting tradition in 1777, serving churches in Marlborough and Painswick until his death.

²Winter is surely referring to the controversy between Wesleyan and Calvinist Methodists sparked by the Minutes of JW's 1770 Conference with his preachers—a controversy in which Fletcher published several tracts.

³JW added the note in *AM*: 'Let the unbiassed reader judge whether Mr. Fletcher has made use of groundless arguments, or bitter invectives!'

⁴John Owen, *Salus Electorum, Sanguis Jesu; or, The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* (London: P. Stephens, 1648).

From Penelope Newman¹

Cheltenham
August 23, 1772

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for your kind letter, wherein you request me to speak without reserve.² Glory be to God! I find my spirit quite free to declare all his loving-kindness to me.

In my childhood I was restrained from many evils which children fall into. But as I grew up, my evil nature often betrayed me into folly.

When I was about fourteen my sister was convinced of sin and attended a Baptist meeting, which inclined me to do the same, though much against my father's will. But when I understood that some of that profession did such things as I had formerly abandoned, I took to them again, and thought I did not harm in so doing. For two years I continued going to the Baptist meeting, sometimes sinning and then repenting. At length not knowing what to do (for no one said anything to me), as I understood by their preaching that there were two sorts of people in the world, some who were to be saved and some who were not, I thought, 'If I am to be saved, I shall; and if not, all my care about it is to no purpose.' But as the pain my soul often endured cannot be described, finding³ no relief here, I resolved to go to Church [of England] again. At sixteen, I was confirmed. When the bishop put his hand on my head, and repeated the words of the office, I felt something extraordinary. When I got home I prayed much, and was very strict for some time. I had also a great desire to go to the sacrament, but feared I was not good enough. I then read and prayed much, and often resolved to be better, but found my heart inclined more and more to wickedness. But, blessed be God, his restraining grace kept me from outward evil!

When I heard people dispute about religion, my mind would be perplexed to know which of them was right, which sent me to my knees to entreat the Lord to send someone to guide me in the right way. I often prayed with great fervour, and found some satisfaction. But still I wanted something, and did not know what it was.

In 1769 the Lord sent his servants to this place. But I found a great dislike to the name of a Methodist, as I had often heard they drove people mad. However at last I ventured to hear Mr. [Alexander] Mather, and found a great liking to what he said; but yet thought I would not go much. But a young woman, with whom I sometimes went to the Baptists, came to me and said, 'Penelope, I wish you would hear young Mr. [Samuel] Wells, for he talks better than all the preachers I ever heard. I said, 'I wish I could', and then consented to go. When I went, he was reading in the Epistle to the Hebrews. But presently he sat down and began to speak to those present, one by one. At last he looked at me and said, 'Well, Penelope, have you a mind to save your soul?' I said, 'Yes.' Then said he, 'Do you see yourself a sinner?' I said, 'No' (with great resentment). He said, 'No, not see yourself a sinner!' I answered, 'Neither you nor any one in the town can say any evil of me, for I have always shunned bad company and have been civil to all.' He then strove to convince me that I was a sinner by nature, and that God was angry with me notwithstanding all my civility. But I was resolved not to believe him, for I thought if I did, I

¹Penelope Newman (c. 1750–1831), a native of Cheltenham was converted about 1769; she soon became the leader of two classes and a select society, and was for several years one of JW's regular correspondents. Before her conversion she kept a bookshop. But afterwards she devoted full time to providing spiritual leadership to Methodists groups in the surrounding towns and villages, occasionally giving a public exhortation. She was instrumental in the conversion of Jonathan Coussins and they were married on Oct. 17, 1782. See Taft, *Holy Women*, 1:290–95; Vickers, *Dictionary*, 252–53; and *WHS* 34 (1963): 58–60.

²This was clearly a follow-up letter of JW, not his initial letter of March 6. It is not known to survive.

³Orig., 'and finding'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

should run mad and distress my parents. He then prayed God to give me the cup of his wrath to drink, but not to suffer me to drink it. On hearing this my soul seemed as if it was pierced through, and I thought: if I did believe what he said, I should lose my senses; and if I did not, perhaps I should lose my soul.

I then went home and shut myself in my room, and prayed and strove for more distress. For I now feared I should not be distressed enough. However I went mourning and praying, night and day for a fortnight, for the pardon of my sins. At last God spoke peace to my soul, on which I could hardly forbear opening the window to tell my joys to the people who passed along.

After this I continued happy for some months, though in that time I suffered much opposition from my father and others. But my soul was so delighted in the ways of God that nothing seemed to disturb me. At last the Lord showed me my inbred sin, when I saw clearly the necessity of a deliverance from the carnal mind, and sought it earnestly.

In 1769 I receive the witness of full sanctification. August 1770, I thought I began to be careless, and was going to write to a friend to tell her wherein I found myself deficient. But before I began, I thought, 'Is not Jesus present to make up every deficiency?' I then retired, and as soon as I fell on my knees I found myself emptied, stripped naked, and helpless before a holy God! I could not move nor speak! I lay motionless, without a sigh or a groan. At last, Jesus appeared with such a glorious lustre as caused all evil to vanish before him. My soul was then filled with pure love to him and all mankind. I cried out, 'Jesus is all in all!' I was in such an ecstasy I thought I should expire in the visions of my God! I could not lift a hand, I was so weak. I could only pray and give thanks wherever I went. I had a continual longing to depart and to be with Christ, which made life a burden. And I was much tempted to destroy my health gradually. I also prayed for a consumption, or anything that would wear out or cut the thread of life, death was become so pleasant.

But now, glory be to my God, all these temptations are gone. I am willing to depart, yet willing to live as long as my Lord sees good. I find my will swallowed up in his will in all things. I have only to live *for* him and *to* him; to eat and drink, and do all I do to his glory.

I am,

Your affectionate servant,

P. Newman

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 434–37.

From Thomas Eden [Sr.]¹

Broad Marston
August 24, 1772

Reverend Sir,

I have great uneasiness on my mind for my son Thomas (being highly esteemed amongst the rich and great where he is), lest pride and forgetfulness should get a place in his heart. I wrote to him to come home. His answer was that he was at the house of a Justice of the Peace and enlarging his acquaintance, and so could not come! Please to write to him, in the most striking manner you possibly can, and press upon him meekness, humility, lowliness, and condescension to men of low estate; and to esteem other preachers better than himself.

When you get near the throne of mercy and love, please to remember him, with the rest of my family, not forgetting

Your aged, humble servant,

Thomas Eden

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 394.

¹This is the father of Thomas Eden (1750–97), who had written JW on Feb. 14, 1770. Thomas Eden Sr. (c. 1710–77) married Susannah Smith (1717–85) in Peabworth, the parish church for Broad Marston in 1736.

From Henry Eden¹

Broad Marston
August 27, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Some time past I have been considering the doctrine of Christian Perfection, searching my Bible, your sermons, etc.; from whence I cannot but infer that though the law made nothing perfect the bringing in of a better hope did. But I cannot see where the Lord has promised to do this for us in one moment. Those parables he advanced as the wheat, the mustard seed, etc., I think seem rather to speak to the contrary. As to the living witnesses, there is no doubt that we possess some measure of this sanctifying grace, and so as you observe does every believer, if they follow on to know the Lord, increasing therein day by day.

I cannot say, since preserved [by] that powerful manifestation from God, that I have been troubled with my corruptions as before. No doubt but at that time I was made a partake of more of the divine nature, and consequently enable to abide more in him from whom cometh life. And being taught to look unto him at the very approach of temptation, as far as I did so, was so far saved. I have been unsettled in my mind ever since I heard a sermon from Mr. [James] Cotty² wherein he said no person with the Bible in their hands could maintain instantaneous sanctification, and proved it so reasonable that I remember I was heartily grieved I had ever made such a profession. I have not spoke to anyone on this head since (by way of argument), but thought it better to apply unto you before I draw any conclusion, hoping you will be very explicit in your next.

[I] have been much profited of late under Mr. [John] Pawson's³ searching and salutary discourses. [I] find myself wanting in the sight of God, and have opened my mouth unto him, that he will neither let his hand spare nor his eye pity till all within me is brought into the obedience of Christ. I have reason to think my petitions were heard, and that I may be able to take this medicinal cup as it is offered, till my soul be restored to perfect soundness.

I expect if all is well, brother Harry will be at Bristol next Monday or Tuesday. If Tommy⁴ is with you, please to give my kind love to him. We want him at home. I hope, dear sir, you don't forget me before the God of all grace, and will permit me to make mention of you in my feeble prayers.

That the Lord may multiply you exceedingly, and continue you a defender of the faith, is the sincere desire of, dear sir,

Your very much obliged, unworthy,

H. E.

Address: 'The Rev. Mr. J. Wesley / Bristol'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'ad Sept. 4'.

Source: holograph; London, Wesley's Chapel, LDWMM 1994/1936.

¹Henry Eden (1743–81) of Broad Marston, another son of Thomas and Susannah (Smith) Eden.

²James Cotty (d. 1780) first appears in the Minutes as a traveling preacher in 1765 (see *Works*, 10:304). He served up to the time of his death (10:486). He was stationed in Gloucestershire in 1771–72.

³John Pawson was currently stationed as Assistant (or supervising preacher) in Bristol, but was also helping out in Gloucestershire, since John Ellis, the Assistant there died in Jan. 1772.

⁴Apparently his brother, Thomas Eden Jr.

From the Rev. Richard Moss

Harbour Island
September 16, 1772

Reverend Sir,

A few days ago I received your kind letter,¹ and count it a privilege to have an opportunity of telling you the cause of my heavy afflictions.

On the 26th of December 1741, I was married to M[ary] R[obinson], a widow²—not by choice; but partly by constraint. For she told me that if I did not come on that day and marry her, she would the next day poison herself and the child; and added, that she had the dose prepared, solemnly protesting she would not have a bastard. I being young and inexperienced believed her, and only to prevent her doing such a horrid thing, went and married her; and then left her the same day and came to London.

Sometime after I heard she had a son, who died; and that presently after she was brought to-bed, was married to an Irishman, who took her with him into Ireland. From that time I never heard of her being in England.

The reasons why I left her were: First, she betrayed me into sin at the time I committed it. Secondly, I could never love her. And thirdly, the day we were married she told me she had made herself miscarry before then, but could not do it now or she would not have troubled me. I asked, 'When?' She said when her first husband died she was with child, and then she made herself miscarry. Which, when I heard, completed my resolution of leaving her. This, sir, is the naked truth, which I never desired to lessen or darken. I have spoken of it to several persons, before ever I spoke to Mr. J[ohnson]'s daughter concerning marriage.³

Now, Sir, supposing M[ary] R[obinson] had been my wife (which strictly speaking she was not; for I never cohabited with her after marriage), the laws of England do not condemn any man for marrying again if his wife goes and stays beyond the sea for seven years together, even if he knows she is alive (Burn's *Justice*, vol. iii. Page 248).⁴ But it was more than seven years that she was beyond sea before I married again. Therefore the laws of my country do not condemn me. Neither does the word of God blame a man for marrying again, if his wife is known to commit whoredom. Now suppose, M[ary] R[obinson] to have been my wife, for as much as she went away and lived with another man as his wife, without doubt she lived in whoredom. Therefore the word of God does not condemn me.

Notwithstanding this, I am deeply sensible that the sin of my youth has brought great reproach upon religion. For which I cannot forgive myself. Dear sir, pray for me, and favour me with your opinion and advice in this matter, so you will lay, under still great obligations,

Your most unworthy servant,

R. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 489–90.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²The record of Richard Moss marrying Mary Robinson in Middlewich, Cheshire on Dec. 26, 1741 survives.

³Moss married Hannah Johnson in 1752.

⁴Richard Burn, *The Justice of the Peace, and Parish Officer*, 10th edn. (London: Woodfall & Strahan, 1766), 3:248 (on polygamy).

From Joanna (Cooke) Turner¹

Trowbridge
September 17, 1772

Very Dear and Honoured Sir,

Forgive me the freedom I take in writing. I know that I am the weakest, abundantly less than the least of all saints. Yet is this grace given me to know that Christ is mine and I am his; and all his dear people, real believers, his mystical body, of all denominations, are mine and I am theirs. The same blessed Spirit that joins us to our Head, sweetly unites us all in one.

Glory be to God, although I am the weakest member, yet I am exceedingly comforted with a sense of his love—and the desire of my soul is that it may be in deed and in truth, and not in word only. Touched with a live coal from the heavenly altar, my spirit cries, ‘Send me, Lord. Send me on any errand. Only give me the power, and command what thou wilt. For I can do nothing without thee; but can do all things through thy strength.’

I am not, my dear sir, one of your society. Nor do I see in all things as you do. But I dare not think lightly of you on that account. I should grieve the Spirit of God, were I to do this, and should certainly suffer for it. I find that I must walk according to the light which the Lord hath given me, which is but a little. Yet I hope that you will bear with me. My soul exceedingly rejoices in the Lord, and while this is the case it is easy to bear the cross of that diversity of opinions which is found in the church of God, and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. O, how truly blessed!

One thing which has been greatly blest to me has been to speak as little as possible of lesser matters, and determining to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. But although I have been preserved from vain reasonings, yet permit me to pour out my soul to you, as to a father in Christ. I have the deepest anguish of soul, and my tears flow afresh when I think of it, that the redeemed of the Lord should be at variance; that the sheep of Christ's fold, yea that the most blessed among his followers should speak and write against each other.² O for an out-pouring of the Spirit! O for a day of Pentecost, so as to heal us, that although we cannot all meet together in one place, yet we may all love one another with a pure heart fervently!

Do, my dear sir, endeavour to bring this about, and I will strive to hold up your hands with all the power that the Lord shall give me. Surely wounding a member of Christ is wounding one's self, and cannot be for the glory of God, inasmuch as it occasions the enemies of religion to say, ‘There, there, so would we have it.’ Did we but all humble ourselves before the Lord, what a sweet uniting spirit would he pour out upon us! Prejudice would die away, and divine love would flow into our hearts. It is Satan's work to divide and destroy. But were we united as we ought, the Lord would make us terrible as an army with banners to our grand enemy. This love would cheer the hearts of individuals. And how truly amiable would societies appear, were this anti-christian spirit cast out and all of us more closely united to Christ the living vine. And then should we be fruitful in all good works. How happy would this make the close of life to you, to see the ancient times return, when all were of one heart and mind. I think I could suffer anything for this love. The Lord knows my heart. I would be as a child that is weaned to everything

¹Joanna Cooke (1732–84) was the daughter of a well-to-do clothier named John Cooke and Honour (Shrapnell / Coles) Cooke, and the cousin of Elizabeth Johnson of Bristol, one of JW's devout class leaders. In 1766 she married Thomas Turner of Trowbridge. On a visit to London Joanna was drawn into the evangelical revival and eventually aligned with Whitefield and the Calvinist Methodists, helping form a society in Trowbridge and build a Tabernacle there. See Mary Wells, *The Triumph of Faith over the World ... exemplified in ... Mrs. Joanna Turner* (Bristol, 1787).

²Turner is writing in the context of the debate over the 1770 Minutes.

besides. I think I could bear to have my very eyes plucked out, to have every breach among the children of God healed, so that nothing but the pure Spirit of Christ might live and reign in his members. And if I could willingly die for this, shall I omit any means in my power to bring about so desirable an end? I hope the Lord will succeed this very feeble attempt, and that he will strengthen you to bear with me, and enable you so to act, as to be the happy instrument of healing the wounds of our Sion.

I am, honoured sir,

Your unworthy but affectionate servant,

Joanna Turner

Source: published transcription; *Methodist Magazine* 21 (1798): 46–47.

From Samuel Wells¹

Wallingford
October 10, 1772

Reverend Sir,

I am conscious I am but a child, and that the thoughts of my heart, however sincere, may be weak and foolish. Yet I cannot suppose I run any risk in exposing them to *you*. Therefore I shall make no farther apology for offering you the following hints.

When I consider the condition the whole world is in, as to religion, I am astonished! I see myself in an evil world—a world of immortals, the greater part of whom are regardless of their eternal happiness or misery! I consider, Who lives as a probationer for eternity? It is plain the men of the world do not. No, nor all religious men, for the greater part of them are busied in doubtful disputations, and even deny the truth 'as it is after godliness'.² I believe it is not the will of God that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth. But I cannot expect that this will be effected by any other instruments than such as maintain this truth—viz., that nothing else than being created anew in Christ Jesus will be of any avail to us.

If these are the principles of the Methodists, I am led to enquire: Do *we* who preach them live and act according to them? Let me answer for myself. I am conscious that God seeth the secrets of my heart. But it is often a dull consciousness thereof, else I could never be guilty of trifling conversation, but all my words would be spoken as in his presence. Indeed this *sometimes* the case, and if it were always so it would be (as it is at times) full of the power of God. I know God then owns his word. It is no longer I that speak, but the Spirit of my Father that speaketh in me. The greater sinner am I that I do not always so believe and act. If I believe that the grace of God is sufficient to perfect *me*, and *all* who believe, in every good word and work, am I consistent with myself? Sometimes I think I am. Sometimes I fear I am not. When I am, I not only do nothing which I feel would offend God, but I feel impelled to press everyone I converse with to this also. If I were always what I ought to be, I should abound more and more in the Spirit of faith, and loving obedience, and in all usefulness to others. I believe much of this Spirit hath been given me sometimes; but often have I sinned it away, or sunk back from his goodness by unbelieving fears.

But I consider again, What are my brethren in the Lord doing? Some of them I believe are *all devoted* to him, but I fear not all. Many of them are men of superior endowments. But is their behaviour such as it ought to be? I would ask the same questions about them as I have about myself, but I hardly dare. And yet my heart is full. I will venture to speak a little. I fear though I wander so much, some wander more. Our word is too often a mere insipid repetition of doctrinal truths, our conversation sometimes mere impertinence.

Nay, I sometimes have thought that you, sir, might do more than you do in promoting the cause of Christian perfection. I do not remember that in conversation, or by letter, you ever pressed me to expect deliverance from all the carnal mind, except once in a letter and once when you met the class at Cheltenham; though you have exhorted me to press others to it. And yet I think you have given me, one way or another, far more encouragement than any other preacher in your connection; though some of them have not been altogether neglectful of their duty neither. But dear sir, would it not animate us

¹Samuel Wells (c. 1745–79), a native of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, was admitted into the Methodist itinerant ministry on trial in 1769, and granted full status as a travelling preacher the following year (see *Works*, 10:366, 379). He served faithfully until his death on Nov. 27, 1779. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 449–52.

²Cf. Titus 1:1.

exceedingly if you encouraged us yet more?

Suffer me to mention another thing that occurs to my mind. I sometimes fear that the very ill treatment you have met with from our predestinarian brethren, goes near to provoke your spirit at times; and if it does, it must necessarily hinder your spirituality and usefulness. I am sure you must be *more than human* if their conduct does not hurt you.

That God may guard you from all your enemies, and direct all your doings, is, dear sir, the fervent prayer of

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

Samuel Wells

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 394–96.

From Charles Perronet

Shoreham
October 15, 1772

Dear Sir,

I shall now relate a more particular account of our affairs than you have had before.

Our family settled here about five and forty years ago, and have been ever since oppressed by an unjust people. About four and thirty years we were an offence to the place on account of religion, and during the last twenty-six years have been their derision for the sake of Methodism. For *this* we glorify God. Let them cast out our name as evil. The *wicked* can profit the *righteous* only by persecution! It will make our reward great—if we are faithful to the end.

The plainness and simplicity of the people had been corrupted before our time, by two families that introduced *dress* and other luxuries.

The first seventeen years of Methodist preaching here, the smallness of the congregation and want of the life of religion made us the derision of them that hated us.

Things had long borne an unpromising appearance, and labour seemed all lost. *Then* the work *revived*, and still more so three years afterwards. But the chief increase has been the last three years. And now every day is bringing greater things to pass.

A year ago the offence of the gospel began to cease, and religion to be honourable. *Labour*, and *supplication*, and *sorrow*, and *reproach for Christ's sake* are *seed* for gospel harvest and spring up when our hope fails.

Our place contains above an hundred and fifty families; out of these about an hundred and fifty persons attend the word, including a few from other parts. And so intent are they upon hearing that such as cannot get within will bear the severity of all weathers without.

The heads of the parish begin to come, and others that were the most inveterate. And one and all bear such plainness of speech that gives hope of fruit in due season. Some that had sat long under the word to no profit are awakened, backsliders return to the society, and a low degree of benevolence to the poor begins to appear. Vice hides its head with shame, and those that before made us their derision fly at the sight of us.

Shoreham has been long both the aversion and desire of the neighbouring parishes. Such as loved righteousness thought that to live in Shoreham was all that could be desired and would take any pains to spend if but a day with us. But the haters of religion shunned it and cried, 'You will be made mad.'

The reformation seen in some of the most notorious is talked of by many. The wicked begin to own our design must be good, and that the place ought to profit more by the pains taken with it. If any seem near their end, their ungodly friends enquire whether they are fit to die, and advise them to turn Methodists, as the best thing for dying well. And some that came into great trouble sent with tears to beg our prayers. Such is the saving efficacy of Jesus, that where his name is preached it diffuses grace to those who are far from God. And they that seem not to regard, yet show they honour righteousness and learn to be afraid to die in sin.

Out of three public houses, three receive us to pray in their families. Many children delight in hearing the word and being privately instructed. The schools, one of boys, the other girls, have begun prayer, singing hymns, and religious instruction. Instead of their former rudeness to us, the children are in great awe. And those that can scarce walk delight to pay respect. [unfinished]

Source: published transcription; *Methodist Magazine* 22 (1799): 107–08.

From Christiana Simpson

Aberdeen
October 17, 1772

Honoured Sir,

I had been advised by my brother, as well as others, which made me mention my objections to him. Those your generous offer has more than answered.¹ It is too much! How shall I support the infinite obligation? Pray, excuse me, my heart is full. I can say no more. I am ready to go to London when and how you please, upon a week's advertisement. If it were the will of heaven, I could wish it to be while Mr. Wesley is in London. Then indeed I should be too happy. Lord Jesus, keep me humble! I am less than nothing before God. The more of his goodness I feel, the more of my own weakness I feel also. My will is broke, and my constant cry is 'Thy will alone be done.' I am even willing to live, which was formerly my greatest burden. I cannot write. O that I could throw myself at your feet, that by some means or other I might find ease to the labouring breath of, honoured sir,

Your grateful,

Christian Simpson

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/73.

¹JW apparently had offered to support her spending time in London studying music; see her letter of June 6, 1772 above.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
October 18, 1772

My Dear Sir,

A multiplicity of hindrances prevented my acknowledging the receipt of your last favour till now.¹ I left the Waterford society in a prosperous situation, but have found *this [society]* in a decline and in confusion. The sower of tares has got amongst them!² O how is it that the followers of Christ cannot speak, and think, and act in love?

Since my last I have been wading through deep waters. Many trials pressing hard on me, and all together, and so suited as to make them the more distressing. So that I have been at times ready to sink under their weight. And yet I think these very trials would not be so trying to another, and therefore that this is a mark of the want of grace in me. My ignorance and blindness is so great that I frequently know not whether I am right or wrong. But the Lord my God knows that the desire of my soul is to do his will. He knows why he suffers me to be so closely exercised. I do not, I cannot, find fault with what he either does with or suffers upon me. But I would that he would give me more strength, and that his presence might be with me, for I feel it more than nature is able to support under, to bear the weight of inward and outward afflictions, and the absence of God altogether. His love is better than life, and under the cheering light of his countenance, I could suffer anything. But for some time past this has been eclipsed, except at short and seldom intervals. My desire is that he himself would search out the cause, and [I] think my heart lies open and honest before him. He knows I would not be deceived, and that all in heaven or earth cannot satisfy without himself.

I feel a consolation in thus spreading my state before you, and am thankful to God for this privilege. Had I such an opportunity as I long for, I could say much which I cannot commit to paper. But as the Lord in mercy to us has spared your useful life, and restored to you a measure of health, shall we not see you next summer? May we expect it? ...

I have had some late opportunities of Mrs. Dawson. I think her in a happy state. But the distress of my mind has made these opportunities fewer than otherwise they would be. ... I know Satan desires to sift me as wheat, and I am content to undergo the winnowing, so I lose only the chaff. My soul, with all the feeble power it has, hangs upon the Lord and [I] hope he will again restore to me the joy of his salvation. O pray for

Your weak unworthy sister,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 77–79.

¹See JW to Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis, Aug. 31, 1772.

²Likely referring to James Deaves (see Bennis to JW, Aug. 8, 1732)

From Mary Bishop

Bath
October 25, 1772

Reverend Sir,

Your last was a word in season.¹ I have been enabled to take your advice, and the Lord has graciously blessed my weak efforts, and made my exercises far less than usual.

You will be glad to hear that we have a prospect of good days. Our [preaching] room is crowded, and the congregation in general sinks under the word, and finds it attended with the Spirit's demonstrative power. Mrs. H. (whose husband keeps an inn) and her sister, and two Ladies of their acquaintance, have been at my class, when Mrs. G. met it, and found it a means of grace. I believe they intend to continue. I find their souls inexpressibly dear to me. But was I not kept thankfully conscious that it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, I should sink at the thought of having them to watch over. O who knows the worth of souls? Who can point out the ten thousand, thousand, subtle snares that hinder spiritual prosperity? What piercing eye can discover? What tongue warn them to shun all the *little, little* foxes? I see my duty as a leader is *very great*; and often fear I shall not at the last give up my account with joy.

Will you, sir, be so kind as to give me some instructions herein, and lay down such rules as will facilitate the practice of them. It is what I very much need. And it will, I trust, be of use to me not only now, but perhaps when your spirit is returned to God. I often think I shall regret my not asking you more questions, gaining more help, and more frequently using, and more faithfully improving, the opportunities you so kindly put into my hands. Indeed I should be glad to write much oftener, did my time admit. But the children demand almost the whole of it, and I cannot in conscience steal it from them. No, I did not leave them even to hear you preach here (at noon)², which you may well suppose was not a little piece of self-denial. I endure many heartaches through fear that they will not improve to their parents' satisfaction. O may my life be such as will show forth his praise!

'It is but right that I should live to him who died for me.'³ I know I need every motive to urge me so to do. For some days past the Holy Ghost has made use of that, 'Fear him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell.'⁴ It seems a strange one to *me*; but I am willing to accept and use any motive that leads to that great end—*entire devotion to God*. Life appears a mere vapour! Time exceeding precious. Every morning I purpose to improve it. But upon retrospection at night, I find I have broke my rule. You sir, seem to have found the happy art of keeping it. Help me by your prayers and directions to do the same in my small sphere of action, and permit me to subscribe myself

Your willing and obedient servant.

M. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 437–39.

¹JW to Mary Bishop, Aug. 22, 1772.

²JW had preached in Bath the second week of September in 1772 (see *Works*, 22:348).

³Cf. 2 Cor., 5:15.

⁴Luke 12:5.

From the Rev. Lawrence Coughlan

Harbour Grace, Newfoundland
November 4, 1772

Reverend Sir,

I bless God, my poor labours in this land have been attended with some little success. Some precious souls are gone to glory, and a few more are walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

I am now in the seventh year of my servitude as missionary, at the end of which I hope to return to England. Could I travel up and down in this land, so as to be useful any longer, I would gladly stay. But as I cannot, except by water, in small boats, I am not able to stand it.

I am, and do confess myself, a Methodist. The name I love, and hope I ever shall. The plan which you first taught me, I have followed, as to doctrine and discipline. Our married men meet apart once a week, and the married women do the same. This has given great offence, so that repeated complaints have been made to the governor. But truth is mighty, and will prevail.

In the winter I go from house to house and expound some part of God's word. This has also given great offence. 'But God is above men, devils and sin.'¹

The Society,² I make no doubt, have many complaints against me. But in this I shall commit all to God, for I am conscious to myself that what I do is for the glory of God and the good of souls. We have the sacrament once a month, and have about two hundred communicants. This is more than all the other missionaries in the land have. Nor do I know of any who attend our sacrament who have not the fear of God, and some are happy in his love. There are some also whose mouths God hath opened to give a word of exhortation. I hope he will raise up more.

About this time twelve-months [hence] I hope to be on my passage for England. If I come by the way of Ireland, I should like to see my old friends there. I shall be glad to know if it will be agreeable to you for me to speak in your societies.

I beg leave to ask you one thing more. Having served the Society seven years, as their missionary, upon my return to England, with a strong testimonial from my parish, is the Society obliged to find me a living? And if I could get a place in the Church [of England], would you advise me to accept of it? If I know my own heart I would be where I could be most useful. To be shut up in a little parish church, and to conform in every little thing for sixty or a hundred pounds a year, I would not; no, nor even for a thousand.

My talents, you very well know sir, are but small; so that to be shut up here any longer will not do. I am sure it is high time that I should be removed. Who God will provide for this people I know not. But he opens and none can shut. I have informed good Lady Huntingdon of my coming next year. Her plan is somewhat agreeable to me—this is, in going from one place to another. Yet there is one thing wanting—viz., discipline; which I look upon, under God, has been the preserving of my society. My preaching in this land would do but little good, were it not for our little meetings.

A line from you next spring will be very acceptable, to reverend and dear sir,

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

L. Coughlan

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 490–92.

¹CW, 'The Good Fight', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 137.

²Coughlan was in Newfoundland under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

From Ann Bolton

[Witney]

November 22, 1772

Reverend and Honoured Sir,

I assure [you] it has not been want of inclination to write that has prevented your hearing from me, but an unusual hurry of business, and at intervals indisposition of body—partly, it may [be], the consequence of the former. Henceforward I expect to get more leisure for these purposes.

I thank you for your seasonable reminder and kind cautions respecting the mystic writers.¹ I desire to walk in the most perfect way, [and] am therefore glad to be pointed and hope to adhere to those helps that lead most directly into. I was much delighted with your observation that I should find no other religion then that described by our Lord in his Sermon on the Mount and summed up by the apostle in thirteenth [chapter] to the Corinthians. At reading the words my heart entirely acquiesced in it. I beheld infinite happiness comprised therein, yea the height and depth of Christian holiness. My soul fed while I viewed its riches, and all my internal powers rejoiced with reverence. What greatly enhanced my joy was a feeling since that a measure of each of these graces were already given, and that I doubted not but the whole would be accomplished in me. I see a beauty and excellence in holiness such as words cannot describe. My soul acknowledges it is worthy her most vigorous pursuit, both for its own intrinsic value as well as for the respect it has to a glorious immortality.

I have good news to tell you respecting the Lord here. The time you spent among us was not in vain.² One who had been seeking redemption in the blood of Jesus about six months was, while you prayed after [the] sermon, enabled to believe and rejoice in the love of God. The Sunday following, while my brother [Edward Bolton] was meeting his class, three mourners were comforted with the witness of salvation from the guilt of sin; and two in another found the same blessing at the same hour. By conversing with many of our people after, I understood it had been a time of great revival among them, that there was a solemn festival to their souls. There appeared to be a general awakening to more of the divine life. And for my own part, I think I never experienced so much power to live *to* and *in* God at any time of your being here before. I was enabled to say in the midst of my little engagements

Careful without care I am
Nor feel my happy toil
Kept in peace through Jesus' name
Supported by his smile³

Thanks be to God for his goodness to my dear mother.⁴ She certainly lives nearer to God then ever. My brother also enjoys more power and purity in his soul then ever before.

I am, dear sir,

Your much obliged servant,

A. Bolton

Source: Bolton's manuscript letter-book, privately held by the Bolton family in Pudlicote, Oxfordshire (transcribed by Cindy Aalders).

¹See JW to Ann Bolton, Oct. 25, 1772.

²JW had visited Witney on Oct. 20, 1772 (see his *Journal, Works*, 22:349).

³CW, 'For a Believer in Worldly Business', st. 2, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 7.

⁴Sarah (Beecham) Bolton (1717–90), who married Edward in Feb. 1741.

From Hannah Frances Owen¹

Publow
November 23, 1772

Reverend Sir,

How great are the blessings which so unworthy a family enjoy through your means! Therefore the unfeigned gratitude and esteem with which I address you cannot be fully expressed.

I have reason to think you wish to hear of our spiritual welfare. I trust my honoured mother daily grows in grace, while my sisters firmly maintain their ground. As for myself, alas! I am still hindermost in the glorious race. I am often groaning, 'All my nature teems with ill.'² Nevertheless, I have of late been favoured with much divine enjoyment.

As for our school, we have cause to thank you for it. Because if it had not been for your encouragement, I think we should not have undertaken it. However, the Lord is so at work among the children that we have cause to be thankful on account of *every one of them*. One indeed is, against her will, lately taken from us *for having too much religion!* But it is given to her, in behalf of Christ, *to rejoice as well as to suffer for his sake*.

As several of our children's parents are not so spiritual, and consequently are pleased with trifles, we have, by way of encouragement, taught the children to make artificial flowers, net-work, and little pieces of embroidery. But as it is possible we may be wrong in this, we beg your opinion of the matter. In so doing you will greatly oblige us all, particularly

Your friend and servant,

F. Owen

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 551–52.

¹John Owen (d. 1779), who made his fortune as a shipping agent in Portsmouth, and his wife Hannah (c. 1720–85), retired in 1772 to Publow, Somerset. Hannah and her children ran a boarding school for girls in Publow for several years. JW had recently visited this school and compared it favourably with that which had been started by Mary Bosanquet (see *Journal*, Sept. 15, 1772, *Works*, 22:348). Hannah's children included Elizabeth (1746–1803), who would marry William Pine of Bristol in 1790; Hannah Frances (1748–1820), who would marry John Ford in Publow in 1779; Mary (1751–1809), who would marry Joseph Beardmore in London in 1776; and John (1752–1824), who was currently a student at Oxford and would become Archdeacon of Richmond. The writer of this letter is the daughter Hannah Frances Owen.

²Cf. CW, 'Galatians 3:22', st. 3, *HSP* (1739), 92: 'All my nature teems with hell'.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
December 1, 1772

Dear Sir,

Blessed be my God. Through many and grievous trials, he does still support and uphold a feeble worm. He does perfect his strength in my weakness, and enables me to pursue my way, determined by his grace to follow him, whithersoever he shall lead me. But I think in this I do not enjoy that measure of sweetness and delight which others do.

However distressing it may be to consider you as a disabled soldier,¹ the expectation of seeing you here again, gives me much satisfaction. May the Lord prosper your way, and make your coming a blessing to all.

Our society is once more re-adjusted. We all seem to be in love, and in earnest. Captain [Thomas] Webb's visit has proved a blessing.² Our house was not large enough for the congregations. Many outward hearers seem under awakenings. If we could now have a succession of strange preachers from the neighbouring circuits, perhaps poor Limerick might once more raise its head. I am, my dear sir,

Your affectionate sister,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 80–81.

¹Referring to JW's need to restrict his riding, due to his groin injury; see JW to Bennis, Nov. 3, 1772, *Works*, 28:524–25.

²JW had commended Thomas Webb to Bennis in his letter of Nov. 3, 1772.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[[Bristol]]
[[December 8, 1772]]

[[Dear Brother,]]

F[rancis] O[akley]'s *abundans cautela nocet*.¹ You are undoubtedly called both to write and preach against antinomianism, alias Calvinism. I doubt the temper and discretion of some of your preachers, particularly of T[homas] O[livers]—*your tenth legion*.²

The time was not fully come before. God has in his own best time raised up John Fletcher. He is Talus with his iron flail³—and has, in his *Fourth Check*, committed the unpardonable sin—against John Calvin.⁴ His last book one would think enough to turn the very elect into diabolonians;⁵ i.e., election-doubters.

If the people cannot be kept from Calvinism but by leaving the Church, I am sorry for it. They only verify the Bishop of Cork's words to me, 'You may get the people out of the house, but you can never get them into it again.' Most of them I believe, both hearers and preachers, have lost the *στοργή*,⁶ if they ever had it.

[[Your Captain [Thomas Webb] has done much good; because God sends by whom he will. He is a strange man, and very much of an enthusiast. Can not you persuade him to keep his abundance of visions and revelations to himself? At least not to publish them indifferently to all?

[[I have heard him myself. He has much life and zeal, though [is] far from being a clear or good preacher. I believe you may depend upon his account of America.

[[We all send love to you both.

[[I want my passport, and nothing else.

[[Have you seen Dr. Ford?⁷]]

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr Wesley / at the Foundery / London'.

Postmark: '11/DE'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Dec. 8, 1772 / a[nswe]r[d] 15'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 4/66.

¹'Abundant caution does harm.' Oakley had advised JW not to speak against Calvinism, leading JW to write on Dec. 5 (a letter that does not survive), and Oakley's response on Dec. 10 (see below).

²The Tenth Legion was a Roman legion levied personally by Caesar, and his most trusted. CW is responding to Thomas Olivers, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. Toplady* (London: E. Cabe, 1771).

³In Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Talus goes round the island of Crete chastising offenders with an iron flail in the execution of justice.

⁴Fletcher, *Logica Genevensis; or a Fourth Check to Antinomianism* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1772).

⁵In John Bunyan's *Holy War* this is the name of those allied with Diabolus (the devil).

⁶'Zeal' [for the Church of England].

⁷Rev. Dr. Thomas Ford (1742–1821) received his MA from Christ Church, Oxford in 1765, and his LLD in 1770. He served for 47 years as vicar of Melton-Mowbray, in Leicestershire, and chaplain to Archbishop Secker. See John Ward, *Sketches of Wesleyan Methodism in Melton Mowbray and the Circuit* (Melton Mowbray: J. Towne, 1874), 9ff.

From the Rev. Francis Okeley

Northampton¹
December 10, 1772

Reverend Sir,

I received your favour of the 5th,² and assure you that the loving freedom you use is not disagreeable to me. Were *this* more practised, it would be a good means of leading us more out of all error, and into all truth; nay, it would, in concurrence with the Holy Spirit, keep us in the truth and prevent all error.

I also assure you, with the utmost sincerity, that the Bible is my choicest book—and that too in practice more than in profession. I am not conscious of having any meaning of a single text, but what I believe the Holy Ghost intended by it. And for that purpose I read and pray daily for the true meaning of it. Let other spiritual languages, or dialects of our day, be what they will; I cannot regard them as being better than that of Christ and his apostles. If I weight myself, or others, in any other balance than that of the sanctuary [i.e., the word of God], I am not conscious of it. But knowing my own spiritual blindness and fallibility, I am thankful to anybody, and especially to Mr. John Wesley for putting me upon so beneficial a trial. Whatever sweet things any other person may say about being nothing, and how much soever they may exalt themselves under so specious a cloak, I can assure my dear Mr. Wesley with truth that I have no such intention. I really mean to become nothing, as a deliverance from all unhappiness, that Christ may be all in all to me; to be crucified daily to myself, that he may live in me; which is, I heartily allow, an humble, gentle, patient mind—and that such [persons] walk as he walked, and to the utmost of their power do good unto all men. How far this prevails in me, becomes me not to say. I know I have some little experience of it, and daily sigh after more.

Baron Swedenborg is to me a riddle.³ Certainly, as you say, he speaks many great and important truths; and as certainly seems to me to contradict Scripture in other places. But, as he told me, I could not understand his *Vera Religio Christiana* without a divine illumination.⁴ And I am obliged to confess that I have not yet a sufficiency of it for that purpose. I am thankful my present course does not seem absolutely to require it. We conversed in the high Dutch, and notwithstanding the impediment in his speech, I understood him well. He spoke with all the coolness and deliberation you might expect from any, the most sober and rational man. Yet what he said was out of my sphere of intelligence, when he related his fight of, and daily conversation in, the world of spirits, with which he declared himself better acquainted than with this.

I heartily wish that all the *real* designs which an omnipotent and omniscient God of love might have, either by him or by any other of his sincere servants of whatsoever sort or kind, may be truly obtained. May his kingdom come, and his will be done once in earth, as it is done in heaven!

I thought it proper to express thus much in answer to yours, without desiring you to adopt any of my sentiments.

I am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate brother,

¹Orig., 'Upton'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Emanuel Swedenborg (1668–1772), a Swedish native who had gained fame for his mystical theology.

⁴The Latin title for Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion: containing the Universal Theology of the New Church* (London: J. Phillips, 1770).

F. Okeley

P.S. Indeed you say well that love is the fulfilling of the law; viz., the loving God with all our heart, etc., and our neighbour as ourselves, according to St. Paul's description of charity, 1 Cor. 13, and our Saviour's sermon on the Mount. And I really believe, that if he and his apostles were again on earth, and all we, the different awakened professors of his religion, were to be addressed by him and them, they would say, 'Dear souls, love one another. Bear with and forbear one another, till you can all be made perfect in one.'

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 552–54.

From the Rev. John Rees¹

Llangrannog [Cardiganshire, Wales]
December 18, 1772

Reverend Sir,

By living in a remote corner of Wales, I never yet had the happiness of seeing you. But I have often heard of your name, and read some of your writings; and received great satisfaction particularly from your confutation of Dr. [John] Taylor's treatise on original sin.

You must know, sir, that I live in a neighbourhood where there is more noise about religion than practice. Some are of the opinion of Dr. Taylor, and will cry up reason as sufficient. Others again say that there is a determinate number predestinated to salvation from all eternity, and that these will be saved and none else; which doctrine indeed puzzles me a great deal.

I live also within less than thirty miles of the famous Mr. Daniel Rowland, whom I admire as an extraordinary preacher, and doubt not of his being very useful in Wales. Yet most of his followers are too ready to pass an uncharitable sentence on all who differ from them. I am sure I should love them dearly was it not for this.

I should be obliged to you to direct me where I may have such of your books as explain these points. For although I have a wife and small family, and little money to bestow upon books, yet I would purchase a few volumes of your recommending.

I have been told of a pamphlet you have published, wherein you say a pagan may be saved, provided he lives up to the advantages he has received. I wish I could see it. But before I do, I dare say you have asserted nothing but what is agreeable to reason and revelation, particularly to what is said by the great apostle of the Gentiles.

God grant me a spirit of charity towards them and all men. For what am I but sinful dust and ashes, who am not worthy to open my unhallowed mouth against any man! We have all work enough (if we would but do it) to preach against the vices of this degenerate age. Wishing you still great success in so doing,

I remain, reverend sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

John Rees

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 604–05.

¹Rev. John Rees was vicar of Llandysiliogogo with Llangrannog from 1765–90.

From Robert Swindalls

Cork
January 1, 1773

Last Monday our dear friend Mr. Pigot, made a very happy change.

A little before his departure (having prayed with him) I asked how he felt himself? He answered, 'My flesh and heart faileth. But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.'¹ I said, 'Are you, my dear friend, looking to Jesus by faith?' He replied, 'I am viewing him on the cross, dying in my stead.' Then he added the following words (which were the last he was heard to speak),

'Jesus shows his mercy mine,
And whispers, I am his!'²

'My dear man, follow me, and we will praise God and the Lamb to all eternity. I am near my rest; and when I arrive there, Jesus will say, this is a brand which I have plucked out of the fire!'

He had a sense of pardon six weeks before, but was *greatly* tempted to *doubt* and *fear*. But he is now with the Lord. Hallelujah! Amen.

Robert Swindalls

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 79–80.

¹Ps. 73:26.

²Cf. Isaac Watts, 'God our Light in Darkness', st. 3 as included by JW in *CPH* (1738), 36.

From Duncan Wright

Dundee
January 15, 1773

Catharine Lions was but a child when the Methodists came first to Dundee; but from the time she first heard them, she never left them. She seemed to have the fear of God from her infancy, and was always remarkable for a meek and quiet spirit.

When I came to Dundee in 1769 she had many tastes of the love of God, but could not say he was reconciled to her. I advised her and another young woman to meet in a trial band. They had not done so long till they both could rejoice in the love of God.

After this she suffered a little by inordinate affection but soon got the better of it, resolving Jesus should be 'the monarch of her simple heart'.¹ By taking care (in the nighttime) of a young child last spring she got a cold, which soon threw her into a consumption. But she never discovered any uneasiness or impatience in all her sufferings, but was always sweet and serene. Several of her relations had used various methods formerly to make her leave the society. But though she was the most easy to be entreated of any I ever knew in Scotland, yet in her adherence to the people of God she was inflexible. 'O', said she to one who was frequently with her when she was ill, 'what would my conscience say to me now, had I been advised to leave the society!'

From the time she was seized with her last illness, she determined to love God with all her heart, and would not be easy without it. Accordingly she applied to him with all her might, and soon had the petitions she asked of him. I came to Dundee to see her the night before she expired, and found her quite composed and full of joy.

On asking her, 'Do you find your heart now entirely set at liberty?' 'O yes', said she; 'it is quite loose from all below!' I said but little to her then, not being willing to fatigue her, and hoping to have another opportunity. But that evening the doctor said he did not think she could outlive the night. This being told her, she said, 'Then this will be the happy night.' She said but little to her dear friend Mrs. P., who happened to be then with her. But to another she said, 'Satan and I have had a sore struggle this night, but I am more than conqueror.' Towards morning she said, 'Did you not say, this would be the happy night?' After this she lay quiet till about 6:00 in the evening, when she departed this life without a sigh or groan, and went to him whom her soul loved, to behold his face in righteousness and to worship before him forever and ever!

Duncan Wright

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 137–39.

¹Cf. CW, Hymn 34, st. 5, *HSP* (1749), 2:46.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
January 23, 1773

Dear Sir,

The first day of this month was kept by this society, and by all the societies in the three neighbouring circuits, as a day of fasting and prayer, to intercede with God for a revival of his work. It was indeed a solemn day. And at the renewal of the covenant at night, God did hear prayer and wonderfully manifested himself in the midst of us. I think many will remember it long. Since then our congregations are increased, seventeen added to the society, nine of which are justified, and seven of our old members profess to be renewed in love. The prayer-meetings are re-established, and our preachers are liked and beloved as holy zealous men. Why are not fast days more frequent among the Methodists in general? I have observed that God always particularly blesses such times here, and why not elsewhere?

I find that the Lord is indeed my portion, and he does enable me to press after him through many hindrances. I see there is no standing still, and am ashamed I have loitered so long. May he help me to double my diligence. This by his grace is my determination. Yet I am so well acquainted with my own extreme weakness that I cannot promise for myself one hour. Hitherto my God hath helped me, and in him is all my dependance. Past mercies encourage me to trust him for future support, and his faithfulness strengthens my confidence. I see myself a poor weak helpless creature; poor beyond description! And this view drives me to the Lord Jesus, whose fullness alone I find sufficient for all my wants. And my whole soul acquiesces and is thankful for this gracious glorious method of salvation. O that the obedience of my life might testify my gratitude, and my heart return love for love. But here I fail; in both I am miserably deficient, and cannot say I am at all satisfied with myself. Yet when the power of faith is strong, this brings me again to the same place, so that I am not the poorer for my poverty. Christ is my refuge, and my soul hides under his merit, and leaves the whole to him. Thus I am supported with strength not my own, and live wholly on the bounty of another. And while I expect nothing from myself, I am not disappointed. Could I always be able thus to exercise my faith, I should always be happy. But O my blindness. What labyrinths am I too often led into by my own ignorance. Dear sir, continue to instruct one of the weakest that applies to our common Father, and to you as his special messenger for counsel.

Your truly affectionate sister,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 82–85.

From Sarah Crosby

Cross Hall [Morley, Yorkshire]
January 26, 1773

I own I have been long silent to your important questions,² though not for want of regard, but travelling and many engagements prevented my having the quiet, undisturbed time for reading over the *Plain Account of Perfection*, which I thought was quite needful in order to answer you justly and particularly. But now I can assure you with a pleasing satisfaction that I was blessed in reading it, finding it solid food for my soul. But when that tract was first published, I did not altogether see with my own eyes, so did not fully approve.

Though there is one word which I have heard many express their dislike of, nor can I say that I like it. You say, 'The most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their *actual transgressions*.'³ Would it not have been less exceptionable in some other words? As, 'for their transgressions through ignorance', which I humbly presume, dear sir, is your meaning? Pardon the liberty I have taken in thus writing to my truly honoured father.

I think I can likewise assure you my judgment is the same now that it was ten years ago or more, unless for that space of time wherein I preferred S[arah] R[yan]'s judgment to my own, and to speak simply, I preferred it to everybody's. But I believe there is some difference in my judgment now from what it was twenty years past.

It is now twenty-three years since I felt a want of something more than I had, having been justified near six months. But the predestinarians made perfection to appear such a bugbear, I was affrighted at the thought of it, yet continued to be very uneasy at times. When reading your sermon on perfection⁴ I said, provided this is what Mr. Wesley means by perfection, this is what I want, and I believe God can and that he will make me thus perfect. And I can never rest until I attain it. After this time, I often thought of the only words I remembered in your sermon, the first time I heard you, which were, 'If it is possible for God to give us a little love, is it not possible for him to fill us with love?' I then answered in my heart, 'Yes; it is possible, but he won't do it.' But now my language was changed, and I often said, 'Lord it is possible! O that you would fill my soul with love.'

Soon after this I told you my case. You gave me a ticket. O blessed time never to be forgotten by me. I now expected soon to be filled with pure love. And I felt great need of it, for my evil nature raged more than ever and I was very inexperienced in the knowledge of God or myself. I had constant need of saying,

Force my violence to be still.
Captivate my every thought,
Charm, and melt, and change my will,
And bring me down to naught.⁵

As I was now very simple, I freely and frequently expressed my desire and expectation and was willing to part with whatever could hinder my being closely united to Jesus. For my one desire was to love him perfectly. But I was often told I must have more knowledge of myself first. Till I believed so too, and have sometimes thought myself better for knowing more of my evil nature than those that were

²See JW to Sarah Crosby, Oct. 18, 1772.

³The section of *Plain Account* giving *Thoughts on Christian Perfection*, Q. 4., *Works*, 13:60.

⁴JW, Sermon 40, *Christian Perfection*, *Works*, 2:99–121.

⁵CW, 'After a Recovery', st. 2, *HSP* (1742), 71.

happy in Jesus, whom I thought did not know themselves.

And now my judgment was changed for near five years to come, wherein I laboured and prayed for a deeper and deeper knowledge of myself and a perfection that would save me from every natural infirmity and every deviation (though through ignorance) from the perfect law of God. At length the keen sense of want of constant union and communion with him, who was indeed the beloved of my soul, constrained me to cry mightily to him for help. For though I was favoured with much nearness to and communion with him at times, I knew not how any longer to bear the feeling of anything that I knew displeased him, though in a less degree than ever. And my prayers and tears were not in vain. For Jesus showed me that as he had answered for my actual transgressions in his own body on the tree, so he had answered for my original sin and for every deviation from the perfect law. He then gave my heart a power to believe him thus my whole Saviour, which I never could do before. And now I felt a peace come into my soul, superior to all I had ever known and which I could not tell how to explain, till it came as though someone had spoken. It is the peace that ruled the heart of Christ in the days of his flesh. There were many more particulars, which I haven't room for, and have acquainted you with many years ago. O may my every breath be praise.

And now my Lord instructed me as a little child, daily showing me how wrong my former judgment had been, from feeling myself still surrounded with various infirmities, and yet a sweet, constant union with him, which these did not interrupt nor would they have interrupted before but through want of faith. So that I now saw every failure in obedience was for want of more faith. And as I received freely, so I freely gave, labouring to show all with whom I conversed the way of faith more perfectly.

And thus I now believe and endeavour to practice, and have so believed from the time above mentioned. (Only when I observed the wrong use some made of what they called 'faith', and how likely many more were thus to err, I spoke more of the necessity and blessing of self-knowledge. And doubtless a blessing it is to know much of our own helplessness and natural tendencies to depart from the living God, which faith only, as the instrument, saves us from.)

But in answer to your question, dear sir, whether I now experience what I did then? I freely acknowledge I have not uninterruptedly enjoyed so great a degree of the glorious liberty wherewith Christ made me free sixteen years past, as I did then. For although I have been kept in many a close and sore trial and temptation, yet in others I think I have sunk below my privilege. And I have sometimes been drawn in some degree from my center, by preferring others' lights to my own. But gratefully do I praise my heavenly Father that I could never find my rest below this blessed mark. That is, loving God with all my redeemed powers and aiming to serve him the best I could.

And glory be to his ever adorable name, I now find him as precious and present with me as ever. He is the center of all my hopes, the end of my enlarged desires. I have no pursuits nor wishes but to please him, and no fears but to offend him. I would live to do his will, or I would die to see him. He knows I love him with a measure of the same love wherewith he has and does love me. And I know he will be my friend in life and death the same.

All my good comes from him. He is the life and strength of my soul and without him I can do nothing. Yea I am nothing. A poor, weak worm, helpless as infancy, and surrounded with numerous infirmities. Lord, help and humble me.

As one entirely unworthy your notice, dear sir, I commend myself to your prayers, wishing you all the blessings of the new covenant, with long life and life everlasting.

I remain with all due respect, in divine bonds,

Your affectionately obedient child and servant,

S. Crosby

Source: manuscript initial draft; Duke, Rubenstein, Sarah Crosby letter-book, 48–53.⁶

⁶A excerpt of this letter was published previously in *WHS* 27 (1949): 80.

From Mary Jones

[Bath]

January 30, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I received your letter with tears of thanksgiving, deeply feeling how utterly unworthy I am of the least favour from my heavenly Father, who pours down blessings upon me every moment. He still feeds me, and that continually with the manna of his love. Those indeed are kept in perfect peace whose minds are staid on him! He makes me lie down in green pastures, and leads me by the waters of comfort.

To what you ask I answer, I am every moment sensible of his loving presence. This makes all things pleasant. Not one of his commandments is grievous.

He is my King, and still I sit,
In willing bonds beneath his feet.¹

My soul is always so staid on God that whatever outward hurry I have to pass through, I find myself calm and easy, and often do my business without feeling it. O the length and breadth, the depth and height of the love of Jesus to an unworthy creature!

When worldly people are talking, I feel as one who has nothing to do with their conversation. Unless they speak to me, and then I say as little as possible. If they are good persons, let it be many or few, I feel an inward attention to the Spirit of God, that I may be enabled to digest what I hear and may profit thereby.

As to 'heaviness or lowness of spirits', I find none. My spirit was naturally light and trifling, yet haughty. But the Lord has brought it down. My comforts flow in an even stream, I never feel high flights of joy. But I feel my own nothingness, and God's goodness, more sensibly at some times than at others. And sometimes I feel as being shortly to be with him, whom my soul loveth. This sinks me into the dust before him, and makes me cry out, with him of old, 'I heard of thee before by the hearing of the ear. But now my eyes have seen thee, I abhor myself in dust and ashes.'²

As to my time, it is often with great difficulty that I can get a few moments for private prayer. But my heavenly Father abundantly makes it up to me, by drawing out my soul in mental prayer, even while I am labouring for the meat that perisheth. So that I can say with holy boldness I do pray without ceasing, as well as rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. I can through grace receive losses, weariness, pain, trials and persecutions, coldness of friends, and revilings of enemies with exactly the same composure as comforts and consolations—ever feeling that nothing happens but by the permission of my heavenly Father, who makes all things work together for my good.

The more I experience of the love of Jesus, the more do I feel my own wants and weakness. Indeed I now, more than ever, feel my want of Christ in all his offices: in particular, as my prophet, to teach me how to profit by every dispensation of his providence. I feel it is my privilege to persevere in holiness, still to press forward, to be more and more like my Jesus. I am ever learning how to love him more and serve him better; ever enquiring, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' And I find he does teach me, he does water me and keep me night and day. O pray for me that I may stand steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord!

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 606–07.

¹An adaptation of Isaac Watts, 'The Offices of Christ', st. 8, *CPH* (1738), 32

²Job 42:5–6.

From Samuel Wells

High Wycombe
February 4, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

My father tells me in his last letter,

My journey from Witney was a very pleasant one. I do not know that I had so much as a single thought which was not fixed on God. A most serious and solemn devotion of heart led me to think, I must throw aside my notes at Stow, and preach experimentally to the people.

I admitted several persons into the society, most of whom appeared to be deeply convinced. I have preached ever since without notes. I am afraid to do otherwise. I have enjoyed a continued peace ever since I left you, and am following on to know more of God.

If he writes to you, dear sir, [¹] believe he will discover too high an opinion of me. I hope you will impute what he may say in my favour to the prejudice of fatherly affection.

Sunday, January 10, we held a love feast at Chesham, at which one received the gift of pure love. Friday, [Jan.] 15. This morning I read a letter to Mrs. S. and H. when the power of God descended on Mrs. S. as though she would then be set at liberty from the carnal mind. After prayer, B. H. informed me she now knew that God for Christ's sake had forgiven her.

January 17. God was in the midst of us at Witney; and among the several fresh instances of his goodness, M. P. of Oxford, declared that the blood of Christ had cleansed him from all sin. Thursday, January, [Jan.] 20. T. B. of Freeland, experienced a sense of God's forgiving favour; and R. M. experienced the same blessing that night.

Friday, [Jan.] 21, I preached at Newnham, a little regular built town between Wallingford and Oxford. Mr. Smith, whom I admitted into society, received remission of sins. Soon after I also joined twenty others. God grant they may all be zealous of good works!

Monday, [Jan.] 25. At Shalborne, I was informed that two more received remission of sin, and another at Eastbury. Thursday, [Jan.] 28, at Slade-End, S. S. told me that she received remission of sins when she heard me about a month ago. S. W. and her mother experienced the forgiving love of God, and H. W. has for some months experienced the pure love of God. Thanks be to God for all his mercies!

I remain, reverend and dear sir,

Your dutiful son,

Samuel Wells

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 113–15.

¹Inserted by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
February 6, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I hope the Lord, who has so wonderfully stood by you hitherto, will preserve you to see many of your sheep, and me among the rest, enter into rest.¹ Should providence call you *first*, I shall do my best, by the Lord's assistance, to help *your brother* to gather the wreck, and keep together those who are not absolutely bent upon throwing away the Methodist doctrine or discipline, as soon as he that now letteth shall be removed out of their way.² Every little help will then be necessary, and I hope I shall not be backward to throw in my mite.

In the meantime, you stand sometimes in need of an assistant to serve tables, and occasionally to fill up a gap. Providence visibly appointed me to that office many years ago. And though it no less evidently called me here, yet I have not been without doubt, especially for some years past, whether it would not be expedient that I should resume my place as your deacon—not with any view of presiding over the Methodists after you (God knows!) but to save you a little in your old age, and be in the way of receiving, and perhaps of doing, more good. I have sometimes considered how shameful it was that no clergyman should join you, to keep in the Church the work which the Lord had enabled you to carry on therein. And as the little estate I have in my native country is sufficient for my maintenance, I have thought I would, one day or other, offer you and the Methodists my *free* services.

While my love of retirement, and my dread of appearing upon a higher stage than that I stand upon here, made me linger, I was providentially called to do something in Lady Huntingdon's plan.³ But being shut out there, it appears to me I am again called to my first work.

Nevertheless, I would not leave this place without a *fuller* persuasion that the time is quite come. Not that God uses me much *now* among my parishioners, but because I have not sufficiently cleared my conscience from the blood of all men, especially with regard to ferreting out the poor and expostulating with the rich, who make it their business to fly from me. In the meantime it shall be my employment to beg the Lord to give me light, to guide me by his counsel, and make me willing to go anywhere or nowhere, to be anything or nothing.

I have laid my pen aside for some time. Nevertheless, I resumed it last week, at your brother's request, to go on with my treatise on *Christian perfection*.⁴ I have made some alterations in the sheets you have seen, and hope to have a few more ready for your correction, against the time you come this way.

How deep is the subject! What need have I of 'the Spirit, to search the deep things of God'!⁵ Help me by your prayers, till you can help me by word of mouth, reverend and dear sir.

Your willing, though unprofitable, servant in the gospel,

J. Fletcher

Source: published transcription; JW, *Life of Fletcher*; 64–66; Moore, *Life*, 2:259–60.

¹Fletcher is replying to JW's letter of c. Jan. 25, 1773 (*Works*, 28:550–51), which inquired whether Fletcher would be willing to take up part of the leadership role in Methodism.

²See 2 Thess. 2:7.

³His brief service as Head-master of the college at Trevecca.

⁴The treatise eventually published as *Last Check: A Polemical Essay* (London: R. Hawes, 1775).

⁵1 Cor. 2:10.

From Miss M. A.

[London?¹]
February 20, 1773

Reverend Sir,

As the end of your labour in the vineyard is the conversion of souls, it will give you much pleasure to be informed that my sister Nancy is truly converted.

She says she often envied the happiness of the people called Methodists; and not finding it in herself, concluded it was for want of knowing God.

Mr. [Thomas] Eden's conversation was much blessed to her, as many things he said greatly affected her. But under your sermon on, '*Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation*',² her heart said, this belongs to *me*. When you said to me at supper, 'Press forward, lest your sister should get before you', the word came home to her heart. When she retired, she prayed earnestly that it might be so.

In the morning, a little after you took leave of her, she could praise God, as *her* God. Soon after she communicated it to her brother, and the next day joined the society. The day following, coming over to see me, I was quite astonished, as she seemed fully to possess the faith which worketh by love. She now prayed and sang the praises of God continually, and was so full of the love of God, that she could hardly contain herself. She seemed also to forget her food, while her sleep quite forsook her. She most earnestly desired to receive the Lord's Supper, and had no fear of death; but feared it was wrong to be so happy, as she had felt so little sorrow for sin.

Two things she formerly thought would be her greatest cross to part with, if ever she became serious, she was tried with the next day—when behold, the mountain became a plain, for her right hand was cut off without much difficulty!³

She said she would go to her worldly acquaintance, and tell them what God had done for her soul, and also tell them how she must live and act. And that if they would do so too, she would continue their acquaintance; but if not, she must break it off.

I know, sir, you will bless God with me, because he has given you a child, and me a sister in the Lord. I now begin to hope that all our family will be brought to the knowledge of the truth. How delightful is the thought! I bless God that I can rejoice in Christ Jesus! And have no confidence in the flesh. Pray for me, reverend sir, and believe me to be

Your most affectionate and obliged servant,

M. A.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 115–16.

¹JW was in and around London from Dec. 1772 through Feb. 1773.

²2 Cor. 6:2.

³See Matt. 5:30.

From Penelope Newman

Cheltenham
February 21, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

For two months past, though my sufferings have been extreme, my soul hath not only been kept in perfect peace, but I can even triumph in Christ, who hath counted me worthy to suffer for his sake.

Soon after I came from Bristol, I could not be satisfied with doing so little for God. This caused me to entreat him day and night to point out something more for me to do for his glory. Soon after, two persons whom I used to meet in class asked me to meet them again. Then a girl about twelve years old desired me to instruct her in the things of God. Soon after, two more desired the preacher to let them meet in my class: these four were backsliders.

Ever since they met with me the Lord has enabled me to use great plainness, with much love towards them, who appear very attentive.

I have also thirteen in the other class, who all seem more established than ever.

I also prayed for a select band, and now a few of us meet constantly, and can bear testimony that we love the Lord our God with all our heart and our neighbour as ourselves.

About three weeks ago God gave me such a spirit of prayer for the world in general, and for believers in particular, that I was forced to retire frequently, and pour out my soul with such fervency as I had seldom ever used before.

Last evening a few of us met together to call upon God in behalf of ourselves and others, when he so poured his spirit on us that we could hardly part.

This has been a blessed day to me. My union with the Triune God is beyond expression, and everything, whether prosperous or adverse, seem to increase it. The souls of sinners were never so precious to me as at present, and therefore I can truly say, 'No cross, no suffering I decline.'¹ I could go from house to house all day, to testify the love of God in sending his Son to die for the world. But I see it my duty to be diligent in business, as well as fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. In all I do I have a constant testimony that I am doing his pleasure.

I remain, dear sir,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

P. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 171–72.

¹From a hymn by Maria Böhmer, translated by JW from German, titled 'Looking unto Jesus', st. 4, *HSP* (1740), 22.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
February 22, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I praise my gracious God that he still supports and holds my soul in second life. I find his grace sufficient to bear me conqueror through every trial and temptation. Yet at times my faith and patience, and indeed every grace, seem to be tried to the very utmost. O how good it is at such seasons to find God a place of refuge, whereunto we may run and be saved! I praise him for the consolation I find in and from him, and for the trust I have to see his face without a veil between! What I now feel my want of is more establishment of soul, to be more deeply rooted and grounded in Christ.

I find it requires much inward vigour, and intense labour, to keep my heart free from the world, while much engaged therein. But hitherto hath the Lord helped me. I find the truth of these words, 'To him that believeth all things are possible.'¹

I have still good news to relate respecting the work of God in this place. The faith of God's children appears to be increased. Mourners also are comforted, and others begin to enquire the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

Mr. Samuel Wells's father has paid us a visit, and God gave him to know assuredly that he had destroyed his inbred sin, which caused him to rejoice with joy unspeakable.

I am, dear sir,

Your much obliged servant, and unworthy friend,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 172–73.

¹Mark 9:23.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
February 28, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Last week Mr. [Richard] Hill treated me first with his answer to your book, and by the next post with his *Finishing Stroke*.¹ I need not tell you what I think. The performances speak too loudly for (should I not say against) themselves, as well as against us. We need more than ever the innocence of the dove and wisdom of the serpent.² If you reply, I can help you to some quotations from Bishop Davenant, who shows that the papists are for their predestination.³ I am sure that 'no salvation out of the church' differs little from 'no salvation out of the elect church', as the spirit of Calvinism and Romanism are not unlike. To prove that Mr. Hill was not such a stickler for Calvinism formerly as he is now, I can show you a book *An Affectionate Address to Christian People*,⁴ which he formerly distributed to the poor and gave to his friends with '*pignus amicitiae*'⁵ on the cover or title page. In some places it is much, it is ten times, stronger against Calvinism than the [*Christian*] *Library* against the *Minutes*. And if I am not mistaken, he got it published at Salop; that you may know when you call there.

Mr. Hill has got me into your corner. The manner in which he has mangled my sermon forces me to publish it whole, interlined with some guarding clauses and paragraphs which will exactly show where I (for one) leaned too much toward antinomianism till the [1770] *Minutes* brought me to the equilibrium of gospel truth.⁶

I shall dedicate it to Mr. Hill, and in the dedicatory epistle I shall endeavour to give to his controversial pen a 'finishing stroke' in my turn.

You stand in the first rank. You receive the first fire. And between Shimei and Joab, you stand in need of David's fortitude when he encouraged himself in his God.⁷ The smoke will blow over, and the truth will prevail at last.

That God may strengthen our hands and hearts to fight the battles of our holy Lord is the prayer of

Your son in the gospel and companion in tribulation,

J. Fletcher

¹Richard Hill, *Logica Wesleiensis; or, The Farrago Double-Distilled* (London: Dilly, 1773); and *The Finishing Stroke; containing some Strictures on the Rev. Mr. Fletcher's pamphlet, entitled Logica Genevensis* (London: Dilly, 1773).

²See Matt. 10:16.

³See John Davenant, *An Exhortation to Brotherly Communion betwixt the Protestant Churches* (London: Richard Badger, 1641), pp. 146ff.

⁴Fletcher is apparently referring to John Reynold's *A Compassionate Address to The Christian World* (London, 1730). An edition was published in Salop in 1761.

⁵'pledge of friendship'.

⁶Hill published excerpts of a manuscript sermon by Fletcher on Rom 11:5–6 in *Finishing Stroke*, 44–53. Fletcher the published the whole sermon, enlarged with comments in *An Equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism—Part the first*. (Shrewsbury: J. Eddowes, 1774), 29–89.

⁷See 1 Kings 2.

Mr. James Ireland says four are going to enter the field: Mr. Mason, etc.⁸ Is it true?

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. J. or C. Wesley / at the Foundery / Upper Moorfields / London'.

Endorsement: by CW, 'Fletcher Feb. 28. 1773'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/47.⁹

⁸Fletcher likely meant William Mason (1719–91), who had written against JW previously; but he issued no new work contesting Methodism at the time, only new editions of previous works.

⁹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 303–04.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
March 16, 1773

Dear Sir,

By a letter from Mrs. Dawson, now in Cork, I am informed that we may expect you in the kingdom next month. May the Lord prosper your way, and give you to see much fruit of your labour. I never longed more to see you, yet am afraid to solace myself in the expectation, lest the Lord should see fit to disappoint me. I am still the same poor tottering feeble creature; bowed down under a sense of my numberless deficiencies, yet wonderfully and graciously supported by strength not my own. I think others go on much more comfortably than I do, but perhaps the Lord sees this best for me. And could I always see his will in it, I should be satisfied, for he knows I desire to suffer his will. Indeed I think in the whole world there cannot be a more feeble or unprofitable creature. When I consider the helps which are afforded me, and my non-improvement of all, my spirit is even sunk within me. And though I am enabled to come to the Lord Jesus as my only refuge, yet I feel a want of that strength and vigour of soul which would bring glory to God, or comfort sufficient to my own soul. ... I propose much satisfaction to myself in laying open my state before you when I have the happiness of seeing you, if the Lord shall think fit to afford me an opportunity. Till then I hope for the assistance of your prayers, and am, etc.,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 86–87.

From Philothea Briggs

[Shoreham]
March 18, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I have lately felt all that my nature seemed capable of bearing. My external crosses have been chiefly occasioned by being connected with unreasonable persons, who wrest my words and misconstrue my actions. Even my spiritual friends seldom blame me for my real faults, but rather for things I cannot possibly help or for what I might reasonably expect would gain their good-will. Indeed some of my friends, on the other hand, are so lavish in professions of esteem that if I did not know a little of myself, I should fancy I was something very excellent. Thus exalted by some, and depressed by others, I find little consolation from human society. This, sir, I confess has contracted my heart and greatly hindered the spirit of brotherly love.

From what I have said, sir, you see my state has been distressing. But yet I rejoice in the testimony of my conscience that I please God. And though I desire to be all devoted to him, I see myself so unaccountably deficient that I am unwilling to form any judgment of my real state. But this I know, the Lord has done much for me; and sometimes I feel an assurance that I am clean through his word. I hope one day to attain all that he has prepared for me. I feel true contrition on account of the little progress I have made, and see myself like a vessel on a tempestuous sea, exposed to the storms and dangers of a hazardous voyage.

There are some persons, if I was asked why they exist, I could only answer, 'Lord thou knowest!' I am one of these; and am so deeply conscious of my uselessness, and seem so incapable of living to any good purpose, that I cannot help desiring to escape from the task of life, to which on all accounts I seem so unequal.

I hope to hear from you soon, and that you will favour with your advice and prayers,
Your obliged and ever affectionate friend and servant,

P. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 228–29.

From Samuel Wells

Newnham [Murren, Oxfordshire]
March 19, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I think it my duty again to inform you of the increase of the work of God among us.

Of the twenty-two I joined here two months ago, ten have continued to meet; four now are joined, and six have been justified. Tuesday, [Feb.] 23, S. C. of Shelborne told me she had received a sense of pardon at the class meeting. Wednesday, [Feb.] 24, H. R. of Eastbury informed me that she had received the blessing of pure love. Her mother believes that she enjoys the same, and M. B. is persuaded that God hath forgiven her sins.

Thursday, [Feb.] 25, I preached at Slade End, near Wallingford, from 1 Thess. 5:16–18. As soon as I had concluded, W. S. and W. C. informed me that they were fully persuaded God had purified their hearts; and when I met the class the Sunday following, both their wives declared that they had received the same blessing.

Saturday, Feb. 27, when brother B[rammah]¹ was at Wallingford last, God restored E. P. a poor backslider.

When I was here about a month ago, I observed a grave looking woman in the congregation. I was preaching from the story of our Lord's conversing with the woman who was a sinner. I was informed afterwards she had been kept by a married man, whose wife broke her heart on that account. When Henry Robins preached here,² she heard him and was much affected. From that time she attended constantly, and a great change was visible in her. Yesterday she was at preaching again, and wept much under the word. Nevertheless she has not yet received remission of sins. However she has joined the society, and seems much in earnest.

Tuesday, March 2. This morning after breakfasting at a friend's, the power of God was remarkably present, and one N. R. who lately joined the society, received a sense of pardon. We preach at a lone house on a common, but have large congregations. Brother [John] Furz left fifteen in society here. We have now thirty-three, and eight of them justified since the last Conference but one.

Wednesday, [March] 10, E. H. at Weedon put into my hands the following account.

January 14, 1773; I hope I shall always remember that blessed morning when the Lord took possession of my heart. He so strengthened my faith that I could say with St. Stephen, 'I saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, interceding for me.'³ I heard my dear redeemer say, 'Daughter be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Go in peace and sin no more.'⁴ O what a happy morning was that to me when Jesus filled my heart with love, my tongue with praise, and sent me home rejoicing!

O that the Lord may increase my faith more and more, and fill my heart with his love! May he deaden my affections to all things here below, so that I may count all things but dung and dross so I may win Christ! I bless my dear redeemer for all the opportunities of learning I have

¹William Brammah (d.1780), an itinerant from 1762 through his death, had been assigned at Conference in 1772 to assist Samuel Wells in the Oxfordshire circuit.

²Henry Robins was apparently a local preacher at the moment. He would be admitted to the itinerancy on trial in 1776 and serve through 1784.

³Acts 7:55–56.

⁴Cf. Matt. 9:2.

enjoyed; but most of all for that of hearing the despised, but happy, people called Methodists!
May I be one indeed!

I went to see Mary Bolton, who was lying on her death-bed.⁵ She was justified about twelve months ago. She appears to enjoy the full assurance of faith. Her hope is full of immortality. She at times praises God aloud on her bed, crying, 'Glory be to God!' The neighbours who hear her fancy her delirious. Her pain, sorrow and fear seem all over. She sometimes appears absent from the body, and is grieved when she is interrupted in her heavenly employment. She lay once for four hours in this way, till one awoke her from her ecstatic delight.

I am, reverend sir,
Your son in the gospel,

Samuel Wells

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 282–83.

⁵Mary Bolton, baptized July 6, 1737 in Witney, was a younger sister of Edward Bolton Sr. and aunt to Ann Bolton. She was buried on April 3, 1773 in Cogges, Oxfordshire.

From Mary Bishop

Bath
April 13, 1773

With joy I embrace the earliest opportunity of letting you know that our dear brother Hadden is at last gone to paradise.¹

For some time before his death, he was endued with an uncommon degree of deadness to the world, freedom from anxiety respecting his family, and resignation under continual pain and weakness.

In his long illness, he sought Jesus in good earnest, and deeply mourned his want of a clear sense of pardon. At last the Lord gave it [to] him some time before his death. He then said, 'I firmly believe Jesus died for *me*. I could not say this a little while ago; but it now seems that I have faith enough to go up into the clouds to meet my Saviour.'

The next day, on his saying, 'I have been in violent pain', I asked, 'How did you find your soul then?' He answered, 'All love! All glory!' On my asking him, 'Have you *now* any doubt concerning the forgiveness of your sins?' He said, 'No, none at all.' On Saturday, the third instant, he told the nurse that the angels would come for him at night, and so it proved.

After lying very still about an hour and half, and to all appearance was just expiring, he raised himself up in his bed, and cried out, 'My blessed Lord! Oh, blessed Jesus! There he is! There are the angels! Cannot you see them! There is another come! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Oh what happiness is this! I have been upon Mount Sion! What a mercy is it, that I have my senses so perfect that I may not say any thing to offend God! For nothing unholy can enter heaven. Hallelujah! Sing! Sing! Hallelujah! Oh, how happy am I! What? A publican, a publican happy? A publican going to heaven? It ought, it ought to be put in the newspaper! Poor Mr. Brookman² (another innkeeper of his acquaintance), what will he do when he comes to die? Tell him, tell him, bring it round to him some way or other. Lord Jesus, open his eyes before it is too late!' Then looking round on us he said, 'God bless you all! Keep close to God and his people.' To me he said, 'I see the devil up against the ceiling.' On my saying, 'He has no power over *you*', he answered with an air of triumphant disdain, 'Power, no! Fly Satan! Get thee hence! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!' Thus he continued till he fell into a doze. After lying some time, he clapped his hands together, looked up with a smiling countenance, and fell asleep in Jesus!

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 489–90.

¹Edward Hadden was buried in Bath on April 7, 1773.

²Thomas Brookman was the master of White Lion Inn in Bath.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
April 18, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

With pleasure I resolutely snatch an opportunity of acquainting you with the Lord's gracious dealings towards me. Through a multiplicity of engagements (occasioned by my father's illness, the visits of friends from distant parts, etc.) my soul has been preserved in peace. I found Jesus a place to hide me in, and could rejoice in the manifestation of his favour from day to day. Yet I have been much tried and tempted. The enemy would have me dissatisfied with my present situation, as many of my trials and painful exercises arise from the conduct of those in the family who fear not God, or at least in a very small degree. But glory be to God, hitherto Satan has not been permitted to avail himself. I *am* satisfied with the disposal of my heavenly Father and believe I could not be so happy in any other situation in life as this I am *now* in. I do from and with my heart praise him for all his dispensations and every trial I pass through.

Last week was our quarterly meeting, which occasioned many friends to visit us. And glory be to God, his goings were glorious in his sanctuary. It was a time of much divine consolation. O blessed God, how abundant are thy mercies, how great our privilege beyond many others! I see more than ever the excellency and service of our love-feasts, classes, and bands. I find they are so well [adapted] to increase union and build up the church of God and each other.

The particular want my spirit *now* feels is to be more keenly centred in God, more firm[ly] established by the power of his Spirit. I want to be more hid in him as my secure abode. Then I think the fruit of the Spirit would abound more abundantly.¹ My soul is, as it were, ravished with delight to find my desires all centre in him, who alone can satisfy.

The Lord is pleased often to give me a deep sense of the work he hath wrought in me, which mightily confirms me in his ways. I find also such an agreement between his word and my experience as gives me great satisfaction, and causes me to wonder and adore at his almighty wisdom, power, and love. I find myself at a loss how to express what I feel and know of God and his kingdom within. But this I can tell you, I feel God is love, and I know the truth of the apostle's words, 'The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'²

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

A. B.

Source: Bolton's manuscript letter-book, privately held by the Bolton family in Pudlicote, Oxfordshire (transcribed by Cindy Aalders). JW published a version in *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 284–85.

¹The version which JW published in *AM* includes this paragraph, which may be JW's expansion of Bolton, or may reflect additions she made in her final copy: 'With regard to inordinate affections, the enemy often represents something pleasing to my mind, when in company with persons peculiarly devoted to God. Here Satan endeavours to serve himself by unfitting me to converse with such as profitably as I might. For although my soul will not admit the temptation to delight in the pleasing idea, yet I sometimes find I am not so deeply engaged with God, nor so fully recollected when such are present. I want to get such an ascendancy over these weaknesses that I may feel nothing but a perfect serenity of mind, at all times to converse with profit.'

²Rom. 14:17.

From Hannah Ball

[High] Wycombe
May 4, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I find much reason to praise God, who loads me with his benefits. I find that prosperity and adversity are much the same to me; my soul being not overmuch grieved at the one, nor lifted up by the other. Death of late seems at a great distance. But in this my will is so swallowed up in the will of God that I cannot choose either life or death.

The week after Easter I was informed that a man in this town, whose name is Charles Dean, was thought to be near death; and as he was a very wicked man, I thought I would go and see him. Accordingly I went and spoke freely to him concerning the state of his soul. I had not said much before I observed the tears fall from his eyes. He told me he believed he had the hardest heart of any man alive. I was very glad to hear this, and told him it was a blessing that he felt it to be so. On asking him if I should go to prayer, he did not seem willing. But I told him I should not be long, and so prayed and went away. Going again the Monday following, and finding him putting off repentance, in hopes of being better in health, I endeavoured to show him Satan's device in this, and persuaded him to seek the Lord *now*. Accordingly he began from that time to seek in good earnest. The next night I went to see him again, and found that God had given him a broken heart. I then went to prayer with him, and left him for the present. The next morning I found he was not satisfied with what he had received, but wanted an entire change of heart. On Wednesday morning, [April] 28, his wife found peace to her soul, and is now very happy in the Lord. Seeing her sister stand by, I told her we must not leave her behind. On this she began to weep. I then encouraged her to believe. She cried out, 'Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!'¹

The next day, Dean sending for me, I went and found him in the pangs of the new-birth. Indeed he seized my hand in an agony of distress. I went to prayer, and he prayed with me for sometime. I then stopped, and let him pray by himself. When he gave over I began again, and in less than half an hour his soul was set at liberty. When I went home, he sent for a man from his work to tell him what God had done for his soul. Thus he continued, all that and the two following days, exhorting all to repent and seek that change of heart which God had given him. He also sent for the curate to give him the sacrament. But the curate thought he was not sensible, for he told him what a blessed change he had found. The curate said it was a good thing; but yet would not give him the sacrament until he was more composed. I then persuaded my brother to go to see him.² I believe it had a quite contrary effect on his mind, for he wept much when he was with him. And ever since, when he has talked about him, the tears stand in his eyes. Last night his joy was somewhat abated. But his peace was still the same, and he said if it was the will of God, he would rather depart and be with Christ; but yet was quite resigned to God's will. As to his wife and sister, they grow happier and happier daily. Glory be to God for this great work!

H. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 339–41.

¹Mark 9:24.

²Hannah had moved to High Wycombe in 1759, to live with an older brother, John Ball (b. 1726), whose home and shop where he made laces was at 13 Queens Square.

From Mrs. Christiana Malenoir¹

May 12, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I feel that faith and love which overcometh the world, and that peace which passeth all understanding. I find that Jesus has the ruling power in my breast, and that he has subdued all things under him, and governs every passion. The flame of divine love, in general, consumes all before it. I am also passive in the hand of God, and willing to be disposed of as seemeth him good. I find such zeal for his cause, and such love to souls, as makes me love, pity, weep, and pray for them. In short, I find a heaven upon earth! And yet I find I come short in all things; and therefore am sunk into nothing before him who has thought fit to call such a worm as me to be a partaker of the heavenly inheritance!

As you seem desirous, sir, to have a more particular account of the Lord's dealings with me from the beginning, I shall give you a short sketch of the same.

In May 1770 the Lord showed me that I was a sinner by nature and practice; and that if I did not repent, I should perish for ever. I then attended the preaching constantly, and in a short time joined the society. From that time, till the 28th of June, my convictions increased. Being then in the deepest distress, I retired, full of shame and confusion. I thought to pray, but could not. I then ran to a book called *The Golden Key that opens Hidden Treasure*,² and found a chapter suitable to my state. Presently after, I found the burden of sin fall off, and was enabled to cry out with Thomas, 'My Lord and my God!'³ But I had not the abiding witness of his Spirit till three weeks after, when the Lord shined on my soul and left me without a doubt. In a very little time he showed me that I was prone to backslide from him and that the remains of sin and unbelief was the cause thereof. But how to get rid of them I knew not. On this I asked Mr. [Hugh] S[anderson], who told me it was the gift of God. Then thought I, if this is the case, I will give God no rest until he gives it to me.

One morning, about the latter end of September, I went to the Lord, and pleaded the death and sufferings of his Son, and also my right to the blessings purchased by him. I had not been long before him till my soul was transported as if it was going to leave the body. On this I cried out, 'Lord, what art thou about to do with me!' Just then the following words came with power to my mind, 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation!'⁴ Then was my soul set at full liberty, and disengaged from every needless care and inordinate desire. At the same time I found it quite easy to do all that my heavenly Father required of me, and I had no doubt of my being sealed to the day of eternal redemption. In this confidence and full liberty of heart I still continue to this day. But as I am still weak and ignorant, I stand in need of every assistance; and therefore, dear sir, I must beg (with your advice) an interest in your prayers, which will be gratefully acknowledged by

Your friend and servant,

C. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 341–42.⁵

¹Christiana Malenoir (1738–1803), maiden name unknown, was the widow of Samuel Malenoir (1737–63). She became active in Methodism in Cork about the time she was widowed, and served as a class leader and in other roles until near her death.

²Thomas Brooks, *A Golden Key to Open Hidden Treasures* (London: Dorman Newman, 1675).

³John 20:28.

⁴2 Cor. 6:2.

⁵There is also an incomplete secondary copy in MARC (DDCW 1/62); and a previous transcription appeared in *WHS* 23 (1941): 9–10.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
c. May 22 1773¹

[[Dear Brother,

[[What answer you have received to your p[roposal to the] s[ociety], I shall h[ard]ly know from them. Of you therefore I enquire what arguments they have used with you to stop Mr. [Edward] Davies's coming to our help?² If the offense of my r[elating]; he is satisfied. If the largeness of the salary, Mr. Davies will save us more than that. Besides, Mr. [Richard] Kemp, Mr. [John] Horton, Mr. [John] Folgham, Mr. [Samuel] Petty, and a few more will, if need be, make the matter easy. Mr. Davies, I am now assured, is quite heartened, and d[evote]d to God and his people. Their true objection to his coming is not his salary, but his orders. I have sent him £40 from the committee, by way of advance and to bring his family up. He has sold his goods, and leaves Wales on Whit Monday.³ Brother Horton has taken an house for him and his family. The committee to a man, and the society in general, l[ong] for his coming amongst us. The only opposers are two preachers, and a very few whom they have influenced—concerning whom I shall talk with you, not write.

[[I believe you fully regarding you beginning to smell a rat. Let me advise and entreat you to keep your mind to yourself for a very short time. If we live to meet, we two must be one. Then *nos duo turba sumus*.⁴ I will, through God's help, stand by you *ad aras usque*,⁵ and probably it is the last debt I shall pay to the Church of England and to you.

[[One request I have to make [of] you, which is not to promise Thomas Olivers another year in London, till you and I have had a conference.]]

Source: CW shorthand copy for records; MARC, DDCW 7/112, no. 2.

¹Dated by JW's reply of May 30, 1773.

²Edward Davies (c. 1736–1812), originally of Rhyddlan, Flintshire, graduated from Jesus College, Oxford in 1759 and was ordained a priest in January 1760. He served as a perpetual curate at Bengeworth from 1767–72, where he once invited JW to preach (JW, *Journal*, Mar. 17, 1768). In June 1772 Davies was in Bristol, where he assisted CW a bit, which led to JW deciding to recruit Davies as a helper, particularly as support for the settings in London where sacraments were offered. Over the next months it would become clear that Davies desired more financial support than could be provided, and his relationship with CW soured over a transaction involving a horse—ending this possibility.

³May 31

⁴Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, i.355; “we two are a crowd.”

⁵“As far as the altars.”

From the Rev. John Fletcher¹

Madeley
May 30, 1773

My Dear Sir,

I sent you for your *corrections* the two first parts of my *Equal Check*.² The third part will contain the scriptural—and truly forcible—motives for doing good works, which will be nothing but a set of scriptures arranged under these four heads: 1) avoiding temporal and spiritual curses in the world; 2) securing temporal and spiritual blessings below; 3) avoiding hell; 4) obtaining heaven. I may add to it my farther observations of St. James's justification.

Only the essay is corrected for the press. But I suppose you can make out the sermon and notes. Should the note be printed together *at the end* or *under each page*? I have all along made my way between Scylla and Charybdis. Where I go too near the one of the other, be you my Palinurus.³ Look about for yourself and me. I correct my *Appeal* and make some important additions to it. If you think of some arguments omitted, put me in mind.

Last week I found a sudden impulse, upon reading Mr. Berridge and John Bunyan's *Heavenly Footman*, to answer the former and abridge the latter in a little polemical tract, which I hope will cast light upon the controversy.⁴ Here you have the title: 'The Two Bedfordshire Messengers; or, the Rev. Mr. Berridge's *Valiant Sergeant* and John Bunyan's *Heavenly Footman* dispatched to London, etc., to carry antidote, check injudicious controvertists, and press idle disputers to run the heavenly race for an eternal crown of glory.'⁵ With this motto: '*Thou that callest sincere obedience a paper kite, a jack o'lantern, does thou follow after sincere obedience? Thou who declarest that Our damnation is wholly from ourselves, dost thou oppose conditional election and reprobation? And thou who sayst a man should not work for life as well as from life, does thou work for life, and vehemently exhort others so to do? Yea, and threaten them with damnation if they do it not? Verily the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you and your glaring inconsistencies. Rom 11:22–24.*'

I think, as Mr. [Richard] Hill has quitted the field and Mr. [John] Berridge has entered the lists, the best will be to encounter *him*. *What think you?* I shall read Mr. [Augustus] Toplady when I write upon election, if I live to finish my tract.

I am afraid of loading the world with pamphlets, but meet with so little success in preaching that I must try to write. Last Thursday I preached on Numbers 16, near the great chasm that has been suddenly

¹While there is no address to clarify whether this was to JW or CW, the more formal salutation suggests it was for JW. But JW was in Ireland from May through July 1773, so the letter is endorsed by CW (who was in London) and CW also likely did the reviewing of the manuscript.

²John William Fletcher, *An Equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism-Part the first*. (Shrewsbury: J. Eddowes, 1774).

³The pilot of the ship in Virgil's *Aeneid* guiding it between the two dangerous rocks just named.

⁴John Berridge had just published: *The Christian World Unmasked - Pray Come and See* (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1773).

⁵Fletcher ended up incorporating this in: *Logica Genevensis, Continued; or the Second Part of the Fifth Check on Antinomianism; containing a Defence of ... i.e., the Conditionality of Perseverance attacked by the Rev. Mr. Berridge in his book called, "The Christian World Unmasked"* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1774).

formed here.⁶ Some fields and a road and a grove have been worked up by a mighty slip or earthquake, which blocked up the turnpike road and [river] Severn, then very full, make the water fly back; the wonder of Jordan has been repeated.⁷ Fields have walked, rocks have been rent, a valley sink raised into a little hill, and fields sunk into valleys. The great river sunk two yards downward, till it worked another channel by carrying off some rich meadowland. I suppose you will see an account of it in the papers. The earthquake just grazed my parish, and demolished the bridge that parts it from the next. No lives are lost.

This awful *accident has not had the effect* one could naturally expect. I fear the people in these parts are gospel hardened. Some of the gentlemen of my parish had the courage to stand upon the ruins and among the chasms, putting their bottle one to another, while I preached. One of them was the owner of the ground. I see nothing will do for us but a day of Pentecost. Without it we shall live and die Jews, and our neighbours heathens. O for faith to pray till the Lord answers by fire and pleads by the sword of his Spirit with all flesh.⁸

I have received the parcel and letter of Mr. Franks.⁹ I thank him for both, and desire him to draw upon Mr. [John] Southcote, who has some of my money. I have not heard from my Salop printer and the pamphlet in his hand. I shall send some to London, to see *whether it will be read*. I desire the fourth *Check may not be reprinted* till I have revised it, which I cannot do just now.¹⁰

Oh pray for and direct me. I see myself so wretched and unworthy that I could lie at the feet of my opponent to ask their blessing with joy. And yet I cannot swallow their mistakes. Is it pride, obstinacy, or love for truth?

Adieu.

[note at head]

When you have corrected this manuscript, send it back to me, directed to Mr. Thomas Roberts, Carpenter, Shifnal, that I may finish it and make all the parts agree.

Endorsement: by CW, 'J. Fletcher / May 30. 1773'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/39.¹¹

⁶Fletcher published the sermon he preached in *A Dreadful Phenomenon, Described and Improved* (Shrewsbury: J. Eddows, 1773).

⁷Cf. Josh. 3:1–17.

⁸Eph. 6:17.

⁹Samuel Franks, currently Wesley's Book Steward.

¹⁰John William Fletcher, *Logica Genevensis; or a Fourth Check to Antinomianism* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1772).

¹¹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 308–10.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
c. June 2, 1773

Brother S[horter] desired me to let you know a little of his mind concerning travelling the ensuing year. It was much impressed on his mind last year. But on hearing you refused to receive a preacher who had a wife, he gave up the proposal. But still he believes [it] his calling, a train of circumstances concurring to direct him in it.¹

Source: excerpt in Bolton's manuscript letter-book, privately held by the Bolton family in Pudlicote, Oxfordshire (transcribed by Cindy Aalders).

¹George Shorter (c. 1740–79) married Sarah Cambden in Witney in Aug. 1761. He was accepted on trial as an itinerant preacher at the 1773 Conference (see *Works*, 10:417) and stationed in Cornwall. His ministry was cut short by his death in 1779 (10:485).

From Ann Bolton

Witney
June 16, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I bless and praise the Lord I can yet testify he is able to save to the uttermost, and through all the vicissitudes of this state of probation his power is sufficient to keep the mind in perfect peace. I feel a longing desire to exalt his praise upon earth, who hath done such great things for me, but am oft tempted by reason of my confinement in business. For of late I find less time for reading, writing, and visiting those I think need a word of advice than for three or four years past. Yet through mercy I can rest satisfied; though not with an idle spirit, yet with a resigned will.

Thanks be to God, he has been showing me a narrower path than I have yet known, and my soul rejoices in hope of walking therein. I see the greater conformity to Jesus, the deeper and more solid will be my peace. I find the way of self denial, and taking up my cross, though it merits not forgiveness, makes way for the operations of the blessed Spirit. I find by denying myself unnecessary words and endeavouring to keep that simple act of faith always in exercise, my soul sinks deeper into its center and feels more inwardly vigorous, strong, and healthful.

Yesterday in private prayer my soul entered into a deeper acquaintance with God and enjoyed a peculiar nearness to him. I felt my heart strongly attached to him, and of consequence more abstracted from every created good. It was a time of renewing my covenant with him, and he gave me a more clear and distinct witness of his having purified my heart through faith. I see more beauty in entire devotion to God; because while it is so with me, I believe I shall do and follow *his* will, for I tremble at the thought of being suffered to do my own in any respect.

Dear sir, pray for me that I may be saved from this and believe that I remain,

Yours affectionately,

Ann Bolton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 517–18 (supplemented with first paragraph from Bolton's manuscript letter-book, privately held by the Bolton family in Pudlicote, Oxfordshire [transcribed by Cindy Aalders]).

From Joseph Marshall¹

Birr
June 23, 1773

Reverend Sir,

As there is nothing that yields more satisfaction to a minister of Christ than to hear and see that the work of God prospers, I sit down to give you some account of my present state.

I can truly say I feel a power to love God, in a manner I never did before. I have also power over my own will in all things; and can at all times say, 'Not my will, but thine be done.' My soul is constantly happy in God. I can every hour, and in the midst of my business, go to God and say, 'Thou art mine, and I am thine!' Oh the happiness of living thus to God! I feel the world beneath my feet, and my soul disdains on earth to dwell. I have not a desire to live, but only to glorify that God who has called me out of darkness into his marvellous light. Marvellous indeed, that I who was a few years ago one of the vilest of sinners, should now enjoy such a deliverance! The communion I feel with God makes me sit at his feet, crying, 'Why, oh why me! The most unworthy.'

For some time worldly business was a burden to me. But he whom my soul loveth has removed that also. He showed me that I had no other way to support a large family but by industry. Therefore he made me willing to labour, and keeps me in perfect peace while thus employed.

May you, dear sir, feel a double portion of his spirit! And may your latter days be greater than your beginning!

I am, reverend sir,

Your most unworthy servant,

J. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 396–97.

¹JW had preached in Birr on April 13, 1773 (see *Works*, 22:363). When he preached there again on Apr. 26, 1785, it was at the house of Joseph Marshall (see *Works*, 23:352; and Crookshank, *Ireland*, 1:397–98).

From the Rev. Devereux Jarratt²

Virginia
June 29, 1773

Reverend and Dear Brother,

Though we have no personal acquaintance, yet from what knowledge I have of you from common fame, and especially from your useful writings, I am induced to address you upon an affair of the last importance.

Virginia (the land of my nativity) has long groaned through a want of faithful ministers of the gospel. Many souls are perishing for lack of knowledge; many crying for the bread of life, and no man is found to break it to them.

We have ninety-five parishes in the colony, and all except one, I believe, are supplied with clergymen. But, alas! – you well understand the rest. I know of but one clergyman of the Church of England who appears to have the power and spirit of vital religion. For all seek their own, and not things that are Christ's! Is not our situation then truly deplorable? And does it not call loudly upon the friends of Zion on your side the Atlantic to assist us?

Many people here heartily join with me in returning our most grateful acknowledgments for the concern you have shown for us, in sending so many preachers to the American colonies. Two have preached for some time in Virginia; Mr. [Joseph] Pilmore and Mr. [Robert] Williams.³ I have never had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Pilmore, but by all I can learn he is a gracious soul and a good preacher. With Mr. Williams I have had many delightful interviews. He is just now returned to my house, from a long excursion through the back counties. I hope he will be able to write you joyful tidings of his success.

But after all, what can two or three preachers do in such an extended country as this? Cannot you do something more for us? Cannot you send us a minister of the Church of England, to be stationed in that one vacant parish I mentioned above? In all probability he would be of great service. Many souls there are praying that it may be so; and some of the principal gentlemen, who have the power of choosing the minister, are so afar enlightened that they are determined to choose no man that does not preach up our Articles in power and spirit.

This was the particular thing I had in view, in writing to you. And it is not only my own inclination; but at their earnest desire, that I solicit you.

I wish you could see how matters are among us. This would serve instead of a thousand arguments to induce you to exert yourself in this affair. The parish I am speaking of is about forty miles from me. The people are anxious to hear the truth. The parishes around it afford a wide field of itineration—for I would have no minister of Jesus, as matters now stand, confined to the limits of one parish.

²Devereux Jarratt (1733–1801), a native of Virginia, had been ordained in the Church of England in the early 1760s. He was one of the few Church of England clergy in North America supportive of the Methodist work.

³Robert Williams (1745–75) was the other lay preacher, alongside Pilmore, sent by Conference to minister in North America in 1769. He was active first in New York and then Virginia, before his untimely death in Sept. 1775.

Mr. A[rchibald] McRoberts,⁴ the gentleman referred to above, is an Israelite indeed! He is a warm, zealous, striking preacher of a crucified Jesus. He is constantly making excursions towards Maryland and Pennsylvania, in the north and northeast; whilst I make a tour of the parishes lying to the south and southeast. Now if we had one to take his station forty miles to the west, we should be able to go through the country. I flatter myself it will be so. I shall wait with expectation, till I am favoured with an answer from you. I trust it will be such an answer as will rejoice my heart and the hearts of thousands.

My dear friend and brother, I leave these things to your consideration; not doubting but, if in your power, you will help us.

I am, with much affection,

Your sincere friend and brother in Jesus Christ,

Devereux Jarratt

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 397–99.

⁴Archibald McRoberts, a native of Scotland, was ordained in 1763 and settled in Dale parish, Chesterfield, Virginia in 1773, where he supported Devereux Jarratt. However, in 1779 McRoberts withdrew from the Church of England and aligned with the Presbyterians.

From Samuel Sparrow

James Street [London]
July 10, 1773¹

Dear Sir,

Though I have no doubt of the candour and benevolent spirit of Mr. Wesley, yet I feel some reluctance in laying before him the suggestions of my mind on those two important subjects wherein we differ in opinion—viz., the Trinity and original sin. Not from any distrust of the truth of my principles, but diffidence of ability to do them justice. However, trusting to the goodness of your heart, I will venture to unbosom my thoughts with that freedom which truth and friendship demand, and do hope you will meet me on the same ground, uninfluenced by human authority, unarmed with theological subtleties, and unbiassed by school divinity.

This precaution appears to me the more necessary when I consider the fallibility of all human judgment, and that the Scripture alone is the acknowledged rule of our faith and practice. Till such time as all human authority in matters of religious faith and practice is not only disclaimed but utterly renounced, the consciences of men will always be held in captivity, and the precept of our Lord to call no man 'master' upon earth will be as a dead letter and lose all its intended salutary effect on the understandings of men.² What abundance of mischief has ecclesiastical tyranny done in every age of the world, in proportion to its degree of power and influence? Yet all under the specious pretence of good to the souls of men. Since therefore long experience so powerfully recommends this injunction of our Lord, why will not all pious Christians adopt the practice and no longer attempt to lord it over one another, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men? As we know that religious prejudices easily take root, and are exceeding hard to eradicate; so when seconded by the passions and armed with power, they never fail injuring the truth, sapping the rights of mankind, and leading them into dangerous and hurtful errors. You very well know that the religious zeal of different sects (who hold tenets directly opposite to one another) will operate so strongly upon the majority that their spiritual guides are able by that means to conduct them wherever they please, to the most hazardous enterprises, and even to persecute, under a strong persuasion that they are doing God service. But this can never be the way to come at truth. For as in physics, a few drops of pure elementary water are of more efficacy in dissolving hard glutinous bodies than gallons of strong vinous spirits; so in divinity, a little plain honesty, tempered with common sense, is a better key to the treasures of Scripture knowledge than the whole bundle of gilded pick-locks handed down from age to age by the pretended successors of St. Peter.

In support of your opinion concerning the Trinity, I observe you lay great stress upon that text which commands us to honour the Son even as he honour the Father; and you make this conclusion, that whoever does so honour the Son is guilty of idolatry, unless he believe both Father and Son equal in all perfections. This inference appears to me both harsh and uncharitable, and to have no foundation but in the opinions of men. For I cannot help thinking that this very command implies supremacy of the Father, from whom the command issued. And if he had bid us worship an angel with equal sincerity as himself, could we with any propriety have controverted his orders and refused obedience? Or could we on that account be chargeable with idolatry?

My dear friend, I am clearly persuaded that if we will but lay aside the comments of fallible men, and believe our Lord himself, we can never consider him and the great God as two beings of equal authority and power. For his words are very express and intelligible when he says, 'My Father is greater

¹The letter is misdated '1772' in *Essays*, as evidenced by its comment near the end of taking so long to reply to JW's letter of July 1772, and that JW was in Ireland in July 1773 (not in 1772).

²See Matt. 23:9–11.

than I.³ 'This knoweth no man, nor the angels, nor the Son, but the Father only.'⁴ 'I can do nothing of myself, etc.'⁵ 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'⁶ He prayed, and likewise bid his disciples to pray, to God—not to himself. And there are many other texts of the like import, with which you are well acquainted.

I know very well the turn which men skilled in controversy give to these plain passages of sacred writ. But that ought not to prevail with us to relinquish our right to take the sense and meaning of our Lord's words from his own mouth. Is it not great presumption (to say the least) for any of our fellow creatures (be their learning or station in life ever so great) to take upon them to tell Christians that they must not believe such texts of Scripture in the obvious, plain, and easy sense of the words; but that our Lord here speaks not as God but man; so that without this illustration the revelation of the divine will had been no revelation. It is surprising that an evasion that is so barefaced a perversion of Scripture should be current so long amongst men of great piety, great learning, and virtue. But religious errors are so hedged in by education, human authority, example, emoluments, and worldly honours that we must no longer wonder at any inconsistencies made current by the broad seal of orthodoxy. That text where our Lord says that he and his Father are one would never have divided the world in opinion, had church authority never meddled with it. For a plain Christian would have easily learned the meaning as soon as he read that other text, 'Be ye one, as I and my Father are one'.⁷ But the compass of a letter forbids my proceeding on this subject.

As to original sin, I am unwilling to believe anything but what the Bible teaches. The opinions of men are various, and such their skill in controversy and fertility of invention, that it is dangerous trusting to any of them in things of such moment, especially where prejudices or interests may be supposed to operate. At the same time, some of the arguments which are usually brought in support of the established opinions I can discern to be very weak, and which discredit those which are too learned for my investigation. Whilst learned men have been bewildering the world with subtle conjectures and ingenious comments, the truth of things hath often escaped their notice and fallen to the lot of the humble, devout enquirer. Though great respect and deference are due to all who faithfully labour in the word and doctrine of our holy religion, yet their opinions on subjects of importance and difficulty should only be considered as opinions, and never enforced upon the consciences of people by any art or contrivance whatever.

By admitting human authority in matters of religious faith, a door is opened to all manner of corruption and false doctrine. Witness every nation throughout the world where religious establishments have been made; passion and interest striking in with early prejudices have always rendered reformation next to impossible, without a miracle. If the rule of duty is so plain that he who runs may read it, how happens it that we see so wide a difference in religious opinions, even amongst well meaning, pious Christians of various denominations, all zealously contending for their favourite discriminating opinions and all appealing to Scripture for the truth of them? Is not this owing to the influence of human authority and education principles? Are not all the religious establishments in the world founded in human authority, and encouraged and supported by temporal motives, power, riches, and honours?

However, we know that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, nor his subjects amenable for their religious principles to any earthly power whatever. Ought we not therefore, with a godly jealousy, to scrutinize into those doctrines which require human authority for their support and currency? To guard

³John 14:28.

⁴Matt. 24:36.

⁵John 5:30.

⁶John 20:17.

⁷Cf. John 17:21.

against temporal allurements on the one hand, and intimidation on the other? Sure I am that if men would but separate the chaff from the wheat—I mean all human inventions from the pure religion of the gospel—the people of all ranks (if sincere) would have no great difficulty in understanding the Scriptures in their true primitive sense and meaning. Who that reflects on the direful effects of human authority but must tremble for the ark of God, when touched by the unhallowed hands of fallible men?

But I fear I have quite tired your patience, without entering into such a discussion of the subject of original sin as I intended, and therefore shall detain you no longer, but only thank you for your kind letter of the second of July 1772, and which I did purpose to have answered long ago.

I remain, with great respect and esteem, dear sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

Mrs. Hobs tells me that you are expected from Ireland next month. I hope you will return in perfect health, in full possession of that generous pleasure which a good man always experiences from his success in his pious labours.

Source: published transcription; Sparrow, *Essays*, 149–57.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
July 20, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Through the tender mercy of our God I can yet praise him, and testify he is a *present* help in every time of need. His power and love continues to shield and defend my helpless soul.

Since I saw you I have past through an almost constant succession of hurry in worldly business.¹ But in and through all, Jesus hath been my hiding place, my refuge, and my rest. Yet at times I have been much tempted to dissatisfaction, and to enquire how can this be for my good? But glory be to God, Satan hath not been permitted to avail himself. Nay, rather my soul hath been strengthened thereby, and heavenly understanding gained. For in those moments of temptation the Lord gave me a clearer discovery of his will, and taught me 'to obey was better then sacrifice';² that patiently to endure and joyfully to acquiesce in all his divine disposals were fruits of righteousness well-pleasing and acceptable in his sight.

I feel a longing desire that Jesus may be glorified in the salvation of souls. And my heart has been pained of late for those who feel a measure of his love, but appear neither to seek nor expect that *abiding* in his presence, that *dwelling* in his power, as is their privilege. Some may call this state of grace by one name, and some by another; but this I *know*, it is a 'glorious liberty' worthy our utmost diligence to obtain. And I believe it is much for the glory [of] God that the doctrine of salvation from all the carnal mind should be as strongly and frequently inculcated on the hearts of believers as that of forgiveness on those under the guilt of sin. (Pardon me dear sir if this have the appearance of dictating to you which I did not aim at.)

I felt much satisfaction in that circumstance of your preaching at our door. I rejoiced to testify as far as that could declare, we feared 'not man but God'.³ And I think I have ever since experienced a greater contempt of the world, more indifference to its smiles or frowns. Glory be to God, by the cross of Christ my heart is crucified thereto. I hope to be remembered by you at the throne of grace, and wish every gospel blessing to descend on you. I must hast[il]y subscribe myself

Your much obliged and affectionate servant,

Ann Bolton

Source: Bolton's manuscript letter-book, privately held by the Bolton family in Pudlicote, Oxfordshire (transcribed by Cindy Aalders).

¹JW had been in Witney, and preached at the door to Bolton's house, on July 15, 1773 (see his *Journal, Works*, 22:383).

²1 Sam. 15:22.

³See Matt. 10:28.

From S. P.

Hay
July 22, 1773

Last night, July 21, near nine o'clock, Mr. Howell Harris of Trevecca departed this life. He had laboured under great afflictions for some months, but was not long confined to his bed.

As his religion supported him in the various trials of life, so it enabled him to rejoice at the prospect of eternity. His happy soul was kept above till he breathed out his last.

Some days before his death I called to see him, and found him greatly rejoicing in the consolations of Israel. When we parted, his last words to me were, 'Give my love to dear Mr. Wesley, and tell him that I pray for his present and eternal happiness.'

I hope his death will do that which his life could not—viz., prove to the world that he lived and died an honest man. I believe his will must prove to the satisfaction of all that love or fear God. He has ordered all his effects to be sold and his debts to be paid; and *if* there is anything over and above, it is to be distributed to those of his family who are the least able to help themselves. So far was Mr. Harris from laying up treasure on earth!

S. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 79.

From Thomas Eden [Jr.]¹

Waters Upton [Shropshire]
July 25, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

That you should so kindly remember, so tenderly feel for and write to, one who has not only been shamefully negligent in writing to you but (*as some may suppose*) has broke off all connection with you, is more than I could have expected.

Several persons have, behind my back, reported that I was become 'much of a gentleman'. One wrote to me concerning it, but he had first dipped his pen in gall. Mr. Wesley only, and John Pawson, have acted the part of real friends, by telling *me*, in a plain but loving and tender manner, what they had heard said of me. When I received John [Pawson]'s letter, which gave me much concern, being desirous to show him whether I was or was not what had been reported, I went down to Bristol on purpose to see him—when he told me he did not see *that* in me [which] he had feared, and I had no reason to believe he would ever flatter me. Now, I know not that I am either altered in my dress, become more choice in my living, or changed in my behaviour from what I was then. Yet it is very possible and I not know it. But if anyone would be kind enough to tell me, not in general that I do it but in what particulars I displease God or give any reasonable offence to my brethren, I trust I should have resolution sufficient to put it away.

You afflict me much, dear sir, by telling me you 'fear I am out of my way',² because it is the very thing I so often fear. But if all my friends knew how much I have suffered to know the way of duty, I think some of them would feel for me very differently. When my health was so impaired by preaching that I absolutely could go on no longer (without speedy death), my father proposed two things to me: that I should either go and improve myself by study, or come home to temporal business. Most of my friends, believing I was intended for a preacher of the gospel, thought it my duty to embrace the opportunity providence had given me for improving my talents. And Mr. Wesley, on whose judgement a good deal depended, particularly advised me to the same thing when I met him at Witney.³ I both reasoned and prayed much, on the occasion, to be directed by divine wisdom; and now, although I cannot see any other *way* to act in, yet am sometimes distressed, fearing I should do wrong.

I bless God I can say, and not only say but actually have (and actions speak louder than words), foregone both *wealth*, *honour*, and *pleasure*—that pleasure which my heart has bled for, and which many might have thought lawful—for the sake of Christ, though I know I am the most unprofitable of all his servants.

When I began first to preach, I was took very little notice of. But after you had kindly took me with you and introduced me at some places, I met with a good deal of respect from the people. But did I ever seek it, or go a step out of my way for it? Yet it has cost me very dear—the favour of many of my friends, who have continually accused me of using some unfair means to ingratiate myself in the affections of the people.

No one can justly accuse me of making a *gain* of preaching. I have travelled in general at my own expense; have often put myself to great inconveniency, sooner than to be any burden to the people; have spent my *whole income* in the work, and never received any favour from them worth mentioning. But I know these things by some have been accounted nothing. Nor would I once mention them, if I might still enjoy the favour of my brethren. But the being condemned for some things which I knew not of, and

¹This is the younger Thomas Eden, who presented himself for Methodist ministry in 1771, but was not stationed.

²If JW said this in a letter, it is not known to survive.

³Apparently when JW had been in Witney on July 15, 1773.

others which it was not in my power to prevent, has often distressed me and made me think of retiring wholly from the public world.

I have now many severe trials to combat with, and am often so poorly [I] can hardly attend to any thing. [I] am greatly obliged to you for writing to me, and gratefully remembering all favours. Beg leave still to subscribe myself, dear sir,

Your servant, your afflicted servant,

T. Eden

P.S. Mr. [Thomas] Hatton desires his kindest respects. Mine to the whole family.

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. Wesley / in London'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'T Eden / July 25, 1773 / ad Aug. 7'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/57.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Bristol]
August 3, 1773

[[Dear Brother,

[[Your friend [John] Horton tells me you have given Mr. [Edward] Davies hopes that you will give him something towards making amends for his loss.¹ I enter my caveat. You should <be>² just before you are generous. It is now in your power to do me justice by restoring me my mare. You may an hour <...> before you give him a shilling. I ask no favour but my just deserts. Mr Horton knows particulars.

[[I would not, as I fairly might, take my own mare at London, or usurp Mr. Davies's here and use it till he restored mine. But for the sake of the people]] *mussitavi inj[uriam]*³ [[this long. This long, I say, and no longer. Brother Snig who delivers Mr. Davies's may bring me my beast for I shall be at the t— of t[...]ing Mr. Davies and my letters in the Con[ference]. Meantime if you can do no more, at least stay your hand and give him no money till I see you here. I have no hold upon him—that is, no hope of recovering my mare—but by his fear of you, what's less of himself.

[[His new plea, 'Why did not I claim my mare immediately after my loss', shows his unrighteousness and [un]truth. I did claim it immediately; that is, I wrote desiring him to send it me, and kept a copy of my letter which you shall see.]]

Source: CW shorthand transcription for records; MARC, DDP 1/41 (on John Horton's letter to CW of July 30).

¹See John Horton to CW, July 30, 1773.

²A slim vertical portion of the right margin is torn away, affecting a word or so in several lines.

³I have not publicised the injury.”

From the Rev. Samuel Furly

[Roche, Cornwall]
August 16, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Having learned accidentally by my affectionate friend Mr. David Pugh,¹ who was in your company in London about three years ago, that you had entertained some misapprehensions concerning me, I take the present opportunity of inviting you (if you can conveniently) to take a bed at my house; as I can assure you that both I, and my dear Nancy,² will be very glad to see you. And I shall rejoice, by any act of civility, to confirm my love towards you. Your race, dear sir, is nearly run, and I may not have perhaps another opportunity of seeing you on this side of eternity, if you do not now favour me with a visit. No difference of opinion in some particulars is any bar, I assure you, to my affection. I no more desire another man to think just as I do, than I could approve of another's requiring my sentiments to be moulded exactly according to his own. Whoever really posses the grace of God, and loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, I hope that man I shall ever love and esteem. Time is flying swiftly upon its rapid wing, and eternity is each moment approaching—even that eternal state where all, all differences will be swallowed up in the perfect knowledge, and perfect love, of the infinitely perfect God.

Excuse haste, and believe me to be,

Your affectionate friend, and humble servant,

Samuel Furly

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797): 52–53.

¹Rev. David Pugh (1739–1816) received his B.A. from Hertford College, Oxford in 1762, and was named rector of St. Mary, Newport, Pembrokeshire in 1770. He was sympathetic to the Methodist movement until the push toward separation became more dominant.

²Ann (Bloodworth) Furly.

From Mary Bishop

Bath
August 23, 1773

Reverend Sir,

Of late I have had no very remarkable seasons, either of suffering or consolation. Perhaps the Lord may see it needful to keep me in a quiet state, that I may be the more capable of going through my increasing employment. But I am afraid of indulging this too much, lest I sink into unscriptural quietism.

I have lately read a new translation of Lady Guion's life,¹ and fear it has a tendency to betray the upright in heart into a state of comparative darkness, and unresisted unbelief, under the mask of pure faith, passiveness, and resignation; till they are at last content to live under the hidings of his face. What they say on the blessedness of a pure intention, self-denial, and habitual attention to the presence of God, I have often found animating. Their discourses on prayer are not so clear to me. Need a continued state of mental prayer exclude that which is vocal, and social? When the soul is not inclined to the latter, and is blessed in the former, may it safely rest? Or ought it to do violence to itself, that it may pray always with all prayer?

I remain, reverend sir,
Your affectionate servant,

M. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 518.

¹Referring to Jeanne Marie Bouvier de La Motte Guyon (1648–1717). A footnote in *AM* specifies that the new translation had been by the Quakers; i.e., *The Life of Lady Guion*, translated from French by James Gough (Bristol: S. Farley, 1772). Concerns like those of Mary Bishop led JW to publish an abridged (and theologically purified) extract of this new translation: *Extract of the Life of Madame Guion* (1776; see Bibliography, no. 363).

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
August 25, 1773

Dear Sir,

The want of anything particular this some time past has prevented my troubling you, or intruding on your more precious time. But the desire of receiving a line from you has obliged me to break through. Blessed be God he does carry on his work amongst us. There has been several days of fasting and prayer kept by the select band, and two by the whole society, and I believe most found them solemn seasons. Nor has the Lord suffered us to seek his face in vain. Some are added, some converted, and some renewed in love. The young men are again stirred up, and I hope more in earnest than they have been for several months. The select band meet well, and our meetings are comfortable because preachers and people are all of one mind; and whilst this is the case, the band will thrive.

As for myself, I have taken the Lord for my portion, instead of every other good. I have solemnly (and I think without reserve) surrendered myself and all my concerns into his hands with an entire submission to his will. Then how is it that I find disappointments in temporals (with which I am now surrounded) bear so heavy on me? And be capable of giving me so much distress? The effect that outward trials have on my mind causes many questionings and uneasy fears, and often puts me to a stand concerning my experience. At times the Lord does give me to see that I am all his. But are not trials the surest proof of our grace? Indeed I see what a poor novice I am! How little I know, and how little I can suffer or bear for my great and gracious Master's sake. Surely I want an increase of faith! O help me by your prayers. ...

I am dear sir,

Your affectionate,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 88–89.

From Francis Gilbert

Antigua
August 25, 1773

Reverend Sir,

On a fast-day kept here last September, on account of the hurricane which happened the month before, my brother [Nathaniel Gilbert] began preaching in St. John's, the capital of this place; and continued so to do on Sundays and Thursdays, till my arrival, when we took it by turns. And so great was our success, that at present, almost the whole island seems to be stirred up to seek the Lord!

There is constant preaching also at my brother's, where we have very large congregations. We have in society at St. John's twenty whites and about forty blacks and mulattos. Several of the whites, mulattos, and negroes enjoy a sense of pardon, and adorn the gospel much. The whites are really patterns worthy of imitation. Many more are awakened who are not united to us. In that number is an officer's lady, and the doctor's wife. These attend constantly. Others suffer great persecutions from their husbands, parents, masters, and mistresses. I expect in a short time the society will be abundantly increased, several having made application to be taken into it.

In several parts of the country where we have not been able to preach there is a great stirring among the people, who wish to have the preaching among them. Ere now I should have preached at Falmouth, about nine miles from St. John's. But my disorder increasing, I was obliged to lessen my labours, and am now under the necessity of desisting altogether for a few weeks. My brother some days ago appointed a fast to be kept for me in the society. For two or three days after my disorder was more violent than it had been for some time before; however since then it has greatly abated.

Here is work enough for three preachers, as almost the whole island seems ripe for the gospel. Yet I cannot desire you to send them yet, seeing the people are not at present able to bear the expenses. For the fire, the hurricane, and the severe draughts that have been here for several years have, I suppose, ruined two-thirds of the inhabitants.

I find great help from my dear wife.¹ She is very useful and willing to spend and be spent in so good a cause; but she too is very indifferent in her health. She joins in best respects to you, with, reverend sir,

Your affectionate son in the gospel,

F. Gilbert

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 567–68.

¹Mary (Leadbetter / née Walsh) Gilbert.

From Philothea Briggs

[Shoreham]
August 28, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I bless the Lord, who still keeps my feet in the way of peace, and daily finds me out occasions of doing and suffering his will. I have lately felt the hopes of glory, a great means of encouragement to endure the cross and despise the shame. And though I have never felt a keener sense of the miseries of life, yet I am willing to wait the appointed time till my change come. But I am so slow of heart to learn the lessons of his grace that I fear I shall fall short. I seem lately to have contracted a habit of indevotion. I feel myself at times incapable of continuing instant in prayer; though at others I find sweet moments of recollection.

I need particular instruction with regard to those little ones you left to meet with me. I usually go to them with a self-abasing sense of my own insufficiency for any good word or work, and leave them grieved at my inability to do them good. I should take it as a particular favour if you would give me any advice, or direct me to any book that will teach me how to assist them in knowing themselves and Jesus. The besetting sins of the younger ones are self-will, disobedience, lying, and settled inattention to the things of God; and the elder ones are endangered by the pleasures of life, and the desire of other things, which stifle their good desires.

Madam Guion would set them to 'practice prayer';¹ which indeed, if any human art could effect, it would be a noble achievement. But it seems to me [to be] beginning at the wrong end. Madam Guion's religion seems to me very fanciful. I can form no idea of a spiritual person sitting for hours in meditation with her eyes shut, especially when others want her advice and assistance. Had it been my case, I should have concluded it to be either owing to my stupidity, or else to the wiles of the devil. O let me rather be ever able to say,

Far above these earthly things,
While yet my hands are here employed,
Sees my soul the King of kings,
And freely talks with God.²

I am, reverend sir,
Your obliged servant,

P. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 568–69.

¹Referring to Jeanne Marie Bouvier de La Motte Guyon (1648–1717)

²CW, Hymn 6, st. 5, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 8.

From Thomas Rutherford¹

Arbroath [Scotland]
August 30, 1773

Reverend Sir,

When I went to Perth, about the latter end of May last, I found the work of God very low. This stirred me up to beg of God both for liberty in speaking and for the spirit of prayer. Accordingly, after preaching to a large multitude in the open air, one Sabbath-day I proposed giving an exhortation in our preaching house to all who desired to hear. As many came as almost filled the house. While I was speaking, many wept, and seriousness appeared on every countenance. While I was praying, the whole (except about three or four persons) burst out into strong cries. Our own people said they never felt, nor saw, anything like it in Perth before. A dragoon was then deeply awakened, who a few days after found comfort. From that time more came to the preaching while I stayed, and heard with great attention. Others were also stirred up, and cast in their lot among us. I visited them again last week, and found them more than ever athirst for the word. I had a letter last night from the dragoon above-mentioned, in which he tells me his comrade was awakened the last time I was there, and is now desirous to flee from the wrath to come. In short, there is at present a stir among the people of Perth in general.

I am, reverend sir,

Yours affectionately,

T. Rutherford

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 629.

¹This is the first surviving letter of Thomas Rutherford (1752–1806) as a correspondent with JW. He will reappear frequently. A native of Northumberland, Rutherford first attended Methodist preaching in 1767, a year after he had been left an orphan. He joined the society in 1769 and was admitted as a travelling preacher in 1772, assigned to the circuit in Aberdeen, Scotland (see *Works*, 10:406, 408).

From Mary Jones

Bath
September 2, 1773

Reverend Sir,

Ever since you have permitted me to write, I cannot let slip any opportunity. And I am bound in duty to tell you that your letters are instruments by which God has conveyed much light into my soul. Since I wrote last the Lord has been pleased to exercise me various ways. But I find it all for my good; being sensible the minutest thing cannot happen to me without the permission of my heavenly Father, by whom the hairs of my head are all numbered. But tell me, sir, when I see any particular trial that seems as much as I can bear, may I not pray, 'If it be consistent with thy will, let this cup pass from me'? Although I do feel an humble submission, and can truly say, 'Thy will be done!'

And pray tell me, Is it common for those whom the Lord hath blest with his continual presence to be tried to the uttermost by his own children? To be branded by some to the face, while others reproach them behind their backs, as either mad, or deceivers? And while the enemy is buffeting them at the same time, and trying every way to break their confidence?

At these seasons I feel great need of exerting all the power which God has given me. And I feel this is profitable also. When I am branded to my face, I am not suffered to revile again, but I love and pity them that do it. When despised and reproached, it humbles me before God, and leads me to cleave the closer to him. And when the enemy comes in as a flood, the Lord does lift up a standard against him.

I more than ever feel my own weakness and foolishness, and my need of being every moment sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb. I cannot but cry out,

Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death.¹

I feel myself daily decrease, and Christ increase. My desire is that he alone may be exalted. Christ is the element of my soul. I feel a continual abiding in him. O sir, now my eye seeth him and I abhor myself in dust and ashes. But to be truly humble and divested of all that is not God does not seem to me the work of a moment. I did indeed receive at once the grace which makes me a partaker of a divine nature. But how I am to grow therein is my frequent enquiry at the throne of grace. Is it by being always filled with sweetness and ecstatic joy? A frame that shuts out all suffering and pain, and carries me as it were out of the body, insensible of every difficulty? Surely this would tend to puff me up, and leave me a prey to the enemy. I have passed through this dispensation, and good was the will of the Lord in it. But now he seems to be showing me what great things *I must suffer for his sake*. 'Know ye not', says the apostle, 'that as many as are baptized into Christ, are baptized into his death?'² This has been my meditation of late, which seems to carry a great depth in it. I believe as Jesus divested himself of all (but love) to lie in a manger, to live and die for me; so must I in my measure be divested of all, in respect to anything to glory in or rest upon—of all gifts, graces, experience, so that I may be brought into subjection to the Father of spirits in all things. These considerations lead me to God, entreating him to give me strength and patience to perform whatever he calls me to. And, glory be to him, I find him ready to help in every time of need! I am,

Your most unworthy

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 608–09.

¹CW, Hymn on Isa. 32:2, st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 146.

²Rom. 6:3.

From Penelope Newman

Cheltenham
September 18, 1773

Reverend Sir,

Glory be to God, I enjoy uninterrupted communion with him! He gives me an unbounded desire to do his *whole will*, at *all times*. I experience times of suffering to be preparatory to greater blessings. I always find, after a storm, sweet refreshing showers of grace enlivening all the power of my soul.

Of late the Lord has been showing me the happy consequence of having all my thoughts, words, and works brought into full conformity to him. O that I may be more and more exemplary in patience, purity, and good works!

Our small society in this place is more than ever united together in the bonds of love. Dear Mr. [Samuel] Wells goes on well, without a shadow of a doubt. His humility and simplicity quite astonish me!
...

I am often tempted about speaking to you who are so much my superior in grace, but how can I forbear while I find such need of instruction! I should have thought it a great privilege to have enjoyed your company and conversation at Bristol, but many things have conspired to prevent it. As your stay there at present is almost finished,¹ I hope to have an opportunity shortly of receiving a blessing by means of your conversation. May your valuable life be prolonged for the advantage of many! And among others, for the sake of

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

P. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 630–31.

¹JW would leave Bristol on Oct. 3 1773.

From Thomas Ball¹

[Bath / London]
September 21, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I beg to lay before you Mr. [Alexander] Mather's account sent me by letter of 18th past, of the gross value of your books, taken in February and March, 1773;² viz.,

In London, etc.	£3,754	4	0
Bristol	4,253	4	8
Country	2,716	1	8
Cash	183	2	11
Debts	<u>23</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
	£10,929	15	4

Stock in Feb., 1772	<u>8,833</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>7</u>
Increase in stock	£2,096	14	9

Supposed to be owing in March last to printers, binders, etc., £500.

I am, reverend sir,
Your most obedient and dutiful servant,

Thomas Ball

Examined, 21st Sept. 1773
Thomas Marriott
Richard Kemp³

Source: published transcription; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 65 (1842): 1013.

¹Thomas Ball (d. 1786), a collector of excise in Bath and frequent visitor to London, was a friend of JW. His daughter married Edward Collinson, a leader at the Foundery and City Road Chapel.

²JW had commissioned Ball, assisted by Alexander Mather, to undertake a thorough review of his inventory of books in a letter dated Feb. 27, 1772. If they submitted an immediate report, it has not survived. This report shows the increase over the past year.

³Richard Kemp (1721–87) was a prosperous framework-knitter of Whitecross Street in Moorfields, London. He was a member of the Foundery society and an original trustee of City Road Chapel. See Stevenson, *City Road*, 530.

From Mrs. M. H.

October 2, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I find Jesus unspeakably precious to my soul, and that I am a wonderful monument of his tender mercy. He keeps me looking unto him in all my troubles.

The devil is very busy to distress me; but the Lord makes me more than conqueror, and causes all things to work together for my good. In the world I have tribulation, but in Christ I have peace.

If it is his will to make me perfect through sufferings, his will be done. For I know that he will lay no more upon me than he will enable me to bear.

At present, I am happier in God than ever I was in my life. He not only gives me the witness of the Spirit, but the fruit also. I want words to declare his goodness to my soul. Surely his love is better, much better than life itself. Therefore I thirst and pant for more of his love.

I am thankful that his providence brought me under your ministry. I have heard many, but none have built me up in love and holiness as you and your fellow-labourers have done. I therefore bless God that I am joined to such a society.

I also thank him that he enables me to endure hardness as a good soldier, and that in my troubles I can stand still and see his salvation. For though I am despised and rejected of my acquaintances, who in my trouble hid their faces from me, my help cometh of God, who preserveth those who are true of heart. The Lord is my shepherd, therefore I shall lack no manner of thing that is good. I know I am poor, and weak, and foolish; but

I see the Lord my Keeper stand
Omnipotently near;
Lo! He holds me by my hand,
And banishes my fear.
Shadows with his wings my head;
Guards from all impending harms;
Round me, and beneath are spread
The everlasting arms!¹

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate, though unworthy sister in Christ,

M. H.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 683–84.

¹Cf. CW, 'Psalm 131', st. 4, *CPH* (1743), 86.

From Daniel Bumsted

London
October 4, 1773

Hearing that my dear wife was in labour, I flew immediately to her assistance and found her almost in the agonies of death; but perfectly sensible and very happy.¹

When we judged her not able to pronounce one word distinctly, she broke out, to my great surprise and comfort,

I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers.²

When she saw all about her in great affliction, she endeavoured to comfort us by repeating the following words,

Come on my partners in distress,
My comrades through the wilderness,
Who still your bodies feel;
Awhile forget your griefs and fears,
And look beyond this vale of tears
To that celestial hill.³

When death seemed to appear something formidable, she cried,

No, not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Shall fright me from the shore.⁴

Again, she said,

Hark! they whisper! angels say,
Sister spirit, come away!⁵

Then the dear creature, extending her dying arms as if just going to fly away to her Saviour, said,

For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,

¹Bumsted's first wife was apparently named Elizabeth (Wallett) Bumstead.

²Isaac Watts, 'Psalm 146', st. 1, included by JW in *CPH* (1737), 9.

³CW, Hymn 21, st. 1, *HSP* (1749), 2:29–30; and in *All in All* (1761), 107.

⁴Isaac Watts, 'There is a land of pure delight', st. 6.

⁵Alexander Pope, in 'The Dying Christian to his Soul', ll. 7–8.

And Jesus bids me come!⁶

She then added, with unspeakable rapture,

O what are all my sufferings here,
If Lord thou count me meet,
With that enraptur'd host to appear,
And worship at thy feet!⁷

I never before saw a dying creature so supported. And what I then felt, and do now feel, on the occasion is unutterable! My heart seems ready to burst with grief and joy at the same instant! Surely noone ever stood in more need of the prayers of Christian friends than I do, who am now deprived of the comfort and assistance of a most worthy and engaging companion.

D. Bumsted

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 136–37.

⁶CW, 'The Pilgrim', st. 8, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 68.

⁷CW, Hymn 3, st. 9, *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 6.

From Miss B. C.

Knowle¹

October 13, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I find it is no small thing steadily to pursue the 'one thing needful': to have our eye constantly fixed on him who is invisible. Neither can it be, unless the mind is deeply attentive thereto.

I have reason to magnify the Lord, who hath turned the whole bent of my mind to himself, the true centre of all good. He does indeed actuate all my powers. I feel a deep consciousness of my own poverty and helplessness. Oh what a pleasing sensation is this! Jesus is my all in all! Even while I feel I am the vilest of the vile, a mere complex of nothingness and vanity.

The importance of your last sermon dwells much on my mind. Let him that most assuredly standeth, take heed lest he fall!² I know it is a momentary salvation. By adverting to this I have a testimony that I please God. Glory be to him! He is a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat. While I rest the whole weight of my soul on him, I am saved from fear of evil. In general my mind is deeply led into eternity. But more so for some days past. In taking a view of those that are eternally separated from God, I seem to hear their bitter wailings, till my soul is in an agony! What end this may answer I cannot now see, but hope I shall make a right use of it.

Agreeable to your desire, I have met the young women twice, with much fear and trembling; and the Lord, who gives strength to them who have no might, was powerfully present. The first time dear S. C. came. She expected a blessing, and would not rise from her knees till the Lord spoke peace to her soul. And glory be to him, he hath turned her captivity into songs of deliverance! Last Sunday P. G. was set at liberty; but she was first shook as over the mouth of hell. I never saw anyone in deeper distress. Monday evening another person was brought into the liberty of the sons of God. Tuesday evening we had a most solemn time at the band. Dear K. N. came like one that had lost all hope. I attempted to pray for her, but my mouth was stopped. So sacred was the place, no one could utter a word. The silent language of our hearts was, 'Speak Lord, for thy servants hear!'³ Before we parted she found peace beyond all our expectations. She now waits for the witness of the Spirit, that she is his. O that her example may stir up those who are old and careless, that they too may be in earnest for salvation! I have many fears lest I should not be faithful to my little charge, which in another sense is not little. Let me beg an interest in your prayers, which will be deemed a great favour, by

Your friend and daughter,

B. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 458–59.

¹This would be Knowle, Gloucestershire; a mile from Bristol.

²See 2 Cor. 10:12.

³Cf. 1 Sam. 3:7–10.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
October 17, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I beg you will not overdo. There is a difference between sparing one's self for the flesh and the world, and sparing ourselves for God and the church. May God long renew your spiritual and bodily strength as that of the eagle.

I have revised my *Equal Check* for the press, and hope it will show some candid Calvinists that the *genuine doctrine of grace* need[s] not the support of *theirs*. I think it will be proper to add an appendix to the sermon, chiefly made up of scriptures, to show that, after all, the grand scriptural motives to omit bad and do good works are punishments and rewards, in time and in eternity. A very proper way of trying faith might be to consider how far men go upon the promise of a trifling reward, and how far we move upon the promise of eternal rewards. The thought staggers me. I am almost ready to say 'When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith?'¹ And yet such are the refinements brought in by the Calvinists, and insensibly admitted to many of our friends, that to make use of divine motives is deemed selfish, etc. I foresee the decay of the power of religion among the Methodists. Man moves not but upon the wheels of proper motives. We in general stop short of perfection where the motive of *love* has not its full force. Below perfection, the motive of *interest* is to be in force. Now if carnal babes talk of the motive of love, which they have not in a sufficient degree, and despise that of fear and hope suited to their state, it is plain they must remain without sufficient motives for vigorous action. Hence lukewarmness and antinomianism.

[...²]

They tell me the gentlemen of Georgia rebuild the orphan house for Lady Huntingdon.³ I wish it may be the rebuilding of the temple, and not Jericho. [...]

I find that many, most, of the professors about me are stalled in Calvinism without knowing it. O what mazes! And how many winding in the way! May God strengthen you to stand to the last for the good old gospel.

I remain, with filial gratitude and love, reverend and dear sir,
Yours, etc.

J. Fletcher

Source: holograph; MARC, MAW Fl. 36.6 (extract in 19th cent. hand).⁴

¹Luke 18:8.

²The copyist notes skipping material and jumping to a later part of the letter.

³In June 1773 a fire destroyed much of the main block of the house George Whitefield had led in building in Bethesda, Georgia.

⁴A close transcription of this letter, showing the extractor's spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 313–15.

From Samuel Sparrow

[London]
October 29, 1773

Dear Sir,

I thank you for your favour of the 9th instant,¹ and likewise for Mr. Fletcher's *Appeal to Matter of Fact, and Commons Sense*, etc.²

I heartily agree with you in a total rejection of all human authority in religion which hath not Scripture and common sense for its foundation, and sincerely wish that all professors of Christianity were not only of the same sentiment but would honestly and faithfully examine their own hearts in order the find out the true spring of their religious opinions—whether they originate from the pure word of God or are derived from systems and creeds of fallible men. We know that the minds of youth resemble the potter's ductile clay, being susceptible of any impression. And as that, by the heat of the furnace, becomes hard and stubborn; so the heat of opposition and fire of persecution generally produce inflexibility and a greater firmness of opinion (whether right or wrong) in all mankind. Errors and prejudices will stick to the best of men, and perhaps with greater tenacity in proportion as they happen to excel in human learning and popular accomplishments. Because, as their immediate concern when opposed is defence, they have more skill and stratagem, more invention and subtlety, to countenance and support their opinions—especially when a fair reputation is at stake, and their opinions are corroborated by the suffrages of great and good men, or some pious fathers of the church whose venerable characters cast a kind of awful sanction around their works and forbid doubt.

There is, therefore, no safety but in the sacred writings. And to them alone recourse should be had in all cases of doubt and difficulty. Glosses and comments have their use, but should never be pressed upon the consciences of men. I confess that I am so sensible of my own weakness, and have seen so much in others, that I have great diffidence in all human judgment, but the highest veneration and value for the Bible. If I dared to follow any man implicitly, it would be him who appears to me to have done most good to the souls of men. And I frankly declare to you that I have had some misgivings or doubts upon my mind concerning those opinions in which we differ when I have compared your societies with those which I mostly frequent. In the one there appeared much self-denial, great zeal and fervour of devotion, spiritual joy, and crowded audiences. In the other, an appearance of careless inattention, languid devotion, and dull formality—and consequently thin assemblies and but little prospect of success in the great work of man's salvation. But upon cool reflection this wide difference does not appear to be owing so much to right principles as to right actions. Your people, being roused by an affecting address to their passions of hope and fear by their skilful and labourious pastors, have been (as in the parable) compelled to come in. And by uniting in frequent acts of public and private devotion, evil habits and bad company have been broken off, repentance taken place, and peace, serenity, and joy, the natural consequence of conscientious integrity, succeeded. Therefore, the greater success of the Methodist clergy is not, I apprehend, to be imputed to their embracing the gospel with fewer errors than their neighbours, but because they are more in earnest, more diligent and faithful in their Master's service, and less influenced by the honours, riches, and pleasures of the world. Even the very reproach which they meet with turns to their advantage, by driving them further from the snares of life, and cherishing the flame of devotion, which often chills and languishes at the approach of earthly prosperity and the fascinating charms of sensual pleasure.

¹JW to Samuel Sparrow, Oct. 9, 1773.

²John William Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense; or, A Rational Demonstration of Man's Corrupt and Lost Estate* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1772; 2nd edn., enlarged, 1773).

As all mankind seem to have upon their minds some sense of the deity, and a monitor within to do his will; so, whoever stands forth in the sacred character of a pious divine, renouncing the honours of the world for the good of souls, will undoubtedly become popular and have it in his power to draw after him great crowds of admirers; provided he does not combat popular prejudices, but strenuously maintains established doctrines, which the multitude receive with avidity and maintain with obstinacy. Hence let us admire the wonderful hand of divine providence in the conduct of your's and Mr. Whitefield's long and useful ministration! Had you two gentlemen set out from college, warm in the glorious cause of reformation, with different principles from those of the common people, you could not have expected any success like that which you have now met with. You have been received as angels of light, and the poor have had the gospel preached unto them. The Bible is more read and valued amongst them than before. And it will now be their own fault if they do not become still wiser and better. I have therefore considered your instrumentality of good to the world in a light which perhaps few have done. For had you and Mr. Whitefield (I repeat it again) entered upon the ministry with such sentiments of original sin and the Trinity as to me seem most consonant to Scripture, I much question (supposing my principles right) whether you would have done equal service to mankind. You might have cleared away many errors and prejudices from the minds of men, confounded infidels by the strength of your arguments, and influenced some to have embraced a religion so rational, so benevolent, and manifestly tending to the present peace, comfort, and joy, and to the future felicity, of all its faithful adherents. But after conviction, after proving to a demonstration the truth of things, you would still have found the great work of reformation amongst the higher ranks of people extremely hard, and much more difficult to accomplish, than among those whose indigence and labour exempt them from the dangers of luxury, indolence, and pride, and weaken their attachment to the world and all sensual gratifications. Such is the dangerous situation of the wealthy and prosperous, that we see but very few who are not hurt thereby. Example, flattery, pleasure, ambition, all combine to draw aside the mind from the straight line of duty and weaken the impressions of conviction. The truth is, in religious matters, right sentiments, a clear and accurate judgment, extensive knowledge, and profound erudition are of no avail if a suitable conduct, that of a holy and good life, be wanting.

Whatever are the means of reformation, thankfulness is must justly due to the great Arbiter of all events—though at present (like bitters for health) they are not joyous but grievous. As the spirit and flesh are at continual variance, so those who are most immersed in the cares and pleasures of the world are doubtless in the greatest danger of making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and are the hardest to be persuaded to embrace a humble, pious, and holy life. To such persons sickness and affliction have often been of more real service than the clearest conviction of the truths of Scripture, or the strongest sense of obligation to gratitude and love. Such is the folly and weakness of many good Christians that they render afflictions necessary, to keep them in the path of duty, for we are well assured that our heavenly Father does not willingly afflict the children of men. True religion is most certainly a practical thing. And modes of faith, speculative knowledge, forms and ceremonies, are of no further service than as they tend to make men wise and good, faithful to their Creator, and affectionate to one another. But these duties imply such a regulation of the passions as to many persons seems like cutting off a right hand or plucking out a right eye. And therefore they are offended and ready to fall off into a more easy and commodious road, if such a one could be found. Hence popular preachers are in danger of relaxing man's obligation to moral virtue, treating it as filthy rags and the froth of human vanity, the quicksand of philosophy, and relics of legal preaching; substituting in its stead an unwarrantable confidence that the precious blood of Christ will, without works, atone for all their sins, be their aggravations ever so heinous, and purchase for them, be their tempers ever so bad, everlasting salvation. Such doctrines represent duty so very easy and palatable to a vicious taste that it is no wonder to see vast numbers crowd those assemblies where they are preached.

There is another objection frequently made against some of our popular preachers, and I heartily wish there was not just ground for the charge. And that is their want of charity for other churches, leading their people into an opinion that salvation is only to be had in their own way of worship, and that all who believe not as they believe are in danger of eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. Alas, that any amongst the children of men should take upon them to limit infinite mercy and prescribe bounds to divine goodness; when they know that he who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works, hath positively declared that he will render to every man according to his works; and that in every nation those who fear him and work righteousness shall be accepted of him; and that where little is given, there but little is required. Differences in opinion ought never to divide Christians, whose criterion of character it is to love one another.

As to your opinion that the Father and Son are not two beings but one, permit me to say that I cannot believe what appears so like a contradiction. Though I will not venture to say it is so, on account of the great esteem I have for its author; but only wish he would expunge from his mind all human comments on the controverted texts of sacred writ, and then I make no doubt but we should perfectly agree. I have read with attention Mr. Fletcher's demonstration of man's corrupt and lost estate, etc. But I must confess it falls far short of the point in my opinion, and affords no proof of the whole race of Adam being contaminated with their father's guilt, and for his *one* transgression meriting eternal torments. Mr. Fletcher has indeed given a woeful picture of human nature, and represents the condition of man since the fall as destitute of the means of virtuous actions, or of any considerable degree of happiness in this life. According to him, every species of animals revolt against him, and all nature joins in the conspiracy. But this way of arguing, however necessary to support his opinion, is, I apprehend, far from doing any credit to religion or promoting the cause of truth and virtue.

For my own part, if I may speak as I find, I think the world is a storehouse of pleasure, that there is scarce an object the meets the eye of man but is formed to give him delightful entertainment. All the variegated scenes of nature appear to me conspiring to his benefit. There is such a profusion of gratuitous blessings scattered through all the walks of human life as are more than sufficient for each individual—if man to man were just. So that the whole earth (as the psalmist expresses it) is full of the goodness of God. By the best authority we are assured that he is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works; that he waits to be gracious and that he would have all men to repent and come to the knowledge of the truth—which certainly implies some power, some ability, already given to all men for that purpose. It would be injurious to think otherwise of the Almighty, and therefore I can never admit of such a thought.

If it is in the nature of truth to give full satisfaction to the mind; if continual peace, serenity, and joy are its genuine offspring; if a grateful sense of divine goodness influencing the mind to a filial fear of offending its Creator and to a fiducial trust in his gracious promises, through the merits of his beloved Son, attended with a warm affection to our fellow-creatures, are true signatures of a Christian temper; I humbly hope I may claim their testimony, and take the comfort of such accumulated evidence in favour of my religious principles.

I hope you will excuse the prolixity and errors of this epistle, and believe me
Your affectionate humble servant,

From Thomas Wride

[York]
November 8, 1773

Reverend Sir,

When I write, it is either from concern or necessity, for I would willingly avoid it—and to you especially, as I know something of the impertinencies you are often troubled with. And it is by advice of friends that I now comply. My intelligence is confused. But I have plain proof that some officious person or persons has wrote to you in order to get me removed, to make way for brother Rogers.¹ How this may answer, I do not undertake to say. But the *motive* and *manner* is wrong.

The motive (as I first learned) was ‘Mr. Rogers is weakly and cannot bear an hard round; but Mr. Wride is able to bear his way anywhere, but Mr. Rogers should be near the water’, etc. I should have thought little of this, had they been as honest as they seemed compassionate. But they had not honesty enough to let me know a shadow of the design. But one let it drop to sister Ruth Hall, and she thought herself bound in conscience to inform me of it.

If things was only stated as above, I was pretty well satisfied what appearance it would make with you. But I could not easily believe but what it must has some addition to make it pass. And I find it has this—namely, ‘I am not liked in town or country.’ In my esteem, this deserves no answering. I think it is the very reverse, and I will venture to say that I never was better received in any circuit that I appear to be in this. I am willing to meet them on this ground, for (unless the people of Yorkshire are accomplished dissemblers) I should, I am persuaded, have 19 out of 20 the circuit through.

John Helton likewise (I am informed) has engaged to write to you.² But he is as dishonest as the others, for he hath not let me know a word of his design. I know not wherein I have offended him, excepting that in giving notice for his preaching I did not mention his name. And afterwards, when one violently and repeated[ly] asserted that he was one of the committee to succeed Mr. Wesley after his decease, I asserted that he was not—that there was no such committee in being, nor is it certain there ever will.

However they seem to take it for granted that the point is carried, for brother Rogers went on part of the round for a fortnight (while brother Hunter went to his wife³) and he said to some, ‘I may be here again sooner than you expect’. The inference is easy.

I do not know that brother Hunter knows of, much less would have a hand in such a plot. If he has, he is not the man I take him to be. I have not seen cause to suspect him of such a dishonest deed.

I think there is some few in York who is not well pleased with my manner in preaching. I find they want me to ‘preach to the people that are without; not speak of perfection except in close society’. I cannot comply with this. I do not think it my duty in such a place as York. On a Sunday evening I speak principally to such, but at other times I find other work—and I think not without some measure of

¹This is apparently James Rogers (1749–1807), who was currently a local preacher. He would be admitted as an itinerant the next year (1774).

²John Helton (c. 1731–1817) first appears in the *Minutes* as an ‘assistant’ in 1765 (see *Works*, 10:304); he had likely been travelling since 1763. A person of some financial means, Helton was a popular preacher, and taken into JW’s trust. From 1770–75 he was stationed in London to assist JW.

³William Hunter (1728–97), a native of Placey, Northumberland, was awakened in his later teens by the preaching of Christopher Hopper. He eventually began to preach locally, and in 1767 was persuaded to enter the itinerant ministry (see *Works*, 10:343). Hunter served faithfully, mainly in the north of England and Scotland, until retiring from travelling in 1794. He continued to preach locally until his death. See *AM* 2 (1779): 589–98; and Jackson, *EMP*, 2:240–61.

success. I am sorry for those who have heard preaching so long and yet want a preacher to be continually talking of hell, and proving halfway through every discourse that man is a sinner, that he cannot save himself, that he must despair, etc. Those who think it their duty thus to speak always, may do it. But I think is *my* duty to *build* as well as lay the foundation. And there are those in York who can receive it. And young men must not be starved because fretful children *will* not (or even if they *cannot*) eat.

I had a reason for not publishing John Helton by name. It was the remembrance of what you said to me at sister [Jane] Cumberland's at Lisburn, when you opened a letter concerning him: 'I shall think no more of him than a h[eathe]n man or a publican.' Now not knowing on what footing he stood with you was my true reason why I did not attempt to make him popular. Now that was the reason for my conduct, be it justifiable or blameable.

I could have letters sufficient in my behalf, if I chose to encourage it. But I do not want to give you needless trouble. However you please, under God, to dispose of me, I am content, and desire as in conscience bound to prove myself, reverend sir,

Your devoted son,

Thomas Wride

If you see it good to answer this, please to direct it be left with Mr. John Hall, Spurrier Gate, York.

Source: Wride's manuscript draft; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box CO9, Thomas Wride papers.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
November 11, 1773

Dear Sir,

Though the Lord has blessed my husband's industry, far above our expectation, and has given me both the necessaries and conveniences of life; yet with these I feel such a measure of trouble and care, and such a mixture of uneasiness, as makes me often sick of the enjoyment.¹

I see the hand of God in this, and have reason to praise his name, that he does not suffer me to rest in anything below himself, but does so embitter earthly enjoyments to me as continually to remind me that happiness is not in them. Thus trials, disappointments, and difficulties in life are at times made profitable by keeping my heart weaned from earthly comforts, and pointing me constantly to the Lord Jesus, where only solid happiness is to be found. But in my passing through these I find much cause of dissatisfaction with myself. I see I do not suffer or bear as I should; in every respect I come short, and thereby continually make additional cause of sorrow and distress for myself.

There is one particular evil that cleaves to me, and causes me much bitterness of soul; that is a hastiness of spirit with my children, a fire within that, like lightning, suddenly flashes and is ready to burn up all before it. This is worse to me than all outward trials—these I look upon as under the direction of that providence who guides all things for his own glory and my good, but this appears as a fiend within, as an enemy of God still harboured in the heart, and rises continually as an evidence against me that I am wrong. I strive and pray against it, but am not delivered. Is this consistent with an heart perfected in love? There are some of my intimate friends whose complaints are the same with mine, and for whose sake as well as my own I would be thankful for your judgment and advice. And as your letters are always made a blessing to me, I request you will favour me with your opinion, directed to Waterford, where I am now preparing to go.

I am, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate sister,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 90–92.

¹See the description of Mitchell Bennis's business success in Bennis, *Journal*, 17–21.

From Mary Savage

Worcester
November 28, 1773

Reverend Sir,

At present I am in a poor state of health, but I hope I am quite willing to suffer my heavenly Father's will.

I find nothing so desirable as to live to God, and feel my soul approved of by him. I praise him that he helps me to make some little progress in the divine life. I find my fellowship with the Father and the Son increases, and I long to drink deeper and deeper still into his fullness.

I cannot express how great my desires are for the full enjoyment of God! But why I do not attain what I so greatly desire, I cannot tell. But this I know, I want to glorify God with my body and my spirit, which are his. I want to eat and drink, and do all I do to his glory. I want to love and serve him here as angels do above. That the happy hour may soon arrive, I beg an interest in your prayers, which will greatly oblige

Your unworthy friend and servant,

M. S.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 459–60.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Bristol]
[[December 7, 1773]]

[[I should be obliged to you if you would direct Mr. Kenton to lay by the first money he receives for my quarterly [stipend].¹ Poor Samuel Franks con[sistent]ly paid me in the quarter, and Mr. [John] Horton informs me that, upon his application to Mr. Reddall from me and from the society, he told him he 'was not able to pay'.² I wish you would enquire how this is.]]

Annotation: '[[To my brother]]'.

Source: CW's shorthand copy of reply; MARC, DDP_r 1/43 (on Horton's letter of December 4).

¹James Kenton (1723–1802) became active at the Foundery around 1750. He came from affluent circumstances but ended up in financial need (see JW to unidentified, Apr. 26, 1789). Kenton fancied himself a poet/hymnist. He published *An Essay on Death; a poem, in five books* in 1777, elegies on both Wesley brothers at their death, and *A Familiar Epistle* honouring a benefactor to Charterhouse in 1792. Two manuscript collections of his hymns also survive in MARC (MA 1977/180 and 182). Kenton was particularly close to CW's family, serving as a witness at Samuel Wesley's wedding. He was buried June 2, 1802 in Bunhill fields. Kenton was currently helping manage JW's books at London.

²John Reddall had become steward of the main London society after the death of Samuel Franks.

From Granville Sharp¹

December 20, 1773

Reverend Sir,

I have perused with great satisfaction your little tract against slavery, and I am far from thinking that any alteration is necessary.² You have very judiciously brought together, and digested under proper heads of evidence against that abominable oppression, some of the principal facts cited by my friend Mr. Benezet³ and others;⁴ which you corroborate with some circumstances within your own knowledge; and have very sensibly drawn up the sum of the whole argument into a small compass, which infinitely increases the power and effect of it, like light collected in a focus. And that it may be as sensibly felt with a living flame by those who inconsiderately oppose themselves is the sincere wish of, reverend sir,

Your most obedient and obliged servant,

Granville Sharp

P. S. I apprehend, as the tract is short, that it will appear at most advantage in 12 mo.⁵ But with respect to the mode of communicating it, I am at a loss to advise. The new edition of Dr. Rush's little tract is about to be printed by Dilly in the Poultry,⁶ with other papers relating to the same subject, which collection would be greatly enriched by your tract. Nevertheless, the latter will certainly have much more weight with many persons if it be separately printed and published with your name.

Address: 'Revd Mr John Westley'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Granv. Sharp / Dec. 20 1773'.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/314.⁷

¹Granville Sharp (1735–1813) was a philanthropist and leading opponent of slavery. He was loosely connected to the Clapham Sect and more radical in politics than most other evangelical leaders. He had recently published *Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of tolerating Slavery* (London: Benjamin White & Robert Horsefield, 1772).

²JW had sent Sharp a manuscript draft of the tract that he would publish in early 1774 as *Thoughts upon Slavery* (see Bibliography, no. 350).

³Anthony Benezet (1714–84), a Quaker educator and humanitarian in Philadelphia, was a leading advocate in the colonies of abolishing slavery.

⁴JW drew heavily on Sharp's *Representation*; Anthony Benezet's *Short Account of that Part of Africa inhabited by the Negroes* (Philadelphia: W. Dunlap, 1762) and *Some Historical Account of Guinea* (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1771); and Francis Hargrave's *An Argument in the Case of James Sommersett, a Negro* (London: W. Otridge, 1772) in preparing *Thoughts upon Slavery*. See Frank Baker, 'The Origins, Character, and Influence of John Wesley's *Thoughts upon Slavery*', *Methodist History* 22 (1984): 75–86.

⁵I.e., in duodecimo size pages.

⁶Sharp is clearly referring to Benjamin Rush (1746–1813), *An Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements in America upon Slave-keeping* (1773); but no printing by Dilly in London is known.

⁷A transcription was published previously in *Wesley Banner* 1 (1849): 140.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
December 29, 1773

Dear Sir,

Your last gave me much satisfaction, as indeed all your letters do.¹ O what cause have I to be thankful for such helps. When I find anything in my experience which appears doubtful, I am rather apt to conclude against myself. And though this may proceed from an honesty of heart, yet it has often been cause of much distress to me, by opening a way for the disputations of the enemy, and indeed of my own mind. For I am of myself led to look for that uniformity in all my experience which appears to me consistent with a state of perfection, but which I certainly do not find. And so great is my ignorance that I know not where to lay the blame. I cannot charge it on God, therefore I willingly lay it on myself; and from this cause have been times without number ready to give up my hold as to the work of sanctification. But [I] am prevented, I know not how. Indeed in every particular case your judgment determines the matter, and gives full satisfaction. Nor can I be satisfied however clear the case may appear to my mind, until I receive your approbation of it. And even then I am often apt to think you pass too favourable a judgment on me.

Indeed in general I find such a deadness of affection, such a want of warmth and fervor of spirit towards God, and such an unaccountable unsteadiness of mind, and proneness to wander, as I think none else who make the same profession does experience. What shall I say to this? If the evil propensity be taken out of my heart, why should I find any difficulty in keeping it stayed upon God? This was the case once, but it is not so now. Nor can I at any time doubt but that the work was wrought. But finding it not with me *now* as it was then, I often suffer painful fears, least all should not now be right. My dear sir, I know your love will bear with all my folly. And as I would act without disguise before you, so I hope you will lay my weakness before the Lord. Indeed, it is often my request that he would lay me upon your heart in prayer. Blessed be his name, through the whole, I do find it the desire of my soul to do his will.

...

He has in much mercy brought me safe to this place, but [I] cannot see wherein I can be useful here. I think I never was less fit to act for God, yet find a willingness to act even without life. But the people are very dead and do not meet.

I am, dear sir,

Yours, etc.

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 94–96.

¹See JW to Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis, Dec. 1, 1772.

From the Rev. Edward Davies¹

[London]
[c. December 30, 1733]

[[‘I look upon it to be c[ruel and] b[ase] to delude me with such secret reserves.’
[[‘I particularly insisted on your brother [i.e., CW] having your full authority.’
[[‘His letters which I have by me assure me that all things were settled both with you by letter and the committee in person.’
[[‘But to my great astonishment, when I came with my family to town, I found that the committee were not consulted on the £80 a year.’
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[[‘You must take me for better or worse, you must keep me always, whether your people like me or no.’
[[‘Both Mr. John and Charles [Wesley] had been long corresponding with me before they could prevail.’]]

Source: excerpts in CW shorthand copy for records; MARC, DDCW7/114/2, pp. 1–2.

¹In response to encouragement from CW and JW, Rev. Edward Davies arrived in London in late May 1773 to begin ministering among the Methodists there (particularly in the chapels where the Lord’s supper could be celebrated). But Davies’s excessive expectations and personality created difficulties from the start (see JW to Davies, July 19, 1773). In Dec. 1773 the committee in charge of staffing the London chapels informed Davies that his support would be discontinued at the end of the next quarter (see John Horton to CW, Dec. 11, 1773). Davies wrote to JW protesting, only these excerpts of his letter are known to survive, quoted in a response CW sent JW after seeing the letter; see CW to JW, Jan. 8, 1774.

From Elizabeth (Gwyn) Hatton¹

[Waters Upton, Shropshire?]
c. January 5, 1774

John Hatton, from the time of his infancy, had but a poor state of health. But during the last two years he grew much worse, until the Lord saw good to call him hence.

He did not seem to have much impression on his mind until the last half year of his illness. One of his uncles coming to see us, he began to talk to him about his soul, which offended him so much that he went out and would speak to him no more.

One morning, about eight o'clock, he was taken with a bleeding at his nose, which continued three hours. We used many means to stop it, but all to no purpose till the juice of nettles were applied.

On his seeming much afraid of death, I said, 'My dear, the Lord will have mercy upon you if you pray to him.' On which, he began to pray fervently in these words: 'Dear Lord, have mercy upon me! Dear Lord have mercy upon me!' His bleeding began again about 1:00, and continued till 4:00 in the evening. We much feared he would bleed to death, but the Lord saw good to spare him a little longer.

Soon after, he was taken very ill, and for some days was in most exquisite pain. We got the best advice we could, but to no purpose. Meantime he was often praying that the Lord would pardon his sins. I asked him when he thought the Lord would do this. He said, 'I cannot tell.' I told him he was willing to do it now if he could believe, after which he seemed more resigned to die. I asked him if he thought the Lord had pardoned him. He said, 'Yes.' I again asked him how he could tell. 'Why', said he, 'you told me if I could believe he would pardon me, and I do believe.' After this he got a little better again, but seemed very desirous to die. I said to him, 'Do you want to leave your father and mother?' He said, 'Why, if I should live and be wicked, and the Lord should cut me off in my sins, what would become of me?'

In the beginning of December he was taken very ill, but his affections seemed quite weaned from all things here. He one day asked when his uncle would come again. I said, 'Do you want to see him? I thought you said, "I do not care if I never see him more".' 'Ah!' said he, 'I was so wicked then. But I should be glad to see him now, and should like him to be at my burial.' I asked why he would like that. 'Why', said he, 'he would sing over me'.

He took it unkind of one of his uncles who did not call to see him so often as he wished. I mentioned this to my brother, who came and conversed with him and afterwards went to prayer. I observed as soon as he mentioned him in prayer the tears ran down his face. He now seemed wholly devoted to God, and would sometimes sit with his eyes closed, with all fervency in prayer. As I was listening I heard him use these words; 'Dear Lord, enable me to bear it with patience! Dear Lord, take me to thyself if it be thy blessed will!'

One evening he said, 'I have been praying to the Lord to take me, and he will take me soon. I feel such comfort as I cannot express.' The next day I asked him again if he thought the Lord had pardoned his sins? He said, 'Yes.' I asked if he ever knew that he was a sinner. He said, 'Yes, and I have cried to think what wicked words I have said', the tears running down his face while he spoke. Though I never remember that he spoke any bad words.

One morning he said to his father, 'I thought I should have had a bad night last night. But I prayed to the Lord and he eased me. And when I find the pains coming on, I pray to the Lord and he takes them away.' He was very desirous to hear me read. One hymn that I read to him, he delighted in much, and would often try to raise his feeble voice to sing these words:

¹Rev. Thomas Hatton married Elizabeth Gwyn on July 24, 1764. Their son John was born a year later.

Come Lord and make ready thy bride,
My Saviour, no longer delay;
Come quickly my God and my guide,
And safely conduct me away.

He was trying to sing these words a little before his death.

At another time he said, 'The Lord rejoiceth my heart now, and I find such comfort from him as you cannot conceive.' Towards the last his pains became violent. After one of his conflicts he said, 'Dying will be no more than going to sleep.' Soon after he appeared to be almost gone—was in a cold sweat, with his teeth set. I spoke to him, but he could not answer. I kneeled down to commit him into the hands of God. He then revived a little, and bid me pray. I did so. He repeated the words after me till the sweat ran off him. It was an affecting scene, but the Lord proportioned my strength to my day.

One of his uncles coming in, he asked him to pray, adding, 'I cannot kneel now.' He sat with his eyes closed for sometime, as one whose heart was engaged with God. Soon after he said to me, 'I shall be a happy angel soon, and if you will pray you will be one also.'

Soon after, his countenance changing, he cast his eyes on me with a smile. I asked him if he was going to Jesus? He said, 'Yes.' I asked if he was willing to leave his father and mother. 'Ah!' said he, 'but I hope you will come to me to that happy place.'

An hour or two after, I asked if he wanted to be gone. 'Yes', said he, 'but I cannot go till the Lord sees fit'. As he had sat up all the last day, we prevailed on him to lie down in the evening, after which he seemed very restless. His father said to him, 'My dear, compose yourself and go to sleep.' He said, 'I will.' And just after, he fell asleep in the arms of Jesus, December 31, 1773, aged eight years and six months.²

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 25–28.

²John Hatton (1766–73) was buried on Jan. 2, 1774 in Kingswinford, Staffordshire (not far from Waters Upton).

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

[Bristol]

[[January]] 8, 1774

[[Dear Brother,

[[I do not rightly understand Mr. Davies' complaint.

[[‘I look upon it to be c[ruel and] b[ase] to delude me with such secret reserves.’ What difference to him whether the committee or you paid him £80 a year?

[[‘I particularly insisted on your brother [i.e., CW] having your full authority.’ Not a word of [?]]. His words were softer than oil.³

[[‘His letters which I have by me assure me that all things were settled both with you by letter and the committee in person.’ My letters, he little suspects, I kept a copy of, and transmit them to you.

[[‘But to my great astonishment, when I came with my family to town, I found that the committee were not consulted on the £80 a year.’ Why great astonishment? At first he declared he would have nothing to do with the committee. His business was with you. Besides, I remember that in one of my letters, which I did not copy throughout, I told him that I had mentioned to the committee your having offered him £70. I forbore to mention 80 to him, knowing you could best reconcile them to such an enormous salary.

[[‘Acquainting your brother with those disputes, he answered he would pay the difference out of the public stock.’ And what was it to him who paid him his salary or how, so it was but paid? Where was the dispute? Or what need of that outcry?

[[‘This seeming prevarication was a dis[agree]able onset to poor Mrs. Davies and me, coming after the strongest assurances of friendship and absolute call to come immediately, and leave all the stuff behind, for the land of Canaan was before me.’ As to my absolute call urging, hastening, hurrying him up, etc., I have this to say: It was all posterior to his bargain and agreement. He came to London unexpected on Saturday March 13, and returning soon to Wales, agreed with us that his salary should commence from that day. I therefore thought I had a right to hasten him back after two-month's absence, lest the people should more grudge the large salary if he stayed from them longer.

[[The expression of ‘not staying for the stuff, since the whole land was before him’, was Mr. [Richard] Kemp's. I meant by it that (presuming he would answer our hopes) the people would love and care for him as for you; and that while they had a piece of bread he would be sure of a part. This, I now see and can face, was throwing oil into the fire or giving water to the dike. But I did not then know their dispositions.

[[I do not now wonder at his adding ‘this discovery con[join]ed with Mrs. Davies's uneasiness and led her to see the reasonableness of expecting the advanced £40 as a token of esteem and consideration for our extraordinary expense’. This discovery of what? I explicitly wrote him word that you agreed to his demand of £80. It is mere cavilling, his pretended astonishment at the manner of payment. Mrs. Davies's uneasiness was from herself—her own spirit, temper, greediness, and disap[pointment] ‘that the people did not all come to visit a dying woman’. This did not lead her to see the reasonableness of the £40 advanced. Her and his covetousness led them to shock, disgust, and confound us (Mr. [John] Horton, [William] Ley, and me, etc.) with an immediate absolute demand of £40,

¹JW shared with CW the letter he received from Rev. Edward Davies when Davies was informed his service among the London Methodists was being discontinued. CW here provides initial reactions to Davies's charges. See also CW's more extensive response in the letter of Jan. 19, 1774.

²The shorthand looks like ‘p(?)thtry’.

³See Ps. 55:1; ‘yet were they drawn swords’.

otherwise he would d[irect]ly leave us and look out for another curacy.

[[‘Your brother, Mr. Horton, and others thought it reasonable.’ Not quite so. They often argued about this question, having taken the alarm. I answered cautiously not that his demand of £40 was reasonable, but that something should be given him for his extraordinary expense (by a private contribution I proposed). [I] explicitly told him I could not promise for my brother, but hoped and believed he would do something to assist him. And had he proved the man we took him for, I nothing doubt but many would have made up his losses.

[[His statement of his affairs I did show the committee, not the particulars of his loss in goods, corn, journeys, etc.

[[‘Could I have a luk[ewarm] view?’ Let facts answer. They do too plainly. *Quod dedit principium adveniens!*⁴ He expected (and was weak enough to say so) the people to furnish, if not take him, an house. He expected me meantime to complement him with men. He expected the society to keep him an horse at half guinea a week. He fully expected (as is plain from his bargain with his curate) to have remained f[oremost] minister of our church till and after your death, and that all their subsistence should have been as his service. So I am persuaded from those several instances of his sordidness and greediness, in r[egard] to Mr. Kemp, the couchman, the lodgings, etc.

[[I have been informed by a friend of his, Mr. Osmer(?), that he could never do any good in his parish. He utterly disgusted and deceived them by many sordid accusations. He answered that he had not complied to some layman therefore by many sordid accusations. He answered that he had alone complied to some layman there by his strait subs[ervience]. I then took his word and was satisfied.

[[‘I had given a promissary note to my curate that I would not remove him as long as he was curate of Oving(?). And my house is let for 7 years.’ Why did he not tell us this beforehand and give us fair warning?

[[‘You must take me for better or worse, you must keep me always, whether your people like me or no.’

[[‘Both Mr. John and Charles [Wesley] had been long corresponding with me before they could prevail.’ I must beg leave to explain myself. I never pressed or asked him to come amongst us. I never but once mentioned it in my letters, till he did come and bargained to begin his service from March 13. [At] our many previous conferences in Bristol I was always upon my guard. Not that I then expected him to turn out such as he has done, but because I mistrusted my own knowledge of men in general and because I am duly ignorant of futurity. He himself has told me he wondered that when at last he offered to come I did not close with the offer and urge him to an immediate union.

[[I always said he should be fully persuaded in his an[swer]. After he had agreed, I told him in a letter ‘You know I left you to yourself, I never persuaded or urged you to come.’ ‘Whether God has chosen you to benefit and be benefited by our children he only can tell. I am ignorant therefore without a choice. I have no interest in your coming or staying away. Come with me to London in the end of February; if you should not like us, if you should stumble at the threshold, you may retreat in a quarter, a month, or a week.’

[[My judgement, you see, was that he should first come upon trial, without his family.]]

Heading: ‘[[Answer to Davies / Copy to my brother / never sent]]’.⁵

Source: CW shorthand copy for records; MARC, DDCW7/114/2 (pp. 1–2).

⁴Terence, *The Eunuch*, III.ii.459–60; “On his arrival! What a way to begin” (Loeb).

⁵CW apparently means he did not send the answer to Davies, but did send the copy to JW.

From Mary Jones

[Bath]

January 10, 1774

Reverend Sir,

I have once more taken the liberty to write, to let you know the dealings of God with my soul. Since I saw you I have been brought to the very verge of eternity, for which I am exceeding thankful. My hope was full of immortality. I found God was faithful to his promise. I had much pain of body. But my strength in Jesus was more than equal to it. The more the body suffered, the more I was enabled to rejoice. Some weeks before, I was much tempted to think that I should be buffeted on a sick-bed, and that I should not be able to glorify God in the trying moment. But I found my enemy a liar. God, out of his tender love, sweetly opened eternity to my view, and gave me to drink of that river the streams whereof make glad the city of God.

It has pleased him to raise me again, so far as to be able to labour for the meat that perisheth, but I hope with less anxiety than ever I did before. My soul is kept in perfect peace, in the midst of outward hurry and noise. A deep sense of eternal things continually awes my soul. And an abiding sense of the love and presence of God lifts me above the giddy multitude.

I feel need of cleaving close to Jesus, trusting him with all I am and have. He has stripped me of all, enabled me to give up my wisdom and to become a fool, that I may be truly wise. He seems to be leading me into the depth of religion, the internal, silent, hidden life. But here I need great strength. The amazing love and condescension of God, and my own weakness and nothingness, is as much as I can bear the sight of. He seems to be answering that petition, which has often been the language of my heart,

Confound, o'erpower me by thy grace!
I would be by myself abhorred!¹

I long to drink into this spirit, that lays me low and exalts Jesus, so that the Lord will condescend to communicate strength to bear it.

Satan at present uses every art to shake my confidence. But I find Jesus stronger than all the powers of hell, and he maintains his own work by continually refreshing me with fresh supplies of grace, and promising I shall not be tempted above what I am able to bear. I am deeply sensible nothing can happen to me without the permission of God. Therefore it must be all for my good, and I receive it thankfully at his hands.

It is by his grace I am what I am. I never was so sensible that of myself I can do nothing; that I am nothing, that I have nothing. Here then all boasting is excluded. Jesus is all in all. Short of him I am wretched, poor, blind, and naked; which often makes me cry out, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?' My will is entirely subject to the will of God, so that I cannot desire anything contrary to it. Forgetting the things that are behind, I press forward to know Jesus, and the whole power of his resurrection.

I feel great power in prayer for the church in general, but particularly for that in this place. And he has promised my expectation shall not be cut off, but he will enlarge her borders. May you live to see Zion in prosperity, her walls salvation, and her gates praise! O, may we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end! That at last we may all meet you at the right hand of God, and enter with you into the joy of our Lord! So prays

Your very unworthy

¹CW, 'Pleading the Promise of Sanctification', st. 27, *HSP* (1742), 264.

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(page 213)

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 657–59.

From Samuel Sparrow

[London]
January 12, 1774

Dear Sir,

I received with pleasure your favour of the 28th of last month, and though we cannot quite agree in our sentiments on some few subjects, yet I hope that will not prevent such a friendship as will last forever. It is a pleasing and a glorious prospect which opens to the view of all those who can with sincerity and truth adopt that pious and benevolent declaration of our Lord's: 'Whoever doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my mother, and brother, and sister.'¹ True religion lies more in the heart than in the head, more in practice than in speculation—if faith that works by love and manifests itself by fidelity to God and love to man.

I hope that I need not tell you that I wish to be remembered in your prayers, that I may be kept from temptation and assisted to do at all times the will of God.

With great respect and esteem, I remain, dear sir,
Your affectionate humble servant,

Source: published transcription; Sparrow, *Essays*, 175–76.

¹Matt. 12:50.

From Thomas Wride

[York]

c. January 15, 1774

Reverend Sir,

In my last I expressed myself satisfied that brother [William] Hunter had no hand in the affair, for I could not (then) think him capable of such an action. But now I have proof that puts me out of doubt. The scheme was laid while John Helton and William Hunter was present with the rest of the schemers. How this is reconcilable to common honesty, I cannot see. For I thought we had been as one, and yet at the same time he was stabbing me in the dark. As for John Helton, it was a sufficient offence that I did not endeavour to make him popular. What claim he has to popularity I know not, except (what he is careful to speak in private, and has not failed to publish in a Sunday evening congregation) his independent fortune. I have heard him spoke of as a great preacher. What he *has* been, I cannot say. I have heard him three times, and if I may speak, I think he has no just right to claim applause. His matter and his manner is (in my judgment) inferior to brother Hunter. And I believe he is far from being a Methodist in principle. Particulars I at present forbear, as I must come nearer the present time.

Some time ago the hymn 'The God of Abraham praise'¹ was in high esteem. There being none of them with our book steward, some of our private members caused them to be reprinted and sold them to others. One brought me half a hundred to sell in the country. I told him it was against rule,² and therefore I could not do it. He said he did not know anything of the rules, and easily took my denial. But brother Hunter took them and sold how many I know not. I suspected what would follow—namely that we should soon have more printing.

It was in the course of my plan to come to York Christmas day in the afternoon. Almost as soon as I had a pamphlet shown me (some hymns printed for Christmas³) and 'hoping you will oblige us with one of them this evening'. I told him no, for it was against rule. He said that many people had got them, and it was expected they would be sung, and that 'Johnny Johnson⁴ has obliged us with one this morning', etc. I told him I would sing no hymns until they was approved of by Mr. Wesley. After many persuasions, and as many denials, he said he knew it was contrary to rule, but thought that I would oblige them so far, etc.

About half an hour before preaching time comes Roger Preston (one of our stewards), and with him Thomas Pears, a local preacher, and another of the society; and Roger Preston asked 'Have you seen our new hymns?' I told him yes. 'Well, I hope you will oblige us by singing of them.' I told him no. 'Why? What objection have you to them?' I told him it was contrary to rule. 'But the people expect it.' I told him they had no right to expect it. 'You do not seek to please the people; and if you do not get their affections, your preaching will be to no purpose.' I told him, 'I have the happiness to please and profit those that are gracious. And if I cannot please the rest without violating my conscience or breaking of the

¹Thomas Olivers, *A Hymn to the God of Abraham* (1770 ori.); an English paraphrase of an ancient Hebrew doxology attributed to Daniel ben Judah.

²See Minutes, Nov. 16, 1749, Q. 15, *Works*, 10:235; *Minutes* (1765), Q. [24], 10:311. Ironically, JW had encouraged a republication of this hymn the same year (1773) by William Pine in Bristol.

³This was apparently an early version of William Ramsden's *Hymns on the Nativity: also New Year's Day, Love Feast, and the Passion, to the Trinity* (York: A. Ward, 1775). See Wride's letter of Dec. 8, 1780 to JW.

⁴Apparently the local preacher, John Johnson, also known as 'Drummer Johnson', who died in 1775; see William Lyth, *Glimpses of Methodism in York* (York: William Sessions, 1885), 116–17.

rules, I cannot help it. Nor will I please them at that expense.' He asked if I had the rule in print. I told him yes, that it forbid us to sing hymns of our own *composing*,⁵ and by consequence those of other persons until they had Mr. Wesley's approbation. 'Well', he replied, 'Here is the voice of the people.' I told him the voice of the people was no reason for me to break a rule; that they should *keep* the rules, and not *make* rules. 'Well', says he, 'what if the rules be such as the people do not like? What then?' I told him that good manners obliged any person to conform to the rules of any society joined with, as long as he chose to continue in it. 'But', says he, 'what if they are such as we did not think right?' I told him, if it was the case, he might make his objections and it would be considered. For the Methodists was not so invariably fixed but what they could admit of an alteration for the best. 'But', says he, 'What if we could not get it altered?' I told him, if it was such as he could not get altered, nor could in conscience submit to them, then he ought quietly to leave them. This solution he did not seem to approve of, but told me 'There will be some hundreds of them in the love feast, and then they will be sung, for you will not rule there.' In order to prevent which, I wrote as follows and left it for brother Hunter:

December 27, 1773

Brother Hunter,

Doubting whether I should see you before I went to Stillington is the reason of my writing.

There is some verses composed and printed to be sung among us at this season. I have refused to sing them, because it is contrary to the rule of Conference. This has displeased some. But this comfort remains: that there will be 'many hundreds of copies at the love feast, and then they will be sung', because Mr. Preston says I shall not rule there. The event will prove. But until *that* proof is given, I will not believe *you* will thus publicly fly in Mr. Wesley's face. I thought it needful to give you this caution. I love peace, but it is bought too dear at the expense of truth or discipline.

Your affectionate brother,

Thomas Wride

I do not know that brother Hunter has sung any of them; although John Johnson has, more than once. As Roger Preston is so much displeased on this account, and was one concerned in writing against me before, I shall not wonder if you are applied to again; and more especially as brother Rogers is again on the circuit, to supply brother Hunter's absence.

I hear that brother Hunter, James Rogers, and Arthur Kershaw is to be here on Thursday, to attend the quarterly sessions, for to take licence. But everything is made a secret to me; for ever since I charged brother Hunter with being concerned in attempting to get me off the circuit, he is as shy as if I was a stranger.

Whoever tells you of a revival at York is (at least in my judgment) mistaken. The truth is we have on Sunday evening a large congregation, the house nearly full above and below. What wonder in a city, in short days and cold weather! But as for new members, convictions, conversions, or any remarkable deepening of the work, I know of none. At Tadcaster there is a good prospect, members added and souls quickened. This is the most promising place in all the circuit. When I was there on Sunday, December 19th, I had the opportunity of conversing with some who had formerly met with the children, and had received their first impressions by that means. I was resolved to make another trial (for it had been long dropped), and spoke of it at large in the society. Brother Minethorp kindly and wisely seconded the blow

⁵See Minutes, June 18, 1747, Q. 12, *Works*, 10:207.

by preaching (on Innocent's Day⁶) to the children particularly. On Sunday, Jan. the 3rd, I gave notice for the children to meet me, and I took the names of forty. How many will stand, let time prove. But the past successes give ground for hope for some good.

The reason of my writing is expecting that my sly opposers may write, or have wrote, and I hope you will receive this as a sufficient apology for the present trouble given by, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son,

Thomas Wride

Source: Wride's manuscript draft; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box CO9, Thomas Wride papers.

⁶The Day of the Holy Innocents, Dec. 28.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley (via John Horton)¹

[[Bristol]]
[[January]] 19, 1774

Since I wrote this, I think it safer to direct it to my dear friend Horton. You will deliver it, and attest the truth, to my brother.²

Friday, June 26, 1772 I met Mr. [Edward] Davies in Bristol, on his way to Wales. He informed me that my brother and he had been treating some time about his coming to assist us at our chapels. We rode and conversed together most days till July 16. I saw how much depended on his being first a man of grace and of a single eye, and next, a true lover of the Church of England. I therefore endeavoured in our first conferences to stir him up and provoke him to love and good works. From the beginning I laid aside all reserve. All the difference betwixt my brother and me (I told him) was that my brother's first object was the Methodists, and then the Church; my first the Church, and then the Methodists. That our different judgment of persons was owing to our different tempers—his all hope, and mine all fear. That I could not blame him for *asking* Mr. Davies to join us, although I dared not do it myself, fearing my own ignorance and shortsightedness, and believing he ought to be fully persuaded in his own mind, so that if he came it might be entirely his own deed and choice.

The farthest I durst go was to answer his objections. Some he mentioned, but kept others back, and seemed to leave Bristol unresolved.

In his letters from Wales he again seemed willing to come, but started fresh objections, which I fairly satisfied. I acted with the utmost simplicity, telling him the faults as well as virtues of our children, setting before him all the difficulties and discouragements as well as the advantages which might accrue both to him and them.

In the beginning of December 1772 he mentioned a new objection, 'I understand it is a matter concluded on that the people are to be directed by 12 lay-preachers.' I set him right in my answer of December 10, and added, 'Known unto God are all his works, and all his workmen. Whether *he has chosen you* to benefit or to be benefited by our children, *he only can tell*. I am ignorant and therefore *without a choice*. I have no interest in your coming or staying away. The will of the Lord be done.'

'But I think you run no hazard by helping us. *Tu in portu navigas*,³ and are absolute master of your own motions. Come with me to London in the end of February. ... If you should not like us; if you should stumble at the threshold ... you may retreat in a quarter, a month, or a week and bury yourself again and your talent at Coychurch.'⁴

In his next he mentioned an impossible condition: 'If he was *sure* Mr. Fletcher would succeed my brother.' I replied in few words, 'There is all reason to *hope* John Fletcher will succeed John Wesley. The

¹We have this letter in three versions in CW's hand: the original sent to JW via John Horton (DDCW 1/64), CW's clean copy for his records (DDCW 7/63), and a copy in shorthand (DDCW 7/114, pp. 2–3). There are also derivative copies in a secondary hand in MARC (DDCW 1/63) and the Methodist Archives at Drew.

²CW added this line in the top margin of page 1, clearly after writing the rest of the letter, to explain why he was sending this letter to his brother via Horton.

³'You navigate into the port.'

⁴In 1768 Davies was also made rector of Coychurch, Glamorgan, Wales (though he was infrequently resident there).

Lord will give him suitable associates. *I have no more to say upon the subject.* You must be fully persuaded in your own mind.'

From this time I gave up all thoughts of his coming and expected to hear no more from him about it. But not long after he surprised me with another letter, 'that he would no longer confer with flesh and blood, or fear to disoblige Lady Huntingdon, but was resolved to follow his conscience and come among us.' I replied, that his fear of her Ladyship was a new objection, which he *ought* maturely to consider and not rashly disoblige his benefactress. I told him the hour I should set out for London, not inviting him to accompany me, not expecting or desiring it.

February 25, 1773 I came to London.

Thursday, March 10, I met Mr. Davies at the Foundry, to which he came quite unexpected the evening before.

He declared to me and Mr. [William] Ley that he would have nothing to do with the committee, and desired they might *not* be consulted in regard to his salary. For this reason, when it was touched on among them Mr. [John] Horton stopped their proceeding on that subject, and declared that my brother would reserve it to himself.

He demanded £80 a year in Mr. Ley's presence. I agreed to it and promised to write immediately to my brother, who I doubted not would agree to it too.

On Sunday, March 14, he assisted me at the [West Street] chapel, and so every Sunday till Easter. On the 13th or 14th of April, he set out for Wales; but first agreed with me in presence of Mr. Ley either that his travelling expenses should be paid or his *salary commence from the time of his first coming to town.* To the last we mutually agreed.

In his first letter from Wales, May 1, he writes thus, 'There was one thing which I postponed laying before you, and am very culpable for my neglect—our real situation and circumstances (then follows a long account of them). We find it impracticable to sell our goods. They are become a mere drug⁵ and are sold (here) for half value, so that we must take them all to London. And as this will be attended with great expense, should esteem it as a great Christian kindness if the stewards could lend us £40 or £50 to defray the expenses of our journey and to commence housekeeping. ... I must beg, my dear sir, your being so kind as to lay THIS before the stewards immediately, because I can do nothing before I have an answer.'

I immediately summoned the committee and laid it before them. They all agreed to advance him £40 of his salary. Some inquired, 'What that should be, knowing Mr. Davies's desire that *it should not* be submitted to them, and that my brother could better, when he came, reconcile them to so large a salary.' I only said that my brother had formerly told me he would allow him £70 a year. Mr. Horton then put an end to the inquiry by telling them my brother reserved that matter to himself.

I purposed, at my coming to London, to return home immediately after Easter, but yielded to stay a little longer for Mr. Davies's sake. He promised to be back before Whitsunday at the farthest, and in a letter of May 28 writes, 'I take it inexpressibly kind your staying for my arrival, for I know the timidity of my spirits'.

I had informed him of my mentioning to the committee my brother's former offer of £70, of their allowing £40 per advance, and of my brother's consenting to pay him £80 per annum. In my letter were these words: 'You know I left you to yourself. ... I never persuaded or urged you to come among us, but stood still to see the design of God. Mr. [Richard] Kemp has sent you the enclosed [bill], bidding you come away and not stay for the stuff, for the whole land is before you.'

⁵OED includes as one meaning of 'drug' at this time: 'A commodity which is no longer in demand, and so has lost its commercial value or has become unsaleable.'

‘You see the necessity of hastening to us. I will defer my journey till June 14, that I may be here to receive you, and *leave you settled*. Let nothing retard your setting out beyond Whitsun Monday. If your partner be too weak to accompany you, leave her to follow at her leisure. It may be best for you to have an house ready for her.’

June 8 Mr. Davies came with his wife, children, and maid to Mr. Horton’s.

[[Dear Brother,]]

From this plain narrative you may fully answer all which concerns me in Mr. Davies’s letter. My ‘*urgent letter* and absolute call to come’ was no more than pressing him to keep his word. I thought I had a right to hasten him back, *after the bargain was made*. And I did urge him to return at the *time promised*, for his sake as well as my own and the people’s, who might be more apt to grudge the large stipend if he stayed longer from them.

As to that expression of Mr. Kemp’s, ‘Stay not for the stuff, for the whole land is before you’, I am persuaded any clergyman acceptable to the people would find it strictly true, and that while they had a piece of bread he would be *sure* of part of it.

Mr. Davies is mistaken in saying ‘your brother, Mr. Horton, and others thought it reasonable’. So far from it that we were shocked and confounded above measure when, at his first coming, he peremptorily demanded the £40 as a gift, otherwise he would ‘immediately leave us, and look out for another curacy’. What I thought reasonable was that *something* should be allowed him *towards* his extraordinary expenses. I proposed a private collection, but explicitly told him I could not *promise* for my brother. Only I *hoped* and *believed*, he would do something for him.

[on margin of address page:]

[[Dear Brother]]

[[The rest comes on Monday next. Show this to Mr.]] Ley, and Horton. Take care, it is neither lost nor stolen.

[[Adieu]]

Address: ‘To / Mr Horton / Dyer in Woodstreet / London’.

Endorsement: by JW, ‘C[harles] Case of Rev. Mr Davi[e]s / Janu[uary] 19, 1774’.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 1/64.

From Miss M. Cotton

Liverpool
January 29, 1774

Reverend and very Dear Sir,

Your character for candour and ease of access gives me to hope that you will pardon the address of a person to you unknown. My concern is how I may live the life of the righteous, as well as to die their death? But alas, here lies the great difficulty, being carried into extremes on the one hand or the other—some times splitting on the rocks, and at others sinking in the sands.

It is now about thirteen years since the Lord first set my soul at liberty, *by his free forgiving love*. But alas, I am yet but 'a babe in Christ'.¹ I want to feel much more than I do at present, the meaning of 'This is the victory which overcometh—even our faith'.² When I feel peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, then I can say 'for me to live is Christ, and to die would be gain'.³ I feel that what I ask is given; yea, I can 'rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory'.⁴ Though I cannot say I feel so much of extasy as of settled peace, but to pray to God and to praise him is my greatest happiness. Solitude and retirement are what I at such seasons long for. I can say that *I am least alone when most alone*. No cross appears heavy, no affliction great. Complaining is not heard in the street, nor murmuring in all the land. My only desire is that the will of God may be done in me and by me, and that I may have uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But oh, how short lived are these my happy hours.

Though I believe, when in the state above described I am in some measure fit to die. Yet how to live, I know not. I seldom continue in this state longer than two or three days together. It seems to me that I must exclude myself from all company or I cannot retain that near fellowship with God which I long for. I continually feel that a word spoken (as I judge) improperly, or not to the glory of God, wounds my faith, destroys my joy, and fills me with unspeakable anguish. I cannot relate anything which I have heard spoken by another—let the matter of it be ever so good, or the design I have in speaking ever so profitable—if it be not related by me just in the author's own words. Though I may have given the full meaning, yet something says within that I have not spoken the truth. Again, if I am asked a question in an hasty manner, and I in the same way reply I think it is so or not, etc., and if I afterward find it not to be just as I have said, I am brought into condemnation. Nay, in short I cannot converse either with religious or irreligious persons. I cannot allow myself to speak of the things of time or eternity. Nay, even if I am asked the most important question, I cannot return them an answer but I feel condemnation for having said something or other which is not right. Whether this is a temptation from Satan or something wrong in me I cannot tell. But this I can say with certainty, that the sorrow and anguish of soul which I feel on these occasions no tongue can describe. As for speaking evil of an absent person, the Scripture so clearly forbids it that I think no one can offend against that plain rule through mistake or forgetfulness. But it appears to me that forgetfulness and mistake are the great sources of all my sufferings.

I am often led to think much on these passages of Scripture: 'By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned';⁵ 'In the multitude of words there doth not want sin';⁶

¹1 Cor. 3:1.

²1 John 5:4.

³Phil. 1:21.

⁴1 Pet. 1:8.

⁵Matt. 12:37.

⁶Prov. 10:19.

‘Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God’.⁷ At some times I fear lest I should be seeking for sanctification by works and not by faith. I hope, dear sir, you will be so kind as to point out to me how far I am right, and wherein I am wrong. And how I may escape these temptations (if they are such) and live devoted to God, which is the longing desire of my soul. I bless God for the hope I feel since I began to write of this snare being broken. That your days may be many and peaceful, and your unremitting labours crowned with an abundant success, is the sincere prayer of, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

M. Cotton

Source: published transcription; *Methodist Magazine or Evangelical Repository* 2 (1799): 610–12.

⁷1 Cor. 10:31.

From Samuel Bardsley

[Buxton, Staffordshire?]
c. February 10, 1774¹

Reverend and very Dear Sir,

May that God whose you are, and who you serve, bless you forever. Amen. As the Lord hath favoured me to be connected with you, I shall (I trust, while God spares you) look upon it as my duty and privilege to write to you and inform you how I go on. Through mercy I have had my health as well as I could expect and in general I have been as comfortable in my soul and circuit as in any former years, for which I desire to be thankful to you for sending me and to the Lord for preserving and helping me amongst this people.

I love my fellow labourers. They have their hearts in the work and would do anything for me in their power. The work, I believe, is going forward. A goodly number have found peace since the Conference. Macclesfield is in a prosperous way. Our society and congregation is increased and they attend morning preaching better than at any place I have been at for some time. We had a comfortable time there on Friday the 28th of January. One found the Lord.

Another instance of God's goodness I shall make free to mention. At Flash, near Buxton, we have a lively society by about 50. One Abraham Brocklehurst was remarkably offended because his wife was in our society.² He therefore used her very wickedly and did all in his power to keep her from the preaching and class. He went to the minister and asked his advice. He told Abraham that he must be as kind to her as he possibly could, and he thought by that means he might wean her from amongst us. So he went home and took his wife a book to convince her of the wickedness of Methodism, which the parson had lent him. She read some part of the book, but seeing the design of the author to undervalue the work of God, she laid it aside. Then he promised her how good he would be if she would but leave the society. His fair words had like to have been her ruin, for she was nigh consenting to remain with us no longer. He went to our class leader and insisted upon him to scratch his wife's name out of the class paper. Brother Redfern said, 'No, I will not. I won't humour the devil so much. I have no right to put names out of the paper; that is the business of the preacher.' A few days after this, on the Sunday, our friends (after church in the evening) met together for a prayer meeting and Abraham came and insisted upon his wife to come from amongst them. And she not being so willing as he could wish, he made her leave them by beating her in an unmerciful manner, and then drove her home before him. When she got home, he gave her another book to read which somebody had lent him to convince her of her error. As she read she was agreeably surprised to find the author treated of justification and sanctification, which made her cry out, 'Oh how I love this book! These are the things I want.' When he saw the book would not answer his end, he took it from her and beat her again. That night in bed he was terrified in his conscience and could sleep very little. He thought Satan would certainly fetch him, and begged his wife not to sleep but to pray for him and watch with him. In the morning he was much altered for the best, and God gave him light to see what he had been doing, so that he owned his sinfulness and determined to seek the Lord. On the Wednesday after, I was there to preach and he came of his own accord to hear. I did not know him, but our friends observed him to tremble and weep under the word. After preaching he would shake hands with brother Redfern, whom he had cursed bitterly but the Sunday before. From this time he was willing to come to preaching and let his wife come also. Six weeks after he came to me and told me in his artless way that he believed the Lord moved him to join society. So after some conversation (believing the Lord

¹While undated, this transcription appears in Bardsley's letterbook between letters dated Feb. 5 and Feb. 13, 1774.

²Abraham Brocklehurst married Martha (last name unknown) in 1754 in Flash, Staffordshire.

was at work with him) I admitted him. Since then I am informed he has found the Lord, and appears to be now as any in society. His wife, while he was beating and abusing her, found remarkable assistance and comfort from the Lord.

Lately I preached a funeral at Congleton for a girl who died on her birthday, aged 12. She was a child much afflicted and tempted, but died comfortably singing an hymn. She had known the Lord about a year and was in society.

My dear old mother³ is as well as she can expect, considering her years. She finds her sight to decay. I trust she is very desirous to get an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. Do, dear sir, pray that the Lord may direct her heart into his love.

Business has been very bad at Manchester and my brother has been out of employ, but blessed be God has got work again. And the Lord has given him what I can never be thankful enough for—a desire to flee from the wrath to come. So that I am in hopes he will not rest till he has found that peace which passeth all understanding. Dear sir, be so kind as to pray for him, and do remember

Your unworthy, but affectionate dutiful son,

S. Bardsley

P.S. I shall esteem it as another favour added to your many former if you will write to me and advise me as the Lord directs you. They have got a good man into the church at Hayfield, where Mr. Baddeley preached.⁴ I had but little acquaintance with him. However lately I called to see him and he treated me kindly. He asked kindly after you, and desired me to give his love to you, and if you will favour him with a call when you come down he bid me tell you his pulpit will be at your service. His name is Rain.⁵ Mr. [Daniel] Bumsted knows him.

Pray do call at Hayfield if you can. I shall be glad to know what place you come from into our circuit, as some of us I trust will meet you.

Address: 'To the Revd. Mr J. Wesley at the Foundery, Upper Moorfields London'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/205 (Bardsley letterbook), 2:141–49.

³Samuel's mother was Elizabeth (Lees) Bardsley (1701–77). His father Samuel had died in Jan. 1770.

⁴Rev. John Baddeley (1706–64).

⁵Baddeley had been succeeded at his death by George Roe as perpetual curate of Hayfield. Roe resigned this position in August 1773, and was replaced by Robert Rain in Oct. 1773. Rain served until his death in 1805.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Waterford
February 10, 1774

Dear Sir,

As usual your letter brought a blessing with it.¹ From the time I received it my mind has been more at rest, and my soul more happy. I have Elizabeth Harpers journal,² and sincerely wish I had her simplicity. I know I suffer for want of it. When I can come simply to the Lord I always find it does best with me. But there are certain exercises of mind which I am often under, when the power of this is taken from me. I endeavour at such times to come to the Lord Jesus as at other times, but all before me is confused and clouded, so that I cannot get through. I then think none whose hearts are given to God are in this state. And from the view I then have of myself am ready to fear that all is wrong, and am obliged to stand still without concluding on either side until the Lord determine for me. Indeed I may say my whole experience is one continued conflict with the powers of darkness. I do not say this by way of complaint, but I think there is still such a mixture of self in me that it has need of this fire to purge it. And I am satisfied it should be so. I love the Lord. He is my God, and his will is sweet to me. And I am desirous he should perfect it in me by whatever means he shall see fit. I have only one condition to make, that he would keep me ever his. But it is very grievous to me when my state is not clear. I think if I had the constant approbation of his Spirit, I should never complain. I have been asking for this. But it is always objected, 'how can God approve of such an unholy creature?' How can he be always well pleased with me, when by reason of my folly I must be displeased with myself. Yet I know it is an easy thing with him to remove every hindrance, and give the abiding witness. O that he would increase my faith, to ask so that I might receive.

I am not likely to leave this [place] soon, but can do no good here. By the frequent neglect of preaching, and the almost total neglect of discipline, the people are scattered. And of the few that remain, some are grieved and some offended with this new method of preaching 'salvation by works'. They have for many years been taught to depend on the Lord Jesus alone; and through his merit and death alone to seek for justification here, and a final acquittance at the great day. But now after *all*, are we to be made perfect in the flesh, and to be accepted only for our works. And even at the great day is our faith, nay our righteousness of Christ, to profit us nothing? But our works only? If this was the case, might I not say, '*Who then can be saved?*'

Mr. [James] Hawkesworth, a Calvinist preacher under Lady Huntington, has come here and preaches regularly at Methodist hours, in a large room and to large congregations. He is to stay for some time, and when he goes another is to be sent in his room. Our people, though forbid by the preachers, go almost constantly to hear him. ... I have spoken to several, but with little effect; and have heard his discourses so praised that I did wish to hear him ... but would not show the example. ... But I yesterday paid him a visit at his lodging, and had an hours conversation with him. ... I charged him with unfriendly and unchristian-like conduct in taking advantage of the disordered state of your society, and trying at such a particular time to widen the breach and glean all to himself, which he indirectly acknowledged was his motive for coming.

Dear sir, the situation of these poor scattered sheep distresses me much; O that God may interpose in behalf of poor Waterford, and may enable you to point out some way for their reunion. Enclosed I send you a particular request from a few sincere souls. Indeed my heart is pained for them. Pray let me hear from you soon. I am, dear sir,

¹See JW to Bennis, Jan. 18, 1774.

²I.e., JW, *Extract from the Journal of Elizabeth Harper* (1769).

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1771–75)
Wesley Works Editorial Project

(page 226)

Your affectionate sister,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 98–101.

From Mary Jones

[Bath]

March 10, 1774

Reverend Sir,

As to the spiritual martyrdom you speak of, if I have felt any it was in giving up my own wisdom, strength, gifts and graces, which was not done without some painful struggles at first. But my reasonings were all silenced by those words, 'I am the way. I will be thy guide.'

You ask me, 'What is it that now most effectually purifies my soul?'¹ It is not darkness, but light and love; not dryness, but joy in the Holy Ghost. Indeed I am always able to rejoice in God, and do enjoy uninterrupted union with Jesus. His name is as ointment poured forth. His favour is better than the life itself. I behold this world passing away, and myself more than passing away with it. I have no desire but to be made fit to depart, and to be with Christ. But my mind is not hurt by anxious feelings. I can say, 'Thy will be done!' Knowing that when I have fulfilled as a hireling my day, my Father will come and take me home.

I believe, as there are many furnaces for the soul to pass through before it is thoroughly devoted to God, so afterwards there are various exercises for grace. Sometimes we are in a particular manner called to take up our cross. Sometimes we are surrounded with temptations. At other times we are led to view Christ in all his sufferings. And again we are favoured to go with him to the mount. There to be hold his glory, and also to dwell in nearer views of eternity and of the abundant riches of redeeming love. My mind is at present, and has for some weeks been, dwelling in eternity, beholding there my once crucified but now highly exalted Saviour. But here I want words to express what I feel. O the height! O the depth! O Jesus, thou friend of sinners. Thou spring of all my comfort and source of all my joy. Thou God of glory. Thou infinite I AM. Teach me to praise thee. Teach me to admire thee! This is drinking of that river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. Surely this is finding my all in him! Lo I am nothing. He is all in all.

I feel I have no wisdom, no love, no strength to stand, no power to resist evil, no life but as it is given from moment to moment. I never was so poor. I never was so rich. Glory be to my inexhaustible fountain! To him I owe my all.

He who is infinite wisdom calls me at this time to take up my cross and follow him. He hath also permitted Satan to try me, I believe, that I may not be exalted above measure. But hitherto, glory be to his name, he hath helped me. And I know his grace will be sufficient for me. My one business now is to pursue my way through all, and press toward the mark, encouraged by those words, 'He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved'.² I receive all things with joy from the hand of my Father, praising him for all.

Where you think my experience is not scriptural, tell me. And let me beg you not to be too tender. It will be received with love and gratitude by

Your most unworthy,

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 659–60.

¹The letter to which she is replying is not known to survive.

²Matt. 24:13.

From Samuel Wells¹

c. April 1774

In February 1774 the Lord began to work on John Weston's mind, a child about eleven years old. He dreamed that Satan was coming to tear him in pieces; but he thought he knocked him down, and began singing the 23d Psalm, 'The Lord is only my support,'² While he was singing, he thought he saw the Almighty standing in a long white robe ready to help him. And from that time he began to seek his salvation, and daily reprov'd all whom he heard swear or use other bad words.

One day as he was with John Stones in the wood (a lad about fourteen years old). He reprov'd him for swearing, telling him if he swore he would go to hell and asked him if he never thought of being better? The other laugh'd at him. But he still continued talking to him, till they both agreed to pray together. From that time Stones seem'd to be in earnest about his soul. They made it their constant rule to pray together daily, and often seven times in a day.

On Sunday, March 6, they desired John Jeffery, one of our leaders, to meet them; when John Linnell, another lad about fourteen years old, who also appears to be convinced of sin, met with them. At this first meeting John Stones was so distressed that he cried out aloud. Afterwards as they were going into the wood together, meeting with a youth considerably older than themselves going to his sport on the Lord's day, they reprov'd him; telling him if he swore and broke the sabbath he would go to hell. They spoke to him of the day of judgment, which seem'd to affect him, and concluded their advice by praying with him and by making him endeavour to pray too.

Monday, March 7, as they were in the wood, they told Thomas and Benjamin Newman (the elder about twelve years old, the younger eleven) that if they swore and went on in sin they would go to hell; and so spoke to them of the day of judgment that they both burst into tears, and hung about them crying, 'We shall go to hell!' They then told them they hop'd not, and that God would have mercy on them if they sought him, and would pardon their sins. Accordingly they went to prayer with them, and while they were so doing, the others cried to God for mercy; since which they both appear to be earnestly seeking the Lord.

Thursday, [March] 17, another joining their company, they judg'd it best to divide and that John Weston should take part with him into the wood to work, and John Stones the rest—for none of the others could pray, only as words were put into their mouth;: their method being first to pray with them, and then to teach them to pray, telling them if they could only say, 'Lord have mercy upon us', the Lord would teach them more. Having spent this day as usual in prayer (that is, at the intervals of their work) at night John Stones said to his aunt, 'These words come to my mind, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."' ³ She said, 'Can you believe it is so?' He replied, 'I can hardly tell'. Before he went to bed these words also came to his mind, 'My God is reconciled.'⁴ In the morning he said, 'Now I know I am pardon'd.' On her asking, 'How do you know it?' He replied, 'I feel the love of God in my soul. And I know I love God, and that God loves me, for I was so happy all night that I could hardly sleep.'

Friday, March 18, they spent as usual in prayer and singing, and in reprov'ing all that sinned in their hearing, both young and old.

Wednesday, [March] 23, John Stones and John Weston were at our house in the evening before preaching. As it thundered and lightened much, I asked them if they were afraid? They answer'd, 'No'. I

¹Titled in *AM*: 'An Account of the Work of God begun among the Children at Whittlebury'.

²An English rendition of Ps. 23 by William Whittingham in *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (1562).

³Cf. Matt. 9:2.

⁴See CW, 'Behold the Man', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 265.

said, 'If the Lord was to take you away this night, do you think you should be happy?' They both said they thought they should. John Stones said he wanted to be taken away, that he might be with the Lord; and clapping his hands together said, 'O how glad am I that I am turned from my wickedness!' And they both rejoiced, thinking it would be a means of bringing more to the preaching.

Thursday, [March] 31, I heard John Weston pray, and was much affected at the melting expressions that came out of his lips. He first returned thanks for that opportunity of meeting together. Then prayed for more of the love of God in his own soul. And praised the Lord for sending his dear Son into the world to die for sinners, saying, 'It was I that pierced thy blessed side, and that platted a crown of thorns, and put it on thy head.'

Betty Henson says that they came to the preaching-house while she was meeting in her band, not being aware of their being there.⁵ 'I thought it best', said she, 'to let them have the preaching-house to themselves. But they desired us to stay, and began singing and prayer. I found it was good to be there, as their solid behaviour and innocent cheerfulness was so remarkable.' There were six present, five of whom went to prayer. John Weston expressed his unworthiness, sinfulness, and want of God, and put up such petitions for his own soul and the souls of all present as was very affecting to hear. He concluded with saying, 'Now I know, O God, thy ways are pleasant ways.' And well might he say so, for his soul seemed all dissolved in love and tears.

John Stones prayed with as much steadiness and correctness as most experienced men. John Linnell prayed earnestly for pardon; that he might know the sinfulness of sin; that the Lord might deepen his work, and carry it on in his soul; keep them from formality and lukewarmness, and from trifling words and actions. They then all expressed their thankfulness to God for keeping them out of hell, and for giving them that opportunity of meeting together.

A circumstance which happened before any of them received remission of sins will show how deep and real their conviction was.

One day (as formerly) several of them pent up the deer in a corner of the forest. John Stones said, 'We have done wrong.' The rest said, 'So we have; for it is a sin.' Upon this, they all wept for an hour or more, going about the forest crying and praying to God to pardon their sins. They said they not only sinned by hurting the deer, but they were overcome by a light, laughing spirit. They then all kneeled down to prayer, and while one was asking God for forgiveness, the rest cried so loud for mercy that we heard them in our house. They said they prayed that day seven times for forgiveness for what they had done.

About three days after John Stones and John Weston were justified, they met an old man and told him he must know his sins forgiven or die forever; that the Lord would come as a thief in the night, and that if he died in the state he was then in his soul would be lost. The next day they saw him again and spoke to him in the same manner, and prevailed on him to hear the word.

Another time they met with a man who, being vexed with his work, was cursing it. When they reproved him, he made a jest of it. But they soon let him know they were in earnest, and talked soundly to him of death and judgment, heaven and hell. On his telling them he knew those things as well as they, they replied, 'The more was the pity', as his practice was no better.

I hope the Lord will continue his work among them, and that we shall see greater things than these. Indeed there is a prospect of something of the same kind at Northampton, as several young persons constantly attend the preaching—one of whom has lately declared that she believed God was reconciled to her through Christ Jesus.

S. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 491–94.

⁵Either Elizabeth (Winterborough) Henson or her daughter-in-law Elizabeth (Verney) Henson. See the letter to JW, Nov. 30, 1784.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
April 12, 1774

Dear Sir,

I think I do not at all mistake your doctrine; and so far as I am able to comprehend it, do find my whole soul acquiesce in every point.¹ Nor would I, if I could be saved in any other way. You have seen enough to be able to discover all my mistakes. But you have not reproved my errors, and surely I should take this as the greatest instance of your love. I do not meet with many who are faithful in this respect, and as you have seen the workings of my heart for many years (nor indeed is there a thought in it, I would wish to conceal from you) my errors both in principle and practice must be more conspicuous to you than to any other.

I believe Mr. Perfect² is a good man, and in whose conversation I should have much satisfaction. I think the people are happy in him and his fellow labourer,³ and their labours have been particularly blessed in the county Wexford. But as I may be free to write you my thoughts without your taking it amiss, in time past when all contended for salvation by faith I often thought that through zeal for this the necessity of good works was not enough enforced upon the people. But since Mr. [John] Fletcher's writings on this subject have appeared, I think with some the error seems to be now on the other side. Nor do I wonder that the incautious, full of zeal against anything, should take a step too far. But then we must also expect that such a step will not pass unnoticed. Nor is every person able to make allowance for such a mistake, especially when it is often repeated. But as to that particular point, I would willingly have your judgment on it for my own satisfaction whether we are to expect final justification or acquittance at the day of judgment merely for our works, and whether the merit and righteousness of Christ shall then avail us anything.

I received your last letter in Waterford. Mr. Perfect being then on the circuit, I did not see him to deliver yours. But left it for him, and have received one from him since I came home. Since I wrote last to you my soul has been in general more happy. The Lord has been pleased to keep the enemy at a greater distance, and to allow me a clearer and more constant sense of his work on my heart. So that whilst I remained at Waterford I found my soul more established in his grace. I have reason to thank the Lord that he did thus strengthen me, for I found when I came home I had need of it. I have since then been much weighed down, discouraged, and distressed. I found the preacher and people by the ears, divided into parties, and some turned out of the way, for the most trifling matter that can be conceived. It is very unusual with me to trouble you with such disputes, but as there has a letter gone to you already concerning it, I thought in common justice you ought to be acquainted with the whole. ...⁴

Matters here wear a gloomy aspect, both as to spirituals and temporals. And in the present situation much depends on the person who may succeed Mr. W.⁵ Had your plan been followed, there would be none of all this. Nor do I ever see good proceed from the opposing your commands. May the

¹Replying to JW's letter of Mar. 1, 1774.

²James Perfect had been admitted as a Methodist itinerant 'on trial' in 1770, and risen to the status of Assistant by 1774. He was expelled from the connexion in 1785 (see *Works*, 10:380, 428, 569).

³Michael M'Donald, also admitted 'on trial' as one of JW's preacher in 1770, was assigned to Waterford at the time. He died in Apr. 1775, so 1774 was his last appearance in the Minutes. See *Works*, 10:380, 418, 430; and Crookshank, *Ireland*, 295. Bennis spells 'M'Donnel'.

⁴The printed transcription show a major elision at this point.

⁵Francis Wrigley, whom JW had moved from Cork to Limerick; cf. JW to Bennis, Dec. 1, 1773.

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1771–75)
Wesley Works Editorial Project

(page 231)

Lord restore peace and unity among us. And may he long preserve you over his church is the ardent
prayer of, dear sir,

Yours, etc.

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 103–06.

Hugh Saunderson to Hannah Ball

[Liverpool]
[April 12, 1774]

Dear Sister,

What great reason have we to praise the Lord for what he has and is doing for us, and for others. It gives me real comfort to hear that God is carrying on his work at [High] Wycombe.

Press forward and bring all you can to God. The more you do for the Lord, the more happy your soul will be.

My love to the select band and [I] hope they will remember me.

I desire to praise the Most High for his love to me.

My soul has been kept in real peace, and much comfort, since I met our dear father in the Lord, Mr. [John] Wesley. My soul longs to be more like Jesus. Pray for me. I am,

Your affectionate and loving brother,

H. Saunderson

My love to brother and sister Garr, sister Dean,¹ Mr. and Mrs. Hawes, and all my friends.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 2008/013.²

¹Likely the sister of Charles Dean, mention in Ball to JW, May 4, 1773.

²On backside of a letter by JW to Ball of this date.

From Elizabeth Ritchie¹

Otley
May 17, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

How shall I express the gratitude I feel to God and you for every added favour? It is unutterable. I have often lately been forced to say 'let silence speak his praise'. This last mark of your kindness has, if possible,² exceeded all the rest. May God reward you a thousandfold into your own bosom of spiritual blessings, and may you ever prove 'He that watereth shall be watered'.³ The character you recommend is truly amiable. May God help me to follow Miranda up the steep of excellence!⁴ The one allowed desire of my heart is to be all devoted to God. There is nothing else worth living for. Jesus is worthy of my whole heart. I see, I feel his so; and glory be to God, tis all his own. He has taken entire possession of my soul.

Jesus triumphs o'er my willing breast
And reigns alone the Lord of every motion there.⁵

May he forever reign, the sole monarch of my simple heart. On the Sunday morning when at Birstall after we left you, sister [Sarah] Crosby, Clapham,⁶ and me again joined in beseeching the God of love to make us all his own. I was much blessed and, while praying that the enemies I had seen that day might be seen and felt no more forever, the Lord spoke to my soul in many promises and encouraged me much. 'Thou art all fair my love. There is no spot in thee'⁷ was often by the blessed Spirit powerfully applied. I hardly durst lay hold, unbelief strove to keep me from entering into rest, but the Lord so bless me I could not doubt. How was my soul filled with holy joy! I only feared losing the blessing. This made me diffident in speaking. I thought 'I'll wait till I get home and see how I shall then be', the enemy telling me what I then felt was chiefly owing to the sight and company of those I loved, and that this happiness would last no longer than while I was thus favoured. I knew him to be a liar; and, glory be to God, have in this respect, as well as many others, proved him so. When you was at Otley, my soul was still kept very near my God. It was a blessed time, though the enemy kept whispering 'it will not be always so; a few days hence thy inbred foes will again return, thou will feel the remains of sin and be brought from that sweetness thou

¹This is the first letter of Elizabeth Ritchie (1754–1835) to JW. It is a reply to JW's letter sent May 8, 1774, which she received on May 13, commenting 'I have been favoured this day with a letter from Mr. Wesley; it has been much blessed to me.' See Bulmer, *Mortimer*, 15, 30–38.

²Orig., 'possibly'.

³Prov. 11:29.

⁴See the character of Miranda in William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, ch. 7.

⁵This appears to be a blending of lines from two German hymns translated by JW—cf. Nikolaus von Zinzendorf, 'Subjection to Christ', st. 4, ll. 1–2, *HSP* (1739), 122; and Gerhard Tersteegen, 'Divine Love', st. 4, ll. 3–4, *HSP* (1739), 79.

⁶Ann Hall (1738–87), of Leeds, married William Clapham in Feb. 1759, and was widowed in 1767; she subsequently married Robert Walker in Oct. 1784. An account of her death was included in the *AM* 11 (1788) 188–91, 242–36.

⁷Song of Solomon, 4:7.

now enjoys to thy former state'. When th(e)se thoug(t)s⁸ were suggested, I flew to Jesus. He heard and helped me, but still I d(id not tell) the great things God had done for me, for fear I should not keep the blessing, and so hurt the cause I love. The morning you left us, I felt such resignation as I did not expect. This was a means of strengthening me, as everything I met with proved God had wrought a change in my heart. The respect I had for you, honoured sir, was (if possible⁹) increased, but my soul felt no will of its own. Ere long, I thought, we shall meet to part no more, to sing the wonders of redeeming love through one eternal day. O transporting thought! Shall I, unworthy as I am, be admitted to join in that triumphant theme? Yes, I shall, I shall! Glory be to God! My soul can now praise him. I shall ere long be with God, forever blessed.

To his meritorious passion
All our happiness we owe
Pardon, uttermost salvation
Heaven above, and heaven below
Grace and glory
From that open fountain flow.¹⁰

But to return, all the week I lived as in the suburbs of heaven. My soul never felt such bliss before. Life or death was equal. Jesus was all in all to me. I could no longer eat my morsel alone. On Sunday, when we met band, I told my sisters what God had done for my soul. After which I was tempted, but on crying instantly to Jesus, Satan was put beneath my feet and God sweetly shone on my soul. Every time I have simply declared the goodness of God, he has shown me it was pleasing in his sight by giving me more and more to feel his power, and his Spirit to witness with mine that I am all his own. Never did I feel myself so truly helpless as now; I am dependant on Jesus for everything. I seem like a newborn babe hanging on its mother's breast for all it wants. '*I am nothing*',¹¹ but more than all in Christ I find. Jesus feeds me with his love. He is very precious indeed, and altogether lovely. To love him more is all my wish. I long to praise him as he deserves, but language is faint:

Words are too mean to speak his worth
Too mean to set the Saviour forth.¹²

Thanks be to God, whose love we feel, 'the gift divine, unspeakable'.¹³ May all my ransomed (life) show forth in me the Saviour lives. Private prayer has been a pre(cious time?) lately. It is just like conversing with Jesus, and I feel as great a thirst after all the fulness of God as ever I did after purity within. How does the love of Jesus enlarge a heart! Strangely indeed do they talk who say 'If you are saved from sin,¹⁴ what need of growing?' When the weeds are plucked up, and the rubbish cleared away,

⁸A small portion of page is torn away, affecting two lines on each side of the leaf. The missing text is reconstructed as possible.

⁹Orig., 'possibly'.

¹⁰CW, 'Thy Kingdom Come', st. 2, *Intercession Hymns* (1758), 31.

¹¹1 Cor. 13:2.

¹²Cf. Isaac Watts, 'The Offices of Christ', st. 1, as included by JW in *CPH* (1738), 31.

¹³Cf. 2 Cor. 9:15.

¹⁴Ritchie wrote 'perfect', then crossed it out and replaced with 'saved from sin'.

then a soul may grow up into him who is their living head *in all things*. These have long, very long, hindered my growth in grace. But thanks be to my adorable Saviour, through faith in his dear wounds I hope to urge my way. What lengths and breadths do I see in the love of God, all for me. Glory be to God on high. May Jesus make me faithful. My safety I feel depends in sitting at his dear feet. May I forever sit and hear my Saviour in[ward]ly speak. this day I have felt the truth of these words: 'He that believeth is not condemned.'¹⁵ O the blessedness of living by faith. May I prove it more and more, till faith is sweetly lost in sight. What an open field of fresh delights in God do I see before me! I am lost in wonder. They are all for me. Jesus and all he has is mine. O blessed portion! I have a goodly heritage. This is rest indeed, when all within calls Jesus 'King'. To see God in everything, the whole creation appears with added beauty. *Him* I not only seek but find in every herb, plant, fruit, and opening flower. But whither shall I go?

This pleasing theme makes [me] forget myself. However, the freedom you gave me, dear sir, must plead my excuse. I do not wish to hide anything from you, and hope the Lord will make me more simple still. But shall I not intrude on your valuable time? I fear I have done it already, but hope in this and every other respect your care over me will be shown by admonition or advice, as you shall judge necessary. Everything from you will have double weight with, and I trust will be thankfully and gratefully received by, honoured and dear sir,

Your unworthy (but I hope dutiful) daughter in the gospel,

E. Ritchie

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wesley / Ed — b — h'.

Annotation: another hand, '1st'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6). Cf. JW's published excerpt; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 48–49.

NOTE: This is the first of several letters from Elizabeth Ritchie where we have access both to her initial draft, which she kept for her records, and a transcription that JW published in the *Arminian Magazine*. We provide below the published transcription for this first instance, so that readers may observe how JW abridged and polished the grammar of the original. On occasion there is material in the published form not in the initial draft. It is impossible to know whether Ritchie added this in her final version mailed to JW, or if it is his editorial addition. Finally, in most cases JW's published transcription is dated a few days later than Ritchie's draft. Likely this reflects a lapse in time between Ritchie's initial draft and when she actually mailed the letter. In future cases we will give only Ritchie's draft (as more reliably indicating the letter that JW received), but will footnote significant additional material found in JW's extract.

May 23, 1774

Reverend Sir,

The character you recommend is truly amiable: may God help me to follow Miranda up the steep of excellence!

¹⁵Cf. John 3:18.

On the Sunday morning you left us at Birstal, several of us joined in beseeching God to make us all his own. While I was praying that the enemies I had seen that day, might be seen no more for ever, the Lord applied such promises to my soul, as encouraged me much. Yet I hardly durst lay hold on them, unbelief striving so hard to prevent my entering into rest. But the Lord continued so to bless me that, at last, I could not doubt. All I feared was losing what I had received, which made me backward in speaking of it. I thought I would wait and see how it would be with me by and bye.

One my return to Otley, my soul was still kept near to God. But the enemy kept whispering, 'It will not be always so; a few days hence thy inbred foes will again return; thou wilt be brought from the sweet rest thou now enjoyest, to thy former state.' When these thoughts were suggested, I flew to Jesus by prayer, who heard and helped me. But still I did not speak of the great things God had done for me, for fear I should not keep the blessing. But all the week I lived as in the suburbs of heaven. Jesus was all in all to me! At last, not being able to eat my morsel alone any longer, on Sunday I told my band what God had done for my soul. After this, I was tempted I had done wrong. But on crying to Jesus, Satan was put beneath my feet; and every time I have since declared the goodness of God, in this respect, he has sweetly shined on me.

At present I feel I am nothing in myself, but Jesus feeds me with his love from day-to-day. On this account I find him very precious indeed, and to love him more and more is all I want on earth.

Private prayer has been very sweet to me of late. I find such a holy boldness, in telling Jesus my wants, as tongue cannot express. And though my wants are many, my chief request is to be filled with all the fullness of God.

O sir, how great is the blessedness of living by faith! May I prove it more and more, till faith is sweetly lost in sight! O what a field of fresh delights do I see before me! I am lost in wonder! They are all for me! Jesus, and all he has, is mine! O blessed portion! I have a goodly heritage indeed! May I prize it, and walk worthy of it all my days!

I hope, dear sir, you will reprove and advise me as occasion shall require. In doing which you will greatly oblige

Your unworthy friend in the gospel,

E. R.

From Anthony Benezet

Philadelphia
May 23, 1774

Respected Friend,

Having a good opportunity by means of the bearer, my friend and old pupil William Dilwyn, a valuable religiously minded person who is going a voyage to your country, I make use of it affectionately to salute thee. The tract thou hast lately published entitled *Thoughts [up]on Slavery* afforded me much satisfaction. I was the more especially glad to see it as the circumstances of the times made it necessary that something on that most weighty subject, not large but striking and pathetic, should now be published. Wherefore I immediately agreed with the printer to have it republished here.¹

The several settlements which are now begun, and will doubtless vastly increase shortly, on that tract of land which extends some thousands of miles from the mouth of the river Mississippi to the northward of the lake of Canada, instead of being as I trust the Almighty may intend a refuge, and affording a comfortable subsistence to thousands and hundreds of thousands of distressed people, will be occupied, as is much the case of our southern provinces, by tyrants and slaves. For in all those places where slavery prevails a poor industrious white man cannot procure to himself and family a living, as his labour is rated (except he be some extraordinary workman) no higher than that of a slave. So that he must, by credit or otherwise, become a slave-keeper, with all its corrupt effects to himself and family, or lead a poor miserable life, or abandon the country.

I observe that in thy late publication on slavery, in thy mention of the several Negro-nations who occupy that part of Guinea situated on and between the two great rivers of Senegal and Gambia, thou givest a character of the whole nation of Fulis, who are numerous, which from the account given by Moore, etc. is only applicable to a part of that nation who then resided amongst the Mandigos (having been driven out of their own country). This may be amended in case of a further publication, as it might give an advantage to the advocate for the trade, to lessen the strength of what is strictly true.

A certain author, who calls himself an African-merchant, in *A Treatise upon the Trade from Great Britain to Africa*,² has endeavoured, though without real ground, to make me appear inconsistent in the account I give of those and other Negro-nations in my *Historical Account of Guinea*.³ Indeed the whole of that author's work is more calculated to show the iniquity and dishonesty of the African traders, even to one another, than to give any grounded answer to what has been written against the slave-trade.

Thou wilt probably have heard of the death of my dear friend Nathaniel Gilbert of Antigua. The account he gave me in his last letter, wrote two or three months past, was such as afforded me comfort for the sake of poor Negroes on that island. I rejoiced that Providence had raised them such a friend, and by his means such an opportunity of comfort in their affliction. But he is gone! It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. The same hand who raised and removed him can, and in the proper time will, raise more. What he wrote at different times was as follows:

¹Benezet included JW's tract in his *The Potent Enemies of America laid open: being some account of the baneful effects attending the use of distilled spirituous liquors, and the slavery of the Negroes* (Philadelphia: J. Crukshank, 1774).

²(London: R. Baldwin, 1772).

³Anthony Benezet, *Some Historical Account of Guinea, its Produce, and the General Disposition of its Inhabitants, with an Inquiry into the Rise and Progress of the Slave Trade, its Nature and Calamitous Effects* (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1771).

I can give you but a poor account of the progress of religion amongst us. We have a small religious society here, consisting of about twenty whites, exclusive of my family, and of sixty-four Negroes and Mulattoes. (The word seems to make more impression on some Mulattoes and Negroes than it does on the white people. There is particularly a Mulatto-woman whom I look upon to be a person endued with great grace.) I have sometimes on Sunday, I believe, no less than eight hundred Negroes who come to hear the word. They choose to bring their victuals with them and spend the whole day here.

I have for several years thought that the Lord had a controversy with the West-Indies, on account of the treatment of our slaves. Whilst I was a member of the Assembly, I have several times expressed my disapprobation of that act of our island which subjects the Negroes to death for running away from their masters; but without success. And very little, I conceive, is to be expected in favour of Negroes from a legislature who will not repeal so wicked a law as to the punishment of those who murder Negroes, which is only a fine and imprisonment till the fine is paid. Though every general who comes to this government has a particular instruction from the king to use his utmost endeavours to get that act repealed, so that the crime might remain as it is at common law, by which every murderer is liable to loss of life.

I understand the laws of Virginia and North and South-Carolina are much to the same purpose as those in the islands, tending rather to promote a murderous disposition in the master towards their poor slaves, quite abhorrent of that universal brotherhood so strongly enjoined by the gospel. These worse than savage laws the slave-holders apprehend necessary for their safety, and to keep their slaves in awe. Now can anything more plainly show the abhorrence of the practice of slave-keeping with everything that is good and sacred than the pretended necessity of such detestable laws? Laws, at which the darkest age would have repunged! ...

As a farther instance of the inhumanity with which the poor Negroes are treated, even in those provinces where they have a less proportion of slaves, and have not the same plea for keeping them in awe, I will here add the substance of two advertisements published in the public prints of the province of Virginia and North-Carolina. Viz., from the *Williamsburg Gazette*: 'Run away in Prince George, on the 10th instant, a lusty Negro, named Bob, etc. etc. (describing him) The said fellow is outlawed, and I will give ten pounds reward for his head severed from his body, and forty shillings if brought alive.'

The other advertisement from one of the North Carolina newspapers is to the following effect.

Run away last November from the subscriber, Ent River, a Negro-fellow named Zeb, aged 36 years. As he is outlawed, I will pay twenty pounds Pch⁴ out of what the Act of Assembly allows in such cases, to any person who shall produce his head severed from his body, and five pounds Pch, if brought home alive.

John Mosely

I would now leave off writing, particular in so irregular a manner. And indeed time calls for it, the bearer being upon his departure. But I cannot be easy to do it without here transcribing a paragraph of a letter I have just written to your country, viz.,

That as dreadful as the slavery now carried on in our colonies is to the miserable subject thereof, yet greater, far greater, is its baneful influence on their possessors and their unhappy offspring. These being thereby, from their childhood, nurtured in such scenes and practice as

⁴The provincial currency.

naturally beget in them habits of idleness, pride, cruelty, and lasciviousness. With a train of other evils which bear sway and, as age comes on, predominate to the introduction of a much worse kind of barbarism than that which our northern ancestors were under before they became acquainted with Christianity. With the poor Negroes the evil of their sufferings will end with this life, and the merciful Father of the family of mankind will look on their deep affliction, and in his boundless mercy requite them good for their sufferings; and may favour them with that greatest of blessings, *humble and contrite hearts*. But with respect to their lordly oppressor, the horrible abuse of their fellow-creatures will extend its baneful influence even in the regions of eternity. For such is the depravity and hardness of heart and mind produced by it that for many, very many of the subjects of it, it may be feared Christ will have died in vain.

In the best love I am capable of, and with sincere wishes for thy welfare and prosperity in every thing that is truly good, I remain
Thy affectionate friend,

Anthony Benezet

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 44–48.

From Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley¹

London
May 31, 1774

My Dear,

Your laconic letter from Edinburgh, May 18, would have seemed strange if I had not known you. You desire me to let Mr. Pine have an hundred pounds,² with fifty to John Atlay; also fifty to the paper maker. *Amazing*. Surely you must have forgot your writing to Mr. Lewis³ on May 6 'for Mr. Pine to have two hundred, and that the rest might be lent to Kingswood school'. And besides, sixty pounds your brother [CW] desired me to pay Mr. Pine soon after you went away, by your order! On the 16th, Mr. Lewis came to me and desired me to let him have all the money I had. He said you desired it might be so, for the above purposes. *I did so*, and gave every single *coin* which I found into his hands, agreeable to *your order*. But let me tell you by the by, bad as you make people believe *me to be*, if that money had not been found by me you would never have had the ordering of *one shilling of it*.

Who it was told honest John Pawson, I know not. But this I know, he makes it his business to slander me wherever he goes, saying 'Mrs. Wesley has several hundred pounds in her hands belonging to Mr. Wesley. But how he'll ever get it from her I know not, except he puts her to trouble for it. For I do not believe there is a more covetous, wicked woman in the world than she is; etc.' He and John Allen,⁴ and your old quondam⁵ friend Mary Maddern,⁶ was doing all they could to render my life bitter while at Bristol. Mary Maddern the very day you set off from Bristol said to the stewards, 'I hope Mrs. Wesley is not to stay here till Mr. Wesley returns, for if she *does* this society will be quite ruined!' In so much that there were many high words between her and some of the stewards the night I and Mr. Lewis came from seeing you out of town. It was time I had a horse. But in this I soon was *made to see* and *feel* her power, for whenever I wanted to ride she would contrive to send the man out on some trifling thing or other. So that I have been 14 days together without riding at all. And when I did, I was sure to be lectured by the man, telling me he had enough to do for Mr. Charles Wesley and Mrs. Madden. That if you must ride, there must be some other to wait on Mr. Charles Wesley and Mrs. Madden, as I could not use my horse there. And Mr. Lewis telling me Mr. Charles Wesley wanted him to leave one for the man to ride by the side of their carriage, which would save the society a guinea if I would lend my horse instead of their hiring one. I said 'With all my heart.' But I was soon informed from your brother the London stewards would not like my horse to go, as he must have three there himself, as a subscription was proposed to buy the third, etc.

It was no hard matter to find how I was circumstanced in your houses, and I could get no one to ride with me. I did not care to put you to the expense of keeping my horse, so I sold it. So that *evil* is removed. The next must be myself! Then the Methodists *must be a pure people*, when the troubler of their happiness and peace is removed. My dear friend, let me beg of you for God's sake, for your own sake, put

¹This is the only letter of JW's wife to him known to survive.

²William Pine was JW's current printer in Bristol.

³Thomas Lewis, a tailor on Castle Ditch street, was General Steward of the Bristol society at this time (see *Works*, 10:873).

⁴John Pawson and John Allen were currently stationed in Bristol.

⁵'former'.

⁶Orig., 'Maddan'; i.e., Mary (Francis) Maddern, who had returned to Bristol after the death of her husband and was serving as housekeeper at the New Room.

a stop to this torrent of evil that is poured out against me. It is cruel to make *me an offender* for defending myself, and if *you*, or any *other*, have anything to *lay* to my *charge*, let it be proved. I desire to be open to conviction. But surely I have a right to do justice to myself in the truth, when I have it in my power. The trials and persecutions I have met with lately, were they accompanied with any degree of guilt, would make me of all creatures most miserable. But blessed God, he had rather to keep me from becoming a prey to my enemies. Though I am often tempted to fear I shall not hold out any longer, as I am a poor, weak worm, *alone* against a formidable body.

I am,

Your affectionate wife,

M. Wesley

Address: 'To / the Revd Mr Wesley / Newcastle upon Tyne'.

Postmark: '31/MA'.

Emdorsement: by JW, '[[my wife]] May 31. 1774 !'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 11/1.

From Mary Jones

Bath
June 7, 1774

Reverend Sir,

I can say, the Lord's mercies are new unto me, not only every morning but every moment. He is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. O that I could praise him!

You ask, 'What are the temptations you have been delivered from?' Awhile ago, it was strongly impressed upon me, 'That now I had no need of ordinances, in particular not of band or class. That these were only the shadow, the outward form; and that I was to feed on Christ, who is the substance.' This was a close temptation. At the same time I was much afflicted in body, and had many trials with my relations after the flesh, and some with my spiritual friends. These I then thought were the only means to purify my soul, and make me fit for eternity.

Yet I was not suffered to keep from my class or band. But I was so bound up that sometimes I could hardly speak a word. I then saw it was a temptation, and entreated the Lord to give me patience, till it was his will to deliver me.

As to the purifying of my soul, I mentioned to one whom I thought well able to instruct me that I believed this could only be done by sufferings. He told me it was surely so, and soon after wrote to me from Bristol saying, 'O my dear sister, how am I burdened? Mr. Wesley has totally denied that we are to be sanctified by sufferings! He says it is by faith alone, and that it begins from the first moment we believe.'

Here the great mountain fell in a moment; yeah, in the twinkling of an eye. I saw things in quite another light. I saw faith was the hand that received every blessing from God. I saw it was faith alone that must make me perfect and entire, lacking nothing. And that sanctification did indeed begin the first moment I believed in Christ. And I saw that though my second deliverance was as instantaneous as the first, yet it was a much by faith, and could only be continued by the same means. Then I saw and felt that faith alone could make the things I was now passing through of use to my soul, and that they would do nothing for me any farther than they were received by faith, with patience and resignation. O how was I stripped and laid low, and the cry of my soul was, 'Lord, increase my faith!' Since then I trust in God, not in pain or affliction. I do simply depend on Jesus, ever looking for his appearing, and continually praying that he will fit me for eternity.

Many more have been the temptations Satan has laid for my feet, especially one to which most young people lie open. But I feel, greater is he that is in me than all that are against me. And he is faithful who has promised that in every temptation he will make a way to escape. He makes me feel, 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: when he has been tried, he shall receive the reward.'¹

My present state is lying at Jesu's feet, singing 'I nothing have. I nothing am.' All my treasure is in him; and therefore possessing him, I possess all things. While a hope full of immortality makes every thing more abundantly sweet. I am, reverend sir,

Your most unworthy servant,

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 57–58.

¹James 1:12.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

[Otley]
June 13, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I was agreeably surprised to find by your kind favour¹ that the providence of God will again bring you amongst us. How can we be thankful enough to this bountiful donor of all we enjoy? Sure a people so favoured out unreservedly to devote their little all to God. May we improve every opportunity the Lord gives us. The sole return his love requires is that we ask for more:

For more I ask, I open Lord
My heart to embrace thy will
Turn and beget me Lord again
With all thy fulness fill.²

Well might the apostle say in holy triumph 'God is love'³, for I who am lest than the least of all his saints feel him so. Since I last wrote to you Satan hath spared no pains to tear my shield away. But thanks be to my dear Redeemer, he hitherto has made me more than conqueror. Jesus is now my strength. And when temptations have been cast at me, at first through ignorance I hardly knew whence they came. But on immediately crying to God, he showed me the difference between sin and temptation, and put my enemies beneath my feet, giving me by every such exercise to feel more of my own nothingness, and of the power he hath to save unto the very uttermost all them that wholly depend on him. May I abide under the shadow of his wing. Tis all my happiness on Jesus to depend. I feel I am very unworthy of the least of all the many mercies my God bestows, but they are the purchase [of] that precious blood, which was freely shed for me. Tis through the Saviour's love that I have favour found, and through this love do I this moment live.

O wondrous grace. O boundless love.⁴

Who would not love such a Saviour as this? May my soul lie in the dust overwhelmed at such a depth of love to an helpless worm, and may I every moment glorify this *precious Jesus* by believing more abundantly on him. Every blessing is promised to the believing soul, and glory be to God, I feel he helps with holy confidence to draw near. The promises are 'Yea' and 'Amen'. When I read the blessed word of God it seems to me as if the Lord spoke the very things I read, and indeed his words are spirit, and life, and power to my soul. O that I may prove faithful unto death, and thee Lord will give me a crown of life.

Some of the little flock in this place have lately been stirred up to seek the *pure love of God*, and one of my band sisters last Tuesday was brought into this liberty. How good is God. Glory be to his dear name. Here are more who I trust will not stop short of the blessed mark. Last Sunday five of us began a little select band, which I trust the Lord will make a great blessing to our precious souls. He shone on us when we met, and I have no doubt but he will abundantly bless us. I long to see the people of God willing to submit to love's command, and glory be his dear [name] many seem all athirst for Jesus in all his

¹JW's letter of June 3, 1774; though the published extract does not mention the visit.

²Cf. CW, 'Grace after Meat', st. 4, *HSP* (1739), 37.

³1 John 4:8.

⁴See JW, 'From the German', st. 4, line 4, *HSP* (1740), 75.

offices. With the Lord's leave I hope to see you, dear sir, before you arrive at Leeds. I believe the Lord will make a way for me to come on the Sunday to Tadcaster. If you are alone and travel by yourself, I should take it as a great favour would you be kind enough to take me with you. Miss Wilson gave me a pressing invitation to Malton, telling me you would be there. But not seeing any probability of going, I hardly expected to be able to get there. I hope if it will be the least inconvenience to you that you will make no difficulty of refusing me, for as my brother will come with me, I can *easily* return with him should it not suit you. But the advantage the Lord has enabled me to receive from your abundant labours, honoured sir, induces me to ask that I may have more opportunities to hear you tell of the riches of redeeming love. How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings to Zion. O faithful shepherd of the Lord's flock, may you be yet more abundantly blessed, both in your labours and in you own soul. May our dear Jesus fill your every want, and may your later days still more glorious. May your own soul be as a well watered garden, and as springs of water whose waters never fail. The Lord prolong your useful life, and at last, having fought the good fight, finished your course, and kept the faith, may an abundant entrance be administered for you into the realms of glory, where through the countless ages of eternity your soul shall reap an endless harvest of eternal joy.

I am, dear and honoured sir,

Your affectionate though unworthy daughter,

Eliz. Ritchie

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr W—'.

Annotation: another hand, '2[n]d'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

From Samuel Bardsley

Biddulph
July 19, 1774

Reverend and very Dear Sir,

May that God whose you are, and whom you serve, bless you in your body, soul, and labours now and forever. Amen. Blessed be God, we have had a tolerable good year in this circuit and some of the people are very desirous I should stay again. Mr. Ryle of Macclesfield will,¹ I believe, write to desire you will continue me. Miss Stephenson showed me a few lines where you told her if it was agreeable to me you would have no objection to my being at Sheffield the next year. Dear sir, which circuit you think I shall be most useful in, there I shall be glad to go. I hope the Lord will give you wisdom to dispose of me to his glory the coming year. If I am within 40 or 50 miles of my dear mother,² I shall be thankful. The stewards have given me something to carry me to the Conference. Brother [Thomas] Westell does not go. He will meet you at Monyash as you come from Leeds.

Do pray for me, who am, dear sir,
Your unworthy but dutiful son,

S. Bardsley

Address: 'To the Rev Mr J. Wesley / Sheffield'.

Source: manuscript copy for records; MARC, MA 1977/205 (Bardsley letterbook), 3:9–10.

¹John Ryle (1744–1808) was a Methodist in Macclesfield who had just been elected mayor there; see JW, *Journal*, Apr. 3, 1774, *Works*, 22:402.

²Elizabeth Bardsley, of Manchester.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

Limerick
July 21, 1774

Dear Sir,

Since I wrote you last, I have been exercised with sickness in my family; and at the same time my oldest son¹ (apprentice in Waterford) had a fever and by all accounts was in great danger. I found this to be a heavy trial. But the Lord was with me in it, and did enable me in the most grievous part of it to say with my whole heart 'Thy will be done'. . . . This trial, and the Lord's dealing in it, has proved a great blessing to my soul. As indeed every trial does. I do find in general that afflictive dispensations are of all others the most profitable to me. Such is the stubbornness of my heart that it has need of being softened with stripes. Yet surely the Lord does deal very graciously, by affording me only such a measure of these as he sees absolutely necessary. And by the many deliverances he works out for me, gives me to see his tenderness and love towards me. So that I may truly say my whole life is one continued scene of mercies. And in some degree the Lord does make me sensible of, and thankful for, his goodness. . . . For some time past, my soul has been kept more than ordinarily happy in God. Frequent opportunities of Christian conversation always has this effect, and Mr. Snowden² has afforded me many happy seasons of this kind, which have been much blessed to both. He still retains his happiness and confidence, and I trust will continue to do so. I, with many others, have reason to thank the Lord for sending him to Limerick.

He came at a very critical time, and his entire deportment since has been such as to gain the love and esteem of all the people. Peace and harmony subsists now amongst us, and the generality seem to have but one end in view. Yet we want a greater revival. The select band set apart some days to wrestle with God for this, . . . which has not been altogether in vain. But we wait for a fuller answer. By a letter from Mr. [Michael] M'Donald, the work of God is prospering in the county Wexford. . . . But in Waterford they are still lifeless. We have proposed to them, and all the country societies on this and that round, to set apart the first of next month as a day of fasting and prayer, solely on their behalf. . . . Perhaps the Lord would be entreated, and cause the dry bones to live.

I am, dear sir, etc.

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 107–09.

¹Thomas Bennis (1756–1812).

²George Snowden (1737–1812) had entered the itinerancy in 1769. He would serve sixteen years in Ireland, and then itinerate in England until he retired in 1808. See Crookshank, *Ireland*, 1:222, 237, 286, 295; and *Methodist Magazine* 36 (1813): 706.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
July 22, 1774¹

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As I knew not well how to direct to you after you left Madeley, I take the liberty of intruding on your precious moments while with your worthy friend,² fearing if I missed this opportunity that I should be long before you favoured me with what I esteem an invaluable privilege and what my dear Lord has hitherto made an unspeakable blessing. What a mercy is it that we were ever taught to think aloud, or that when many miles interspersed between, we can still converse. I bless the Lord that ever he inclined your heart to append a few of your golden sands³ for my good. Continue to favour me with your advice,⁴ and I trust the Lord will make me a dutiful child. May I be one who shall add to your crown in that day when all shall be brought home, when you shall from your dear Master receive your great and eternal reward.

I am often lost in wonder!⁵ What has Jesus suffered for me! And yet how little do I love him! How little am I capable of loving him! O that my heart may be enlarged, and filled with God! I do, glory be to his dear name, feel that as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I dare appeal to the searcher of hearts and say, 'Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest I love thee with my whole heart.' Indeed, my Lord

A points my stock
A drops my store
More shouldst thou have, if I had more.⁶

But my adorable Saviour does not despise the day of small things. He accepts my feeble sacrifice. The Father, well pleased in his dear Son, beholds me with a propitious eye. Never did I feel more than at present the truth of these words:

Every moment Lord I want,
the merit of thy death.⁷

I stand by faith in the dear Redeemer. My shortcomings and my weaknesses you, dear sir, are not unacquainted with. But blessed be God for that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin. I feel it is a continued coming and receiving on my part. Jesus is ever waiting to give me help in every time of need, and only waits to be gracious.

I had a blessed time while at Miss [Mary] Bosanquet's and had intended staying longer, but on

¹AM published extract is dated 'July 19, 1774'.

²Rev. John Fletcher, of Madeley.

³I.e., precious hours; like sands through an hourglass.

⁴JW's most recent surviving letter was June 23, 1774.

⁵AM published extract has a prior sentence in this paragraph: 'How infinite is the Saviour's love!'

⁶Cf. Joachim Lange (trans. by JW), 'A Morning Dedication of Ourselves to Christ', st. 2, *HSP* (1739), 180.

⁷CW, 'Hymn on Isa. 32:2', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 146.

Sunday was fetched away, my mother being but poorly.⁸ She did not send for me, but a friend at Leeds, hearing she was ill, let me know. I came to Leeds that night, and home the next day. She is a little better. I have cause to be thankful for this dispensation. Some time since it would have been a close trial; but love makes all things easy. I feel Jesus enables me to sit calm on tumult's wheel. It is mercy all, my soul praise thou the Lord. Since I came home, I have at times been in the fire. But this cannot harm, for God is here. I feel he keeps my soul in perfect peace, which stays and waits and hangs on him.⁹

May the dear Lord Jesus abundantly bless you, dear sir! I feel thankfulness that though distance may hinder me from either seeing or hearing you, no distance can hinder¹⁰ me from earnestly beseeching the Lord to be ever with you. I trust the arm of the Lord will be revealed at Madeley, and that wherever you go the sound of your Master's feet be heard behind you! May your soul rest in God, and may every purchased, and promised blessing be continually yours, prays

Your affectionate though unworthy daughter,

E. R.

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr W'.

Annotation: another hand, '3[r]d'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6). Cf. JW's published extract; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 102–03.

⁸Beatrix (Robinson) Ritchie.

⁹*AM* published extract substitutes for this sentence: 'It cannot hurt the soul that cleaves to Jesus.'

¹⁰*AM* published extract reads: 'no length of time or space can separate those whom the love of Jesus made in spirit one; nor can any distance hinder'

From an Unidentified Correspondent¹

Leeds
July 22, 1774

Last Monday about three o'clock John Nelson, coming in from dining with Mr. Jowat, went up into his room and said to S. B., 'I do not know that I have been so well after dinner this long time.' In a little while, being seized with a violent purging and vomiting, he was helped to bed. He had not been there long before he became insensible, and died about half past four o'clock in the afternoon.

On Wednesday his remains were carried through the streets of Leeds, in his way to Birstall, attended by thousands, who were either singing or weeping! It was truly a very solemn season to many, to see *him* carried to his grave who had done and suffered so much in these parts for the honour of God and the good of men. But as he died in the Lord, he now rests from his labours, and his works follow him.

O how ought we to be all humbled, on seeing the first instruments of the great revival of religion in our day called away so fast! Lord, in mercy to the rising generation, continue a constant succession of holy and useful men, who shall not count their lives dear unto themselves—when they may be spent for thy dear sake!

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 573–74.

¹Titled in *AM*: 'Another Account of the Death of John Nelson'.

From George Clark

London
July 29, 1774

Reverend Sir,

Less than thirty years ago I was an entire stranger to heart religion. But by hearing you preach, and by receiving the truth in love, an entire change took place. But having aforetime put no restraint upon my passions, I found it hard work to keep a conscience void of offence. The conflict was so great that it was almost like resisting unto blood. But as I believed the doctrine of entire sanctification, I prayed and lived in hope. And the Lord, who saw my desire, granted my request. For on the 30th of May 1762, my soul was set at liberty. This work was full as evident, in its nature and effects, as that of justification. But the power then communicated to my soul was more abundant. For now my peace and love were without those interruptions I formerly met with, and I went on without any in the members. From that time I have gone on believing and obeying the truth, and at present I have no doubt of the accomplishment of all which the Lord hath promised.

But sir, do you waver concerning these things? (It is intimated that you do, because you said we have rested too much on the work of justification and sanctification.) I believe you do not. But I ask the question because this doctrine seems to be exploded here. The work of holiness is not exploded. No, blessed be God, it never was more insisted on than at present. But here are¹ none that speak of a present deliverance from inbred sin. Nor do I know that it has been once pressed on the people since you left London.

I spoke of this deliverance at the meeting of the [class] leaders, but the Assistant said he did not well understand it. I spoke of it also one Monday morning, but the preacher said it was not good so to be harping on one string. I know not, sir, how it may be in other places; but I think the string is so cut here that it will not soon be spliced again by the preachers we now have. But if this doctrine is given up, or indeed the mode of expressing it, what have we more than our neighbours? Or what can we enjoy more than an honest Calvinist? They look for a deliverance at death. And it will not come sooner to us, if we do not look for it. You have often said, 'Give up this doctrine, and you will easily slide into formality.' Perhaps we see a little of that now. For field-preaching is almost out of use—scarce any one is willing to take up the cross. Love also waxes cold. Some of our poor have been abridged: those who had two shillings and sixpence per week, are reduced to two shillings; those who had two shillings, to one; and those who had one, to nought!

The Lord give you wisdom and courage, that all things debated in the ensuing Conference may be to his glory, the establishment of your souls in unanimity and love, and the furtherance of the work of God in these kingdoms.

I am, reverend sir,

Your obedient son and servant,

G. Clark

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 103–05.

¹Orig., 'is'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

From John Downes

London
August 4, 1774

Reverend Sir,

I take the liberty of laying before you some of the reasonings of my mind which you seem to be the best able to answer.

Last winter the sweet counsel my wife¹ and I took together was the means of reviving my poor drooping soul. The more life we had, the more was our earnest desire that I should again be devoted to God in his church.

As your answer to our letter encouraged that desire,² I cast myself upon Lord's assistance, and preached at the Foundery. God in his infinite mercy was pleased to own his poor creature and give such a blessing to my own soul, and the souls of several others, as I think fully showed he was well pleased with the return of his poor prodigal. Being encouraged by this, I preached the week following at Brentford. And it seems that I am about as much hurt by preaching once as I should be in walking two or three miles—both the one and the other gives me a slow fever, for which I take the wormwood drafts.

Blessed be God, I am more and more convinced it is my duty to make the *most* of the short remainder of life. My cry is only, 'Lord what wouldst thou have me to do?' But where shall we draw the line between faith and enthusiasm? My wife thinks I ought to give up all that I may be a preacher; and that, as God has called me to it, I ought to believe he will give me strength. She thinks God has so many times shown her in prayer that this is his will that she is quite willing to run all risks, knowing that our heavenly Father is both able and willing to supply all our needs. And she says the Lord has so often assured her that he will in this way take care of her, that I shall grieve his Spirit if I do not give up all. And she has an odd and continued impression that he will make us both useful, and deliver us from this present, perhaps *penal* uselessness. Is this faith or enthusiasm? That which inclines me to the former is that I know how close she walks with God, and how many hours in a day she spends in private prayer. And that this is always the result of her nearest accesses to the throne of grace.

That the Lord may bless you with the choicest of his blessings is, reverend sir, the prayer of
Your unworthy son and servant in the gospel of Christ,

J. Downes

[added editorial note]

N.B. A little after this he dropped down dead in the pulpit, just when he had concluded his sermon in West Street Chapel, London!³

'Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing'⁴—shall find doing the will of God.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 105–06.

¹Dorothy (Furley) Downes.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³In his personal copy of *AM* JW changed this line to read 'A little after this he dropped down in the pulpit in West Street Chapel, London, and spoke no more.'

⁴Matt. 24:46.

From Ann Bolton

Finstock
August 5, 1774

Reverend Sir,

With pleasure, I once more attempt to communicate to you the loving kindness of the Lord toward me.¹ I adore him for his great condescension in teaching me how to advance in conformity to his will. I am convinced this is my one great business, while sojourning here below. And it is the prize which my soul hath in view, and which it followeth hard after. I am endeavouring to learn how to walk in a narrower path than in time past, by attending more constantly to the divine presence in my soul.² 'My sheep hear my voice',³ saith Jesus. In order to this end, the mind must be kept in silence, and divested of every other pursuit but that of knowing, doing and suffering his holy will. When this is effected, with what pleasure and alacrity doth it press forward to the complete fruition of God! Anticipating that moment when it shall drop this tenement of clay, and behold him face to face, without a veil between!

I hope to have an account of seeing you soon, which will be thankfully received by

Your obliged servant,

A. Bolton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 159–60.

¹See JW to Bolton, July 13, 1774.

²Bolton may have heard about JW's concern that her increased involvement in temporal affairs was coming at a cost of her prior spiritual focus; see JW to Hannah Ball, June 19, 1774 (*Works*, 29:45–46).

³John 10:27.

From Henry Brooke

Dublin
August 6, 1774

Reverend Sir,

I received with true gratitude your very kind letter.¹ It was indeed a dear and precious token of your remembrance; and should have been answered immediately, but that I waited in hopes my dear uncle² would have been able to answer for himself.

His health is great impaired, and he is but in a declining state. A kind of vertigo or megrim continues not only to enfeeble his limbs, but to interrupt his study and writing. However I trust as his outward man decays, his inward man is renewed daily.

He is deeply sensible of your very kind offer, and most cordially embrace[s] it.³ He has desired me to express the warmth of his gratitude in the strongest terms, and says he most cheerfully yields the volumes you mention to your superior judgment, to prune, erase, and alter as you please. He only wishes they could have had your eye before they appeared in public. But it is not yet too late. A second edition will appear with great advantage when they have undergone so kind a revisal. But he is apprehensive your time is so precious that it may be too great an intrusion upon it, unless made a work of leisure and opportunity. Yet as you have proffered it, he will not give up the privilege, but hope leisure may be found for so friendly and generous a work.

Blessed be God, our united family continues to live in peace, harmony, and love! We have four divisions of it in one house, and some small branches besides—and yet no jarring, no discord, no discontent or jealousy!

We have heard lately from my brother in the Indies.⁴ He is restored to health, and has made his fortune; and only waits for an opportunity to retire, and leave his command with honour. He wished not for a Nabob's fortune, and though in the high road to station and wealth, yet he abandons all to live in retirement and the endearments of friendship.

As to myself, I am indeed as much united to the Methodists as ever, and meet with my brethren as regularly as most. But I cannot attend the preaching so frequently as formerly. Yet my brethren are not offended; they know how to make allowance for me.

I bless God I feel the happiness of living by faith! My heart enjoys much of that peace which passeth all understanding. And notwithstanding all my wretchedness and vileness, I experience a sense of the love of God daily.

May the blessings of the former and latter rain be yours! The rule of Satan fall continually before you! And the kingdom of Christ be exalted by your means! I am, reverend sir,

Your most affectionate friend and brother,

H. Brooke

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 160–61.

¹JW to Henry Brooke, July 8, 1774.

²Henry Brooke (c. 1703–83), the Irish novelist and dramatist.

³JW had suggested publishing an abridged version of Brooke's novel titled *The Fool of Quality* (among others), a possibility that was realized in 1781 (see *Bibliography*, No. 414).

⁴Robert Brooke (1744–1811) returned to Ireland in 1779, spent time in business, and then became Governor of the island of St. Helena.

From Mary Jones

Bath
August 6, 1774

Reverend Sir,

Your last affectionate letter more than ever convinced me of your care and tender regard for me.¹ May the Lord reward you seven-fold for all your labour of love toward me! And may he write gratitude on my heart for all the blessings and mercies he daily confers upon me!

I was enabled to follow your advice, and to fly as from the face of a serpent.² I could not have been, had I accepted the offer, in a better situation for doing good than I am now. Nor could I have had more advantages for the improvement of my own soul. Indeed my present situation is attended with much danger and many trials. But he is faithful. As my day, so is my strength. So he has promised, and so I have found it. I had many reasonings, 'It was a thing lawful in itself.' 'It would take me out of many snares.' 'Many more holy than me had entered into that state, and were not hurt by it.' 'How do you know but it may be the will of God, and intended by him for your good?' But I was not suffered to listen to the voice of the charmer. I laid it before the Lord, and he soon convinced me that it was a mere temptation. Then was I determined to quite his company at once, and give him up to God.³ I did so. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name!

The present cry of my soul is, 'Lord, hide me!' And he does indeed hide me in his presence. Though in the midst of outward hurry and dissipation, I feel that solemn, retired solitude that I could not find in the most unfrequented desert, were I destitute of his favour and presence.

O sir, I want a heart full of gratitude to so good a God and so kind a benefactor. How do I daily groan under mountains of mercies and an unthankful heart! O Lord, teach me to praise thee!

I feel a continual power to cast myself as a helpless sinner at his feet. And he does not cast me out. The fountain is open, and Jesus is ready to save. When weary and faint, he is my life and strength. Though foolish and poor, he is my riches and wisdom. Having him, I possess all things. I desire nothing out of him, nor would I for ten thousand worlds, accept of anything without his permission. He is an unerring counsellor. I

Leave to his sov'reign sway
To choose and to command.⁴

My desire is, to lie in his hands as clay, that he may do with me what seemeth him good. Let me glorify him both in life and in death, and then all is well. I trust you will continue to remember at the throne of grace

The weakest of all your followers,

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 59–60.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²There had been a proposal of marriage, which JW counselled her to reject.

³Editorial note in *AM*: 'The company of him who had made his addresses to her.'

⁴Paul Gerhardt (trans. by JW), 'Trust in Providence', st. 13, *HSP* (1739), 143.

From John Prickard¹

Brecon
August 8, 1774

Reverend Sir,

I have taken this opportunity of writing to you concerning my being a travelling preacher.² When I wrote to you last, Mr. C.³ and the others had prevailed on me to decline it. But by the advice of Mr. Brettel I have reconsidered the matter very seriously.⁴

And first, I see plainly that preaching constantly in one place would not be so profitable either to the people or myself. Secondly, as my health is impaired, I believe that riding will be of service to me. Above all, I find a desire to be wholly given up to the blessed work of calling sinners to repentance: compared to which, gaining the whole world is not worthy a thought.

If therefore you think it best that I should travel, I am at your disposal. I thank God my mind is perfectly resigned at present to his will, whatever it may be.⁵ May God direct you in this and all things, which is the unfeigned desire, reverend sir, of

Your son in the gospel,

J. Prickard

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 162.

¹John Prickard (1744–84), a native of Pembrokeshire, had been a follower of Whitefield and Howell Davies in Wales during his early adulthood. A conversion experience in 1768 led him to align with the Wesleyan Methodists. He quickly became a successful class-leader, exhorter, and local preacher, but resisted joining the itinerant ministry until 1774. For much of his ministry he was subject to bouts of fever, made worse by his preaching often in bad weather.

²This was actually Prickard's second letter. See his autobiographical reflections in-letters, c. Dec. 1783; *AM* 12 (1789): 14.

³Likely William Church (1749–1830), a son of John Church, one of the original trustees of the Methodist preaching house in Brecon. William had just begun preaching locally.

⁴John Brettel (1742–96), admitted to the itinerancy 'on trial' in 1771 (*Works*, 10:395), was stationed in Glamorgan and Breconshire 1771–73.

⁵Prickard notes in his autobiography: 'Soon after the Conference I received a letter from him informing me that he had appointed me to the Glamorganshire circuit.' This letter does not survive.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
August 19, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am sorry I have ever given you cause to complain of me.¹ My not speaking to you about my health was chiefly owing to my want of thought at the time I was with you. The wants and infirmities my outward man often feels are almost forgotten while my spirit seems to be wholly seeking the things which are above. Tis true I have a feeble body, but this at times is so strengthened that I am enabled to do things without feeling any present disadvantage, which others who appear to be far stronger seem unable to do. Hitherto I have used very few means, and had little advice from anyone, being willing if my father² or any other thought anything necessary to use it. But [I] seldom sought for aught, desiring to give both soul and body to him who I knew could do in all things as he saw best for me. But if the Lord hath inclined your heart, dear sir, to care not only for spiritual health but also for my natural strength, I am willing to tell you all I can, and will endeavour to use the means you prescribe.

Tis near three years since I caught cold at an improper time, which in a short space brought on a consumptive complaint. All my friends thought me near gone, but the Lord unexpectedly raised me up again. Since that time my constitution has never been strong. But for some time lately I have no cough, no shortness of breath; this seems entirely gone. But [I] have in the general a continued lax,³ often much pain in my bowels. Sometimes I have the headache. But being bled in the foot about 8 weeks since, have since that time been rather better in my head. But for some weeks have had a breaking out, especially about my elbow and knees. It is of the scurvy kind—a white scuff peels off without either itching or soreness. Since this broke out I have been better of myself. It has hindered me bathing (my father not thinking it proper for me to bathe while thus broke out), which used to be of great service to me and strengthened me much. The scurvy some of my friends thought proceeded from the poorness of my blood, and advised me to live better. But my blood was not at all thin nor bad, though rather inclined to the sizey.⁴ I seldom eat flesh meat, though very few things disagree with me and my appetite in the general is such as gives me to feel I eat to live. Thus, sir, I have endeavoured to tell you how I am, as near as I can. I hope you will bear with my prolixity. It is a subject I am unaccustomed to write on. But you, I know, will excuse me.

I greatly desire to praise my God for his abundant mercy towards me, a most unworthy creature. He enables me to give both body and soul up to his dear self. I have not any anxiety about my health, but just want what he sees meet. The language of my heart is:

Give joy or ease, give grief or pain
Take life or friends away
But let me find them all again
In that eternal day.⁵

¹If JW's letter of July 31, 1774 included complaint, it was omitted from the published excerpt.

²John Ritchie (1703–80), a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, initially trained and served in the navy as a surgeon. Leaving the sea, he settled into Otley, Yorkshire, married Beatrix Robinson, and served as a surgeon and apothecary. The family became Methodist and JW often stayed at their home. JW preached Ritchie's funeral on April 19, 1780 (see JW, *Journal, Works*, 23:166).

³I.e., diarrhea.

⁴*OED*: 'thick and viscous'.

⁵CW, Hymn III, st. 9, *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 6.

I desire to forget the things which are behind, and to reach forth toward those which are before. I seem as if I was but beginning to live, because I will not reason as I used to do. The enemy sometimes tells me, 'Thy conscience is hardened; thou art not open to conviction.' But my Lord shows me when the tempter is near, and this drives me to Jesus, who is my one help. I am weak as helpless infancy, but he is my support. The Rock of Ages is my strength, of whom then shall I be afraid? I feel such a sense of my own weakness as I can hardly express. My entire dependence is on God for everything. Without him I can do nothing. May I every moment lean on Jesus, and through him strengthening me do all things.

Last week Nancy Rhodes went to her eternal rest. How happy are they who gain the desired port. Did not 'Thy will be done'⁶ silence every bold request, I should ask to see that face without a veil between, whom unseen I love. But thy time, O Lord, is best. My every wish is swallowed up in this. Let me live or die to thee alone.

Annotation: none [would be 4th].

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁶Matt. 6:10.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

[Gwennap]
September 4, 1774

The sermon you preached last Thursday evening was, by the grace of God, of great good to my soul. And when you prayed so earnestly for backsliders (of whom I am one), an arrow dipped in blood reached my heart. Ever since, I have been resolved never to rest till I find again the rest that remains for the people of God. I am, dear sir,

A vile backslider from the pure love of Jesus and from the society at Gwennap.

Source: published extract; JW, *Journal*, Sept. 4, 1774 (*Works*, 22:428).

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis

[Limerick]

September 30, 1774

Dear Sir,

My husband¹ desires I should return his thanks for your kind and ready acceptance of his son.² He cannot possibly be sent off within the time you mention, as there is no ship going immediately from this place. But as soon as he can settle some affairs, which is likely to take up three weeks, he intends going with him to Waterford and shipping him from thence, as we are informed it is a safe and speedy passage. I hope the thing is of the Lord, for as yet there has appeared nothing to hinder, and the child's heart is so set upon it that he is even impatient to be gone. I shall endeavour to forward his departure as soon as possible.

You ask what has become of brother [Robert] Tegart.³ The world and the creature has drawn his heart from God. He has still a name amongst the people, but he very seldom comes there. Neither is his life at all exemplary. Mr. Scott has retired from business and one Mr. King has taken the shop and bought the goods, and taken Mr. Tegart into part-ownership, and keeps the same business in as expensive a manner as ever. This has been no help to him, for how soon is the heart lifted up on a favourable turn of fortune without constant watchfulness and prayer. And still he loves the people, and loves the cause. Brother Mason was married a few weeks ago to sister Knight, who lives near Birr.⁴ I suppose you know her. She is not come home yet. She was a widow, has no child, and is a gracious woman.

It would be a very strange thing that I should be prejudiced against Mr. Wrigley before I knew him.⁵ The Lord deliver me from such a spirit. That his behaviour did afterward prejudice me against him I do not deny. I sincerely wish him all happiness of soul and body, and pray that you may never be disappointed in him. I am convinced I should be satisfied to have my best actions and intentions misconstrued and misrepresented. But the pain this gives me discovers how much of self is still remaining. Or rather, how little is yet subdued. Yet I trust the Lord will cause even this to work together for my good. As indeed he does every dispensation of his providence. So far as I know of myself, I do find it the desire of my heart to do his will, and to cleave to him all the days of my life. Nor do I find any happiness out of him. Yet surely I am not as happy or as holy as I should be, or might be. Every day of my life I find cause for shame and self-reproach, and cannot help condemning myself even when I find the Lord does not condemn me.

E. B.

Annotated: 'Mrs. Eliza. Bennis / to / Revd John Wesley / 1774'.

Source: manuscript copy for Bennis's records; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Historic St. George's United Methodist Church, Archives.

¹Mitchell Bennis (1720–88).

²The son had been accepted to study at Kingswood (see JW to Mitchell Bennis, Sept. 13, 1774). This was their son Henry (1760–99); cf. JW to Bennis, Dec. 13, 1777.

³JW's letter raising this question is not known to survive.

⁴Thomas Mason was one of the trustees of the Limerick Methodist society in 1765; see Bennis, *Journal*, 17.

⁵Francis Wrigley (1746–1824), one of JW's itinerant preachers, was stationed in Ireland 1772–73 and reported to JW about being 'abused' by the young men in Limerick; see JW to Bennis, May 2, 1774.

Anonymous Review of John Wesley's *Thoughts on Slavery*¹

September 1774

That one rational being should be claimed by another as his absolute property in all circumstances, like a horse or a dog; and that he should beget children solely for his master's profit, by adding to his personal chattels; are tenets so repugnant to all principles of humanity, according to British ideas, that the slave trade has often been severely censured among us both in a moral and legal view. The advocates for slavery, indeed, are chiefly those who are mediately or immediately biassed by interest to defend it; or who, by residence in our plantations, have lost those honest tender feeling that prompt us to do as we would be done by.

What the apologists for slavery rest on, as their strongest plea, is that of *expediency*, according to present circumstances. But is not this casting aside all distinction between right and wrong, and betraying the cause of humanity altogether into the iron hand of violence, which is first to decide who is to be master and who is to be slave? And does not this as fully justify a Barbary corsair as a Jamaica planter, with all his brutal agents in the African trade? Let us attend to what Mr. Wesley offers on the subject.

He has collected from various writers a good historical account of our modern Negro slave trade, with descriptions of the county and inhabitants from whence they are brought, the methods by which they are procured, together with the usage on their passage, and in the plantations where they are finally sold and settled. Mr. Wesley thus sums up the testimonies he has consulted on the general character of the native Africans:

Upon the whole, therefore, the Negroes who inhabit the coast of Africa, from the river Senegal to the southern bounds of Angola, as so far from being the stupid, senseless, brutish, lazy barbarians, the fierce, cruel, perfidious savages they have been described, that on the contrary they are represented by them who have had no motive to flatter them as: remarkably sensible, considering the few advantages they have for improving their understanding; as industrious to the highest degree, perhaps more so than any other natives of so warm a climate; as fair, just, and honest in all their dealings, unless where white men have taught them to be otherwise; and as far more mild, friendly, and kind to strangers than any of our forefathers were. Our forefathers! Where shall we find at this day, among the fair-faced natives of Europe, a nation generally practising the justice, mercy, and truth which are found among these poor black Africans? Suppose the preceding accounts are true (which I see no reason or pretence to doubt of) we may leave England and France, to seek genuine honesty in Benin, Congo, or Angola.

It appears more than probable that the good qualities here attributed to the native Africans are dealt with too liberal a hand, in order to dress them up and mortify us by the contrast. But what then? If the Negroes do not deserve so agreeable a character, will it follow that we have a right to drag them away from the places of their nativity across the ocean into perpetual slavery? Others again hardly allow them any pretensions to rationality, in order, by their disgustful representations, to palliate as much as possible the injurious treatment of them. Nevertheless thus much may be safely asserted, that whatever they are naturally, we industriously cultivate their worst qualities where we trade with them for slaves, to qualify them for the detestable employment of kidnapping their more innocent countrymen within land.

¹While this is not a letter to JW, it was the occasion for a letter back to the *Monthly Review* by a reader (given next), which drew from JW a letter in response of Nov. 30, 1774.

We have often been publicly informed how the ships are supplied with these poor Africans, and therefore need not repeat the schemes of violence and treachery recorded by the present writer. Two instances however produced by Mr. Wesley will give us a lively idea of this infamous traffic.

The first is taken verbatim from the original manuscript of the surgeon's Journal: 'Sestro, Dec. 29, 1724. No trade today, though many traders came on board. They informed us that the people are gone to war within land, and will bring prisoners enough in two or three days; in hopes of which we stay.

'The 30th. No trade yet. But our traders came on board today and informed us the people had burnt four towns, so that tomorrow we expect slaves off.

'The 31st. Fair weather, but no trading yet. We see each night towns burning. But we hear many of the Sestro men are killed by the inland Negroes, so that we fear this war will be unsuccessful.

'The 2nd of January. Last night we saw a prodigious fire break out about eleven o'clock, and this morning see the town of Sestro burned down to the ground.' (It contained some hundred houses.) 'So that we find their enemies are too hard for them at present, and consequently our trade spoiled here. Therefore about seven o'clock we weighed anchor, to proceed lower down.'

The second extract, taken from the journal of a surgeon who went from New York on the same trade, is as follows: 'The commander of the vessel sent to acquaint the king that he wanted a cargo of slaves. The king promised to furnish him; and, in order to it, set out, designing to surprise some town and make all the people prisoners. Some time after, the king sent him word he had not yet met with the desired success, having attempted to break up two towns, but having been twice repulsed. But that he still hoped to procure the number of slaves. In this design he persisted, till he met his enemies in the field. A battle was fought, which lasted three days. And the engagement was so bloody, that four thousand five hundred men were slain upon the spot.' Such is the manner wherein the Negroes are procured! Thus the Christians preach the gospel to the heathens!

While the Negro merchants at London, Bristol, and Liverpool thus raise ample fortunes *with honour and reputation*, the horror of the means is hid from us by the remoteness of the scenes of action, as particulars seldom reach us except by accident. But with what indignant smiles ought we to receive the narration of internal wars in Africa, when urged to excuse our purchasing the prisoners, who we are told would otherwise be all killed! It may be charitably hoped that none of the subscriptions so liberally offered for the support of the Bill of Rights have been taken from purses filled by supporting the wrongs of slavery.

Mr. Wesley gives us a very affecting account of the miseries these poor wretches undergo in their passage from Africa to the West Indies (during which great numbers often perish) as well as after they are landed, in what is termed 'seasoning'. The treatment of the survivors on the plantations they are employed to cultivate is known to be bad enough at the best, and really shocking when wanton severity is under no other check than interest, which would suffer by the incapacity or death of a wretch that cost *a few pounds*! They will certainly fare better or worse according to the natural disposition of their masters, which is of itself a poor dependence to rest on. And it is from this circumstance that we have such different accounts of the situation of Negroes in our islands, particularly by Mr. Wesley in this pamphlet and by the author of the *History of Jamaica* lately published.² But as they have described with different intentions, they probably copied the one from the fairest and the other from the foulest originals. Mr.

²Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica* (London: Lowndes, 1774).

Wesley is however supported by our knowledge of human nature, which is never backward in the full use of excessive power. The murder of slaves is by our plantation laws punished only by a pecuniary fine, and Mr. Wesley, who is no stranger to America, tells us of one gentleman who thought proper to roast his slave alive!

While the cruel treatment to which the Negroes are subjected is a known fact, beyond all possibility of denial, the best of usage must, in an impartial view, be pronounced a very imperfect reparation for the crime of ravishing them from their dearest connexions, their property, and their country; unless, indeed, we kindly take upon us to determine for them, in defiance of their own feelings, that it is better for them to labour in our ground, under the lash of the whip, than to live quietly at home, according to their natural inclinations.

This pamphlet contains many facts on good authority, or as good as could be found, for we are less acquainted with the interior of Africa than of any other quarter of the globe. And the other has many pertinent observations into which we cannot enter, but which do honour to his humanity—the more so as the subject is treated in a liberal manner, without being debased by any peculiar tincture, which was perhaps to be apprehended.

Source: published transcription; 'Review of Wesley's *Thoughts upon Slavery*', *Monthly Review* 51 (Sept. 1774), 234–37 [reprinted in *Scots Magazine* (Sept. 1774), 486–88].

To the Authors of the *Monthly Review*

October 8, 1774

Gentlemen,

In your *Review* for last month you consider Mr. Wesley's *Thoughts on Slavery*. I shall not discuss either his thoughts or your examination of them. I own that the behaviour of the planters, in general, towards their slaves is harsh. But I must, for myself, say that although I have resided many years in the plantations, and have been, and still am, owner of many of those poor wretches, I never was destitute of tender feelings for them. And I can with great truth, and with much inward satisfaction, declare that I cannot charge myself with any act of cruelty or inhumanity towards one of them. What I mean particularly to observe is with regard to that part of your review where you say 'the murder of slaves is by our plantation laws punished only by a pecuniary fine, and Mr. Wesley, etc.' I enclose a clause of an Act¹ now in force in one of our plantations, where Mr. Wesley's residence is proved upon record, that will, I hope, convince you the legislature of that province have some tender feelings, that something more than a pecuniary fine is inflicted upon the murderer of a slave, and that every such murderer must be tried by his country. As to the face of a slave being roasted alive, I must believe Mr. Wesley. I can only say that a very few years after Mr. Wesley left America I went there, and pretty near to the province where he resided, and I never heard of such a thing; although from the general knowledge I had of the inhabitants, I am persuaded that a many guilty of so horrid and action would have been pointed out and detested by the whole community, and must besides have been amenable to the laws.

The other parts of the Act, had I time to transcribe it, would, I am certain, convince that reverend gentleman, as well as yourselves, that it is calculated to enforce a humane behaviour and jurisdiction towards and over slaves, as far as is consistent with the safety of the white inhabitants, whose numbers are

¹Note in original: 'And whereas cruelty is not only highly unbecoming those who profess themselves Christians, but is odious in the eyes of all men who have any sense of virtue or humanity, therefore to restrain and prevent barbarity being exercise towards slaves, be it enacted that if any person or persons shall wilfully murder his own slave or the slave any other person, every such person shall, upon conviction thereof, by the oath of two witnesses, be adjudged guilty of felony for the first offense, and have the benefit of clergy, making satisfaction to the owner of such slave, and shall be rendered and is hereby declared altogether incapable of holding any place of trust, or of exercising, enjoying, or receiving the profits of any office, place, or employment, civil or military, within this Province. But if any person shall offend in like manner a second time, such second offence shall be deemed murder, and the offender suffer death for the said crime, and shall forfeit as much of his lands, tenements, goods, and chattels as may be sufficient to satisfy the owner of such slave so killed as aforesaid. And in case any person shall not be able to make the satisfaction hereby required on committing the first offence, every such person shall be sent to any frontier garrison of this Province, of committed to the gaol at Savannah, and there to remain, at the public expense, for the space of seven years, and to serve or be kept to hard labour, and the pay usually allowed by the public to soldiers of such garrisons, or the profits of the labour of the offender, shall be paid to the owner of the slave murdered. And if any person shall on a sudden heat of passion, and without any ill intent, kill the slave of any other person, he shall forfeit the value of the slave so killed, to be appraised by any three or more freeholders. And in the case any person or persons shall wilfully cut out the tongue, put out the eye, castrate, or cruelly scald, burn, or deprive any slave of any limb or member, or shall inflict any other cruel punishments other than by whipping, or beating with a horse whip, cowskin, switch, or small stick, or by putting iron on or confining or imprisoning such slave, every such person shall, for every such offence, forfeit a sum not exceeding fifty pounds sterling.'

now² *one* to *three*.

I am

A constant reader and admirer of your *Review*

Source: published transcription; *Monthly Review* 51 (Oct. 1774), 324–25 [reprinted in *Scots Magazine* (Dec. 1774): 705–06].

²Orig., 'not'.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
October 18, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am not worthy of the favour with which you indulge me, but this increases my obligation.¹ May God reward you for your labour of love toward a poor insignificant worm! You would sooner have heard from me had not an all-wise providence lately cut me out work that has left me very little time for writing. My poor dear mother² has been for sometime very ill. Attending her, and the family affairs, took up the greatest part of my leisure time. But the Lord doth all things well. I felt power to praise the Lord for everything. All his dispensations are faithfulness and love. What mercy is mingled with all the Lord's dealings in regard to me. He is a kind, indulgent Father to me, and deals with me tenderly. O that I may ever lie passive in his hands, crying, 'Not my will, but *thine* be done!'³ I see, I feel, here is my rest.⁴

In answer to your important queries, [first,] glory be to my dear Lord, I am in some measure always sensible of his presence; though at times I have a much deeper consciousness *God is here* than at others. Second, though my lips are not always employed in calling on the Lord, I feel the desire of my soul is continually towards him, and my heart cries (with or without a voice), 'Do with me what thou wilt; only help me to glorify thee'. So that in this sense my heart prays without ceasing. Third, in everything I can give thanks; because I know whatever my Lord permits will work together for my present and eternal good. Indeed I feel it does. Temptations and trials seem to fix me firmer on the everlasting Rock, and my desire is to overcome by enduring.⁵

Fourth, as to your last query, dear sir, I feel a continued sense of my own great unworthiness, and the imperfection of all my words, thoughts, and actions; but without any condemnation. For by a continual apprehending my great High Priest, he I feel bears the iniquity of my most holy things, and the Father, well-pleased, beholds a helpless worm through my prevailing advocate! If at any time I stand in doubt of any thing I have said or done (which has been the case sometimes) instead of starting to reason, which the enemy of my soul would fain have me do, I fly to Jesus as for my life. He wipes away all my tears, graciously pardons without ever upbraiding, and tells me he is all my own. O that I may be enabled perfectly to love, and worthily to magnify this adorable Saviour, for his love is as great as his power, and neither knows measure nor end.

I have used lemons lately, but could not get oranges—the old ones being sold off and the new ones not come. As soon I can get them, [I] shall endeavour to follow your directions.⁶ I think I am rather

¹Ritchie is reply to JW's letter of Sept. 1, 1774 (*Works*, 29:69).

²Beatrix (Robinson) Ritchie (1728–1808). The daughter of Jeremiah Robinson of Bramhope, Yorkshire, Beatrix married John Ritchie in 1750. After being widowed she continued to live in Otley until her death on Mar. 29, 1808. See *Methodist Magazine* 32 (1809): 174–75.

³Luke 22:42.

⁴*AM* published excerpt includes a sentence not found in the manuscript draft: 'For let what will come, the soul that cleaves to Jesus, and rests in the will of God, shall experience perfect peace.'

⁵*AM* published excerpt includes these sentences, not found in the manuscript draft: 'I am well assured, my Lord gives only what is needful. At times, he hath lately told me, 'What I do now, thou knowest not; but thou shalt know hereafter.' And so I find it. May patience then have its perfect work!'

⁶The published excerpt of JW's letter omits the directions to which Ritchie is responding.

better of all the complaints I last mentioned, though none of them are quite removed. I have lately been permitted to feel the effects of the fall by a violent toothache. The Lord gave me strength equal unto my day. I felt this was needful to exercise my patience. At present, the violence of my pain is removed, but I have still a bad cold, and still pain in my face. I know when the end for which my Lord has permitted this light affliction is accomplished, it will be removed.

What are all our sufferings here
If Lord thou count us meet
With that enraptured host to appear
And worship at thy feet?⁷

I have often solemnly dedicated body, soul, and spirit to the Lord. Therefore, as I am not mine own, he has a right to do with me just what he pleases. Glory be to his dear name, he doth all things well.

I suppose by this time you have entered your winter quarters. May our dear Lord abundantly bless and succeed your unwearied labours. May his face continually shine on you! And may you ever live beneath heaven's smile, prays

Your truly affectionate though unworthy daughter,

[E. R.]

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wesley / At the Foundery Moorfields / London'.

Annotation: another hand, '5th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6). Cf. JW's published extract; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 49–51.

⁷Cf. CW, Hymn 3, st. 9, *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 6.

From Thomas Taylor¹

Alnwick
October 21, 1774

Reverend Sir,

Little did I imagine when I wrote to you last that heaven was about to try me with an affliction by far the most severe I ever felt—viz., the loss of my dear father. Indeed I am fully persuaded that our loss herein is his unspeakable gain. Yet nature must feel the shock, and may be safely indulged with a silent tear.

About a fortnight ago he sailed from Sunderland, for Lynn. On the second night after his departure he had the misfortune to be run down by another ship, and so great was the shock that in about two minutes the vessel sunk! All the crew, except my father, took to the boat and were saved. But while he went down for his box (which he brought up and threw overboard) those in the boat let go their hold of the ship; and having neither oar nor anything else wherewith to move the boat, were unable to render him any assistance, though he was very near. The crew of the ship that ran them down were so inhuman as to proceed without taking the least notice of the people in the boat. However, they were discovered and taken up about four hours afterwards by another ship.

Several friends at Sunderland perceived something very remarkable in my father's deportment before he sailed, which they could not help looking upon as a presage of his approaching dissolution. It was very providential, for the sake of my dear mother, that I happened to be at Alnwick when the fatal news arrived. Otherwise I fear it would have gone still worse with her.

This sudden and unexpected stroke will detain me some little time at Alnwick, till I can get things settled; which from the great kindness shown by all our friends upon the occasion, I have the greatest hopes of doing to our satisfaction.

I am fully persuaded, sir, that you who have been hitherto as a father and a husband, will not cease to be so to the widow and the fatherless. That God may continue to bless you with the choicest of his blessings, and make your latter days yet more abundantly glorious, is the constant prayer of, reverend and dear sir,

Your much obliged and obedient servant,

Thomas Taylor

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 215–16.

¹Thomas Taylor (1752–1802), son of Thomas and Isabel (Bowmaker) Taylor of Alnwick. His mother was the sister of James Bowmaker, who had married Jeannie Keith (active at the Orphan House in Newcastle in the 1740s). Thomas Sr. was a merchant. While in his teens Thomas Jr. was sent to Kingswood School, to assist the headmaster (see JW to Benson, Jan. 31, 1768). After leaving Kingswood Taylor took some medical training and in 1775 joined an expedition to North America. He spent some time in Georgia, but his loyalist views made it necessary for him to move to Jamaica, where he spent the remainder of his life. See Robert S. Davis, 'A Georgia Loyalist's Perspective on the American Revolution: The Letters of Dr. Thomas Taylor, 1776–82', *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 81 (1997): 118–38.

From Sarah (Ward) Nind¹

Ramsbury Park
October 30, 1774

Reverend Sir,

That part of my experience which puzzled me was the withdrawing of the ecstatic joy with which I used to be favoured; and which caused me to ride upon the high places of the earth, and to glory in the Holy One of Israel. I was often led to enquire, why am I thus? And to ask whether I had not lost ground. Yet my intimacy with God did not decrease. I felt the truth of the apostle's words, 'He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him.'² Indeed, I was so one with him that I could commune with him as a man doth with his friend:

To him I opened all my secret store,
Of joy, and grief, and whispered every care.³

I saw myself meaner than ever. The trodden clod appeared far less contemptible; yet, I felt no condemnation. The Lord did not lay folly to my charge.

My spirit is now abased before him, but I am enabled to refrain from reasoning. The caution you gave me respecting it, was a word fitly spoken. I thereby discovered the snare, and was preserved from it, and am waiting in patient but earnest expectation of an increase of that love which passeth knowledge.

My wants drive me continually to God, who doth in nowise cast me out. But rather listens to my cry, and permits me not only to supplicate his throne but to adore and praise him.

For some months I have passed through a series of trials, which variously afflicted my mind, and gave me to see the worth of that grace that sustained me. But now I am suffered to take breath, and to wait upon God with a quiet mind.

If dear Mr. Wesley has any time for retirement this winter, we shall be exceeding glad if he will please to come to Ramsbury Park, where we shall think it an honour to furnish him, as the Shunamite did the prophet Elisha, with a bed, a stool, and a candlestick.⁴ In the meantime I am, dear sir, in hopes of your friendly admonitions,

Your unworthy friend and servant,

S. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 216–17.

¹Sarah Ward was baptized in Oxhill, Warwickshire in July 1747, and married there on Feb. 26, 1772 to James Nind (d. 1822), of Ramsbury Wiltshire. The couple lived on a farm called Ramsbury Park, and hosted JW there (see JW to CW, Oct. 17, 1775 and Oct. 28, 1775). James was a local preacher and general steward for the Methodist circuit, while Sarah became a frequent correspondent with JW until her untimely death in 1783.

²1 John 4:16.

³Cf. Elizabeth Singer Rowe, 'Soliloquy VI', ll. 4–5, *Miscellaneous Works*, 2 vols. (London: Hett & Dodsley, 1739), 1:198–99; republished by JW in *MSP* (1744), 1:247.

⁴See 2 Kings 4:10.

From Elizabeth Padbury⁵

[Whittlebury, Northamptonshire]
c. October 30, 1774

1. Susannah Spencer was born at Whittlebury in the year 1742. When she was young, she contracted a very general acquaintance and was exceedingly beloved by them, having an agreeable person, a good understanding, and much sweetness of temper. And being modest and decent in her whole behaviour, she seemed, like others, to think she had religion enough.

2. In 1760 Thomas Grover came down and preached several times at Whittlebury and at Towcester. She went to hear him but with a fixed resolution 'not to be caught', as she called it. But her resolution was vain. In a sermon she heard at Towcester, she was cut to the heart. Her convictions grew deeper and deeper from that time for about a year. She was then hearing him preach but felt her heart as hard as the nether millstone. Yet at the love-feast which followed, it was suddenly broke in pieces, and she was all melted into tears by those words applied to her inmost soul in an inexpressible manner:

My God is reconciled;
His pard'ning voice I hear!
He owns me for his child;
I can no longer fear.⁶

3. The day following, being exercised with strong temptation, she gave up her confidence. But the next night, wrestling with God in prayer, she received it again with double evidence. And though afterwards she frequently felt some doubts, yet it never continued long; but she had, in general, a clear abiding sense of the pardoning love of God.

4. From that time, she walked steadily and closely with God and was a pattern to all around her. She was particularly exact in reproofing sin and lost no opportunity of doing it. In her whole conversation she was remarkably lively, and yet gentle towards all men. Her natural temper indeed was passionate, but the grace of God left scarce any traces of it.

5. From the very time of her justification, she clearly saw the necessity of being wholly sanctified and found an unspeakable hunger and thirst after the full image of God. And in the year 1772, God answered her desire. The second change was wrought in as strong and distinct a manner as the first had been. Yet she was apt to fall into unprofitable reasonings, by which her evidence was so clouded that she could not affirm she was saved from sin, though neither could she deny it. But her whole life bore witness to the work which God had wrought in her heart. She was as a mother in Israel, helping those that were weak, and tenderly concerned for all, while she sunk deeper into the love of God and found more and more of the mind that was in Christ.

6. In the summer 1773 she took cold by lying in a damp bed. This threw her into a violent fever, which not only brought her very low but fixed a deep cough upon her lungs, which no medicine could remove. It quite wore her down, especially when there was added the loss of both her sisters and her mother, who were all taken away within a little time of each other. She had likewise a continual cross from her father and was at the same time tried by the falsehood of those friends in whom she confided,

⁵Elizabeth Padbury (b. 1751) was the eldest of thirteen children born to Thomas and Judith Padbury. Thomas was a farmer and baker. The first services in Whittlebury were held in his house, and he became a pillar of the Methodist society there. See *WHS* 32 (1960), 188.

⁶CW, 'Behold the Man', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 265.

and whom she tenderly loved. The following year, 1774, she had a presage of her death, in consequence of which she was continually exhorting the young women, Betty Padbury in particular, to fill up her place when God should remove her from them.

7. In the beginning of winter, I understood that, weak as she was, she had not proper nourishment, being unable to procure it for herself and having no one to procure it for her. So I took that charge upon myself. I worked with her in the day (for she would work as long as she could move her fingers), lay with her every night, and took care that she should want nothing which was convenient for her.

8. For some time her disorder seemed at a stand, growing neither better nor worse. But in spring, after she had taken a quantity of the [Peruvian] bark, she was abundantly worse. Her cough continually increased, and her strength swiftly decayed, so that before Easter she was obliged to take to her bed. And having now a near prospect of death, she mightily rejoiced in the thought, earnestly longing for the welcome moment—only still with that reserve, ‘Not as I will, but as thou wilt.’⁷

9. Mr. Harper took several opportunities of asking her many questions.⁸ She answered them all with readiness and plainness, to his entire satisfaction. She told him abundance of temptations which she underwent from time to time, but still witnessed that the blood of Christ had cleansed her from all sin. She often said to us,

The race we all are running now!
And if I first attain,
Ye too your willing heads shall bow;
Ye shall the conquest gain!⁹

10. Commonly when I came into her room, I was not able to speak for a time. She would then say, ‘Why do not you speak? Why do not you encourage me? I shall love you better when we meet in heaven for the help you give me now.’

11. In the last week or two, she was not able to speak many words at a time; but as she could, with her feeble, dying voice, she exhorted us to go forward. Yet one day, some of her former companions coming in, her spirit seemed to revive, and she spoke to them, to our great surprise, for near an hour together. They seemed deeply affected, and it was some time before the impression wore off.

12. Her father now frequently came, sat by her bedside, and expressed tender affection, weeping much and saying he should now be quite alone and have no one left to whom he could speak. She spoke to him without reserve. He received every word and has never forgotten it since.

13. A few days before she died, after we had been praying with her, we observed she was in tears and asked the reason. She said, ‘I feel my heart knit to you, in a manner I cannot express. And I was thinking if we love one another now, how will our love be enlarged when we meet in heaven! And the thought was too much for me to bear: it quite overcame me.’

14. On Friday, she seemed to be just upon the wing; we thought she was going almost every moment. So she continued till Tuesday. We were unwilling to part with her but, seeing the pain she was in, could not wish it should continue and so gave her up to God. I sat up with her that night, and the next day, June 7, she fell asleep.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Oct. 24, 1774, *Works*, 22:432–35.

⁷Matt. 26:39.

⁸Joseph Harper (1729–1813) entered the itinerancy in 1767, serving mainly in southern England and the Midlands, until he retired from travelling in 1801. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1813), 3:361.

⁹Cf. CW, Hymn 2, st. 5, *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 3.

From Elizabeth Ritchie¹

Otley
November 16, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Every time I hear from you I feel fresh cause for thankfulness. Your last kind favour constrains me to say

How art thou pleased by bounty to distress us,
And make us groan beneath our gratitude.²

The Lord directed you to mention one thing which I believe will be very profitable to me. How am I indebted to you, dear sir, to think you thus seek my good. I bless the Lord for such a guide to my youth, and pray that I may daily improve by all the Lord favours me with. To think that one so fully employed for God as you are should ever favour me with the advice you do—what shall I say? O sir, my heart is full. May the God of all consolations reward you. I am often with you, and feel much enlargement of heart when pouring out my soul before God for you. This mark I do bear of being a follower of the Lord's. I love the brethren, and those who have been a blessing to my soul in particular.

Since I last wrote,³ I have felt my fellowship with heavenly things, and those dear souls who live near God much increased. I find the Lord lets me more and more into this secret, it is hid with those that fear him: what a pure and spiritual union do⁴ the souls joined in Jesus feel. Space cannot separate spirits, nor death itself disjoin our kindred souls. And I am persuaded the more we love God the more we shall love each other. This is what I want. To love is all my wish. Satan is oft endeavouring to damp this sacred flame in my heart, but hitherto what he hath used has just had the contrary effect. For I think it has only tended to make it burn more violent. I do, glory be to my dear Lord, still feel such a constant settled peace as temptations of various kinds do⁵ not interrupt. All my dependance is on the dear atoning Lamb, who ever liveth for me to intercede. The atonement of his blood. His precious blood to plead. He saves me in the present hour, and I trust him for the next.

I love retirement, and blessed by my Lord, can get time for it. Though not so much at times as, if I had it in my power, I would take. I generally take some time in the forenoon, after dinner, and in the evening; choosing in general the time when I think the children of God meet in public. At those times I generally read either the word of God, some of your works, or (after prayer) spend time in writing the state of my mind. But I have no particular method which I pursue in reading. But since you mentioned it, have thought how much I should be indebted to you if you would be kind enough to tell me how you think I should both spend my time and what would be best for me to read. I want to grow in grace, and everything you think will help me so to do, I shall through the assistance of God endeavour to practice.

I have been three weeks lately with dear Mrs. [Ann] Clapham. We had a good time while together. Our Jesus blessed us much. She bid me tell you what cause she still finds to praise our common Lord. Jesus is just such a saviour as she wants. He bears her every burden, and helps her to cast on himself her every care. We often joined in prayer and praise on your account, and do hope at last to be

¹The letter to which Ritchie is replying is not known to survive.

²Cf. Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, Night 4, lines 608–09.

³Her letter of Oct. 18, 1774 above.

⁴Orig., 'does'.

⁵Orig., 'does'.

found at your feet, in the day of the Lord. The Leeds people are well satisfied with their preachers, and I trust they will greatly prosper. We have also cause to praise the Lord on this account. Those whom you have been directed to station here will, I hope, be a blessing to the people. Brother Swan is very lively, and the people's hearts seem united to them.⁶ I long for the prosperity of Zion. O that God may lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes. And yet for my own part, I never was more tempted that lately to give up all activity for the good of others—the enemy urging my youth. And when those who have been longer in the way to heaven than me [are] present, he hath said 'Let the aged speak'. Some of the people of God say they could better bear with me, but I am such a child. Indeed, if they who are older will speak for God, and speak to him, it is well. I am thankful when they will. But if they will not, when I see my way, I dare not do as I used to do for fear of what man shall say—disobey God. No, I rather choose to please my Lord and leave the event [to God]. It hath often come to my mind thus, 'If I die young, shall I think I have done enough for God?' Ah no, to go to heaven alone is not what I want. I would fain have my neighbours along with me. Sometimes I think God calls me to something more than just a private Christian. Tell me freely what you think, if my youth is a sufficient reason for me to cease speaking as the Lord gives me opportunity? I desire to do the will of God in everything, and believe that you are able to tell me how to act in many things that I am ignorant of. Excuse my freedom, and bear with me for thus intruding on your golden sands. God shall reward you. O that your cup may be filled with blessings, and your soul feel that love that passeth knowledge.

I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your truly affectionate though unworthy daughter,

Eliz. Ritchie

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wesley'.

Annotation: another hand, '6th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁶Robert Swan (d. 1810), a native of Scotland, was admitted on trial as a travelling preacher in 1770 (see *Works*, 10:380), and served 26 years as an itinerant. He died on September 19, 1810, at Alnwick, where he spent his last fifteen years. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1811), 3:194.

From Ann Bolton¹

Finstock
November 22, 1774

Reverend Sir,

Through the tender mercy of God I can yet praise him, being conscious that he is my father and friend. His hand supports me in every time of trial, and I can praise him for all his afflictive dispensations. I find the various exercises of my faith and patience respecting some particular providences have proved a means of establishing me more in the truth. My mind is divested of every care but that of pleasing God. My soul rejoices at the thought of being all given up to him, and of being wholly at his disposal.

I esteem it a peculiar favour to be kept from reasoning. If I am at any time conscious that I have spoken unnecessary words, or been touched with levity, I am enabled immediately to fly to the blood of sprinkling—not suffering the defilement to remain, or my soul to be dejected. And although in such circumstances I have painful sensations, and am ashamed that I do not to the utmost of my power live every moment to God, yet he graciously condescends to visit me with the tokens of his love, and encourages me to hope and endeavour to grow wiser and better.

We are comforted respecting the work of the Lord here. Our little society appear diligent in seeking the salvation of their souls, and several more have lately testified that they have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I return you most sincere thanks for your care of my soul. I also bless God for the favour of your acquaintance, and remain, reverend sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 217–18.

¹Bolton is apparently replying to JW's letter of Nov. 4, 1774 (*Works*, 29:83).

From Mary Bishop

Bath
November 24, 1774

Reverend Sir,

To write to you in my straits and difficulties is not grievous, your answers being generally satisfactorily decisive, and refreshing as the dew.

'The Lord is my portion saith my soul',¹ and it rejoiceth to find him 'God all-sufficient'. He graciously accepts the worthless return I make of the sacrifice of myself to him.

What is it to, and how shall I, 'afterwards give myself to his people, according to his will'?² How become a servant to the servants of my Lord? How please all for their good to edification, and so become all things to all as not to hurt my own soul? This I have long sought, but it seems I cannot attain unto it. The people complain of my reserve, and some of the discerning few think it lessens my usefulness. Mr. [John] Helton lately reproved me for it, in a very friendly manner, which led me into strict scrutiny with myself and made me weigh my conduct in the balance of the sanctuary. The result of which is doubts whether I do not live too much to myself—whether I am not reproved by 1 Cor. 10:33, 'Even as I please all men, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved.'

Retirement is the soil in which my soul prospers. There I endeavour to '*divine* contemplate, and become *divine*'.³ To remember the way in which the Lord has led me these years in the wilderness, and to raise my Ebenezer of thanksgiving and praise.

In company my spirit seems removed from its centre and place of rest, for which reason I go out less than ever I did. And I do not know but love of solitude grows upon me, perhaps more than it ought. I have not strength to follow that advice,

Present with *God* by *recollection* seem,
And present by your *cheerfulness* with *them*.⁴

One part of my soul is generally attentive to what the other does, and while in and after returning from company I am often oppressed—I dare not say with a guilty conscience, but—with an anxious scrupulosity, fearing I have neither done nor got the good, but have been a spendthrift of the invaluable treasure, *time*.

Meditating on these things a few days ago, Luke 1:74 was powerfully applied to my mind. Is salvation from this self-occupation included in the promise? Till it be more fully experienced, may I venture, for the sake of others, to be unbent, diffusive, and communicative; without endangering the prosperity of my own soul, or exposing myself to the torturing reflection, 'They have made me the keeper of the vineyard; but my *own* vineyard I have not kept'?⁵

Mr. [John] Helton has, I trust, been a means of helping me forward by explaining the *deep* things of God. I have not been so fed in the outward means since Mr. [John] Pawson left us. [I] shall be very thankful for some directions for a profitable attendance on public worship, that I may 'grow up into him

¹Lam. 3:24.

²Bishop appears to be quoting and responding to a letter from JW that has not survived.

³Edward Young, 'Night Thoughts', Night IX, l. 1387.

⁴John Gambold, 'Religious Discourse', st. 7, in *HSP* (1739), 60.

⁵Song of Songs 1:6.

in all things'!⁶ 'He that is mighty hath' already 'done unto me great things'.⁷ But I want to be more fully saved, that I may ever abide in him, and that my fruit may remain.

Our number increases, as I trust does the grace of those who meet with me.

I make no apology for the liberty I have taken, being persuaded you will willingly assist.

Yours,

M. B.

Source: holograph; London, Wesley's Chapel, LDWMM 1997/6690 (attached to Wesley's reply Nov. 30). Cf. JW's published extract; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 218–19.

⁶Eph. 4:15.

⁷Luke 1:49.

From Sarah (Ward) Nind

Ramsbury Park
November 29, 1774

Reverend Sir,

Your letter put me upon the closest self-examination, fearing I might imperceptibly have lost ground.¹ I compared my present experience with the past, at those times especially when I was most abundantly filled with divine consolations. By this means I found that formerly I did not enjoy an uninterrupted sense of the presence of God, but had frequent cause to complain that my Beloved had withdrawn himself. Whereas now I do not lose him for a moment, but my soul abideth in him as the branch abideth in the vine.

Perhaps the decrease of joy which I formerly felt was owing to severe exercises of mind. For within these two years my heart has been pierced through with many sorrows, under which my body could sometimes hardly bear up. And since I wrote last I have felt much from a variety of causes. But in the deepest distress, those words seemed to be given me for a support, 'These are they of whom the world was not worthy'.² By which I conceived a little of the hardships which the saints of old endured, who were nevertheless precious in the sight of God.

My soul is in continual pursuit of more of the divine image. I sigh for entire conformity to Jesus. And though I cannot yet say, 'My daily exercises are my delight; it is not my meat and drink to suffer'; yet God has hitherto enabled me to possess my soul in patience, when seemingly I have been tried to the uttermost. Pray for me, dear sir, and thereby you will greatly oblige

Your unworthy servant in the gospel,

S. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 278–79.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Heb. 11:38.

Copy

Part of a letter of Miss [Philothea] Briggs to John Wesley¹

[c. December 1774²]
Hoxton Square³

[...] Believe him insincere — and though I was soon constrained to believe it was owing to his excessive purity, yet neither his years nor character could reconcile or give sanction to such kind of familiarity. Such conduct, though in one as blameless as an angel, I could never think consistent with the apostolic injunction 1 Tim. 5:2.⁴ We cannot think that Christian love makes all distinctions void; still there is a difference, and ‘*it is good for a man not to touch a woman*’.⁵ When we meet in paradise all these ties and limits will be at an end. But at present how much depends upon you keeping the order of providence! I have often revolved it over in bitterness of spirit, ‘Does he take advantage of my simplicity? Does he avail himself of my love? If he judges of me by my behaviour and submission to him, he must conclude that the first man who wins my affections might bring me to anything. Oh, could he ever judge so unkindly of me?’ But I have spirit and the strictest honour. No one should ever take a second liberty with me.

I can resent an affront in meekness, yet so as to prove I am not to be imposed upon. Let not this seem to insinuate disrespect to my beloved and ever honoured friend. I am far from intending it. Though I must say he was greatly mistaken in thinking I approved all. My nature was averse to it. Nor could the neatness and delicacy wherein he so much excelled, nor my *boundless affection* reconcile me to it, even abstracted from consequences, appearances, etc. I am persuaded my hints were plain enough, that his penetration easily discerned what I liked or disliked, and that he has often seen evident marks of indignation and distress. ...

However I soon forgot, and my love for him, and desire to see him, taught my willing feet to run. Again I received fresh cordial assurances of a love dearer to me than life, but accompanied with what I could not bear. Then my grief and conscience constrained me to reject the kindest invitations, and I suffered a continual martyrdom and sacrifice. What did I feel when I might have enjoyed his presence almost every hour—and yet I dared not. My love of his company and instructions, the fear of displeasing God or my dearest friend, with the violence I was constrained to offer myself, had too painful an effect,

¹This copy of a letter was sent by John Banks Jenkinson (1781–1840), Dean of Worcester Cathedral, to Robert Southey. Jenkinson told Southey that the original had been given by Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley to Rev. Dr. Edward Wilson (1739–1804), prebendary of Gloucester. It passed on Wilson’s death to his wife Sarah (Giffin) Wilson (1734–1810), and then to their son Sir Giffin Wilson (1766–1848), who held it currently and gave permission to share it. It is likely portions of this letter that were published in the *Public Ledger* in Feb. 1776; see JW to Joseph Chambers, Mar. 1, 1776.

²This date is suggested by comments JW made to others at the time. In a letter on Dec. 27, 1774 to Jane Catherine March he noted that ‘Philly [Briggs] has stood such shocks as might have upset some of the most established souls we have in London’; and in a letter to Philothea’s sister Elizabeth the next day he assured, ‘You have done what you could in this matter and “angels can do no more”. I am glad you tried; by-and-by she may see more clearly’.

³The Briggs family home was on Hoxton Square.

⁴[Entreat] the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.’

⁵1 Cor. 7:1.

and those days embittered which otherwise would have been some of the happiest of my life. How cutting were his tender reproaches! How exquisitely did I suffer by every kind upbraiding word and look!

The manner in which it affected others was as various as their circumstances and turn of mind. Some were offended. Others struck with astonishment. The bold and forward pleaded it as a precedent and excuse for familiarity with the other sex; and the reserved were grieved and dejected. ... Some kept at a distance and were quite disaffected. Others consented to visit, but with pain and reluctance. I heard one say that she lost the whole benefit of a winter's attendance upon his public ministry, and could only think of 'Physician, heal thyself.'⁶ Some censored him, but I could never marvel that a *wise man*, who could scarce ever meet with a suitable companion, should in general prefer the company of women. They are usually more amiable and less conceited than men, and especially when they are spiritually minded. But fondness in a mixed company may breed contempt. In some whole societies it was talked of too freely, and even amongst the unawakened. In short, it was a matter of universal grief, a stumbling block to many, and a pain to all.

Oh my ever honoured father, my tenderest beloved friend! Can you yet bear with me? It was the fear of giving you pain that kept me so long silent. You must believe that only love has dictated this letter. How I have loved your feeling heart can tell, and I can truly say every tender and respectful sentiment remains as ever, only heightened, and my heart enlarged to love each day beyond the former. If you will condescend to hear me kindly and forgive, I shall think myself the happiest of women. Be for the future all *unreserved*. I know you will not bear resentment, but your transient displeasure I cannot bear. ... I shall not see you willingly unless you favour me with a line and say if yet you can allow me an interest in your prayers and affections. Do not have me in suspense but, if possible, let Betty⁷ have a letter for me before next Thursday. If she gives it [to] me unseen, perhaps not even my sister may know of my writing. When I see you I entreat you to take no notice if I weep. I think your kindness will not see it. ... For oh! remember how much I feel, and how much I love!

I beg of you to burn this. ... May you be blessed in every blessing! May all your pleasures prove a scale to heaven, and may you forgive and be still kindly affected to her, etc. ...

'This letter was taken by Mrs. Wesley from the bureau of her husband in revenge for similar treatment.'⁸

Source: British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add. MS. 39168, ff. 69–70.

⁶Luke 4:23.

⁷Philothea's older sister Elizabeth Briggs.

⁸Without the original we cannot be sure, but this comment was likely added by Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley. Cf. JW's comment about Mary taking some of his papers 'two years ago' in his letter of Sept. 1, 1777.

From Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley and Noah Vazeille

[as summarized and quoted by JW¹]

[London]

c. December 5, 1774

In the letter you gave me, wrote in your son's name, you complain of being falsely accused. And you accuse *me* of many things.

And first, you say you are accused of beating me and tearing my hair. ... You say you are accused, secondly, 'of being a vixen'. ... You say you are accused, thirdly, of jealousy.

You accuse me 1) of a desire to blacken you. ... 'The road to your favour is to accuse your wife.'

Your second accusation: 'Within a few years after marriage, you wanted your wife to give up her marriage settlement, and rob her children of what *their* father had many years toiled for. To this she was repeatedly pressed by your brother Charles and others. Upon her refusal, your conduct toward her visibly changed. And you made this a plea for your frequent reflections on her.' You say I pressed you to this, 'within a few years after our marriage, and upon your refusal, my conduct visibly changed.' ... 'But at this very early period you allowed your brother's wife £100 per annum.'

You accuse me, 3) of 'causing your jealousy by my letters, so early as twenty years back'.

You accuse me, 4) of writing letters to you ... wherein 'I acknowledged my own weakness'.

You say, 5) 'Scarce had four years passed, when your *inconstancy began to show itself*, by your corresponding with Sarah Ryan and Sarah Crosby.' You add, 'The subject of this correspondence was, plans to torment your wife.' ... 'I frequently warned you of your danger, with the tenderness of an affectionate friend.'

You say, 6) 'I have for twenty years been subject to the will and pleasure of servants.' ... 'A [Sarah] Clay and a [Elizabeth] McDonald were esteemed more able managers than me.' ... 'But they refused to do almost any one thing for [me].'

'At Bristol you took a woman noted for prostitution, for an housekeeper [Sarah Ryan].'

'After [Sarah] Clay came an [Elizabeth] Appleton, whose behaviour to me for these eight years has exceeded almost any I met before. I complained of this before her face.'

'Has my conduct ever been such, as to give you the least room to doubt, but that my affection was wholly centered in *you*?'

'But you have no affection for *me*. Did not you take your housekeeper, Ann Smith, with you in your carriage, while I was denied my humble request of that honour, and left behind to weep my wasting hours alone?'

The heaviest charge is yet behind—namely, my beating you.

But why did you leave me? 'Why, because I cannot endure, to be under the management of any woman in the house.' ... 'But I cannot have my health at the Foundry.' ... 'But what a Jesuitical scheme was it to say from the Foundry pulpit, *whoever should find the strayed sheep should bring her home*?' ... 'But you did not seek after me.' ... 'But I came to you and requested only fifty pounds a year. This you refused; and the cause you assigned was, *whatever I give you is the blood of the poor*.'

As to 'the scores of pounds which I have lavished on [Sarah] Ryan, [Sarah] Crosby, [Ann] Smith, [Mary] Maddern, Simpson and [Elizabeth] Appleton'

You conclude, 'Unless therefore you will redress my grievances, I am determined to defend my cause.'

Source: holograph of JW's reply; Wesley's Chapel (London), LDWMM 1994/1950/1-2.

¹This letter is not known to survive; it is reconstructed from the summary and quotations in JW's extended reply, Dec. 9, 1774 (*Works*, 29:102–08). Consult this reply for more details on persons, etc.

From Mary Jones

[Bath]

December 6, 1774

Reverend Sir,

Since I wrote last I have been led to adore that God who dealeth so bountifully with me. At present I feel peace and joy in believing, and believe that he is engaged to bring me safe to glory.

My soul truly thirsteth for God. I long to bear all the image of the meek and lowly Jesus, and that all I am may be holiness to the Lord. But truly I am an unprofitable servant. Yet Christ is rich in mercy, and from him is my fruit continually found.

The few moments of retirement I can get are greatly blest to me. I am then enabled to lay all my wants and weaknesses before God, and to pour out my soul in tears of gratitude, for his manifold favours.

When I come to hear his word, on entering the house a solemn awe strikes my soul, and a power is given me to attend to what is spoken without distraction. I view the speaker as a servant of God, and hearken for the message which God sends by him to me. I sit, trying my own soul by the law and the testimony, and have no time to judge my neighbours.

I highly esteem my teachers, not being so vain as to think I have no need of them. On the contrary, I feel great need of the least of them. I look upon them all as true servants of Christ, and my desire is that I may be little and learn.

I love all that bear the image of Christ, let them be called by what name they will. I consider they are children of the same Father, and are travelling to the same country. And that when we arrive there, we shall be employed in the same work, even praising God and the Lamb for ever. Yet I have abundant reason to praise God that my lot is cast where it is.

I am not exempt from temptations of various kinds. But hitherto the Lord hath helped me. Thus sir I have written to you the feelings of my soul, and desire that you would approve or correct as you see needful; which will be received with much gratitude by, reverend sir,

Your very unworthy, but much favoured,

Mary Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786): 227–28.

From Sarah (Ward) Nind

Ramsbury Park
December 18, 1774

Reverend Sir,

You seem surprised that I should be acquainted with sorrow in the vale of private life, especially while blest with affectionate friends and all things needful for life and godliness.¹ But oh sir! I have not been secluded from unreasonable and wicked persons, whose minds were set upon mischief, and whose tongues were sharper than a two-edged sword.

One in particular was a false-hearted professor, who had long been my companion and friend; who under the profession of friendship and religion, found means, not only to disturb our domestic quiet but deeply to wound my character. This, and a variety of odd circumstances that attend it, proved to me a very great affliction and weighted down my spirits exceedingly.

My mind has been peculiarly susceptible of sorrow from a child. But since I knew the Lord, I have thought I could never suffer much from any circumstance whatever, if I had a constant sense of the presence of God. But now I know the contrary, and have proved that though grace saves from sin, it does not always from pain and sorrow. But blessed be God, he hath now suffered these things to pass from me, and I enjoy outward, as well as inward peace. For which I feel much gratitude.

Since I wrote last I have gained more simplicity of mind. The consequence of which is, I have a more intimate acquaintance with God and a more extensive view of practical holiness. I now lay myself before the Lord, begging him to work all my works in me, and to divest me of everything whereby he is not glorified. I would not think, nor speak, nor act, but to his glory. But I fear I come far short of this, though I desire it much more than thousands of gold and silver.

I was stirred up to great diligence while Mr. W.² was preaching on Thursday night on 'Occupy till I come'.³ I seemed to see myself on the verge of the grave, and the thought of the many opportunities of reproving and exhorting others which I have lost pierced me to the heart. Indeed I know nothing in which I have been so shamefully deficient. God grant it may be so no more! That it may not, I hope dear sir you will favour me with your prayers, and thereby greatly oblige

Your friend and servant,

S. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 279–80.

¹The letter from JW to which Nind is replying is not known to survive.

²Thomas Westell was assigned to Wiltshire (south) this year; William Whitaker to Wiltshire (north).

³Luke 19:13.

From Elizabeth (Patten) Bennis¹

Limerick
December 24, 1774

Dear Sir,

I have delayed to acknowledge the receipt of your last till I could inform you of my son's arrival at Kingswood school. In this I have given him up to the Lord, without making any choice, desiring that he may dispose of him as seemeth him best. And in this surrender I find my mind entirely eased of every burden concerning this child. Indeed not only in this, but in every affair of life I see the Lord is willing to bear my burden, when I simply and confidently cast it upon him. Nor do I find any other way of deliverance. And had not the Lord in many cases pointed me to himself, and enabled me to cast all my care upon him, I should have sunk under the weight. But glory be to him, though outward things are still the same, yet they have not the same effect on me. They do not distress me in the manner they used to do. My heart and treasure is laid up above. And as to temporal affairs, I desire to leave them entirely to the disposal of my heavenly father, who knows best how to distribute them, being fully confident of his care and protection over me and mine, and knowing assuredly that his will is best however humbling it may appear. This is the present state of my mind, and has been so for some time. And surely I may say 'This hath the Lord done',² for no power but his could ever have subdued the world in my heart.

But a doubt arises whether I shall always enjoy the same deliverance. I trust I shall, and am enabled to depend upon my God for this also.

The work of God goes on blessedly here under Mr. [George] Snowden and Mr. [Michael] M'Donald. We have indeed happy meetings both in public and in private. The Lord is also at work in Waterford, and in most of our country societies. But as you have got an account of these I need not recapitulate.

We rejoice at the expectation of seeing you here once more. May the Lord prosper your way, and send his blessing with you ... and grant you many happy returns of this solemn season ... prays

Your truly affectionate,

Eliza Bennis

Source: published transcription; Bennis, *Christian Correspondence*, 109–11.

¹Replying to JW to Bennis, Sept. 13, 1774.

²Gen. 33:19.

From Charles Perronet

Canterbury
December 29, 1774

Reverend Sir,

I cannot make you any suitable returns for your repeated offers of making the Foundery my place of abode, at a time [when¹] I can only be a burden to you and my friends. Sometimes the thought of spending a month or two with you gives me pleasure. But when it will be I cannot tell. For since you were here,² I have had such pains of body that I could not sit up by day, nor scarce lie in bed at night. The will of the Lord be done! I am a sinner, worthy of correction; unholy, and need purification. From what I have suffered, I have sometimes hoped that God was taking vengeance of my sins and destroying them all. At such times I could find nothing contrary to his will in me. Unless it was too great a desire for still living a suffering life. Or that I might not die before I had done and suffered more for his glory. For indeed I had much rather serve his cause on earth a little longer than even go to heaven before I had *fully* glorified him on earth.

What you say is true. We have one who stands up for us before the throne of God. He is *my* peace; and through him God is reconciled to me. But oh, when shall I bear his image, and have all the mind that was in Christ Jesus? He certainly is my sanctification, as well as my saviour from the wrath of God.

This is glorious gospel, the truth and counsel of God which you were sent forth to preach, that you might set forth Christ as the full and complete saviour of all who *believe* and *abide* in him.

To his mercy I commend you, beseeching him to preserve you all your days and bring you safe to heaven!

Till then, reverend and dear sir, I remain
Your brother in tribulation,

C. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 280–81.

¹Inserted by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

²JW had been in Canterbury Dec. 5–7, 1774.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
January 10, 1775

May every added year bring to my dear and reverend father an abundant increase of heavenly consolations. May this one which you are now entered be replete with blessings and may you enjoy a constant heaven in Jesus' love. I bless the Lord for his great goodness in sparing you with the degree of strength you now enjoy. O that this invaluable blessing may be long continued to this church and people. Forgive me, dear sir, if in this I seem to wish you longer absent from that exceeding and eternal weight of glory the Lord hath prepared for you in the bright regions of eternal day. The fold of Christ wants such faithful shepherds, and many particular persons who are favoured with your acquaintance have great cause to bless the Lord for so faithful and so judicious a guide to their souls as it hath pleased the Lord to make you. Among this number permit the worm now writing to rank herself. I must forever praise my Lord for the kindness you show towards me.

A thousand thanks for your last letter.¹ In the books you recommend I may met with truth unmixed with error. This I find was not the case in that mentioned before. I hope carefully to avoid reading all mystic writers for the future, as the little I did read of Madam Guyon for some days tended only to muddle my understanding.² But I cried unto the Lord. He sent me help in the time of need. I have been reading Mr. [John] Fletcher's *Equal Check* lately, and must acknowledge I never saw the doctrine of the dispensations in so clear a light before. (I had indeed some confused idea of them, never daring to send those who were without the law into endless torments, but believed they were a law unto themselves, their conscience bearing them witness and their thoughts meanwhile either accusing or else excusing themselves to one another.³) But this he shows so plainly that he that runneth may read.⁴ I trust every Laodicean professor that sees his book will endeavour to get some steps up the ladder of truth.⁵ I believe it reacheth quite from earth to heaven. Glory be to God that through the infinite mercy I have begun to ascend it. O may I run and never tire. Indeed, I think every hour I live Jesus grows more truly precious. I feel my fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. In him eternal life I know and heaven's unutterable bliss. My wants I see, and feel are great and many, but Jesu stands with open arms to give me all I want. In some measure I do inherit all things, but ardently long for more of the image of my God. He is indeed as a place of broad waters. In his love is neither bottom nor shore. But this I find, he is my constant friend

And to me he shall show
His uttermost power of salvation below.⁶

May he ever keep me near his side.

¹JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, Nov. 29, 1774, *Works*, 29:95–96.

²Jeanne Marie Bouvier de La Motte Guyon (1648–1717).

³See Rom. 2:14–15.

⁴See Hab. 2:2.

⁵See Rev. 3:14.

⁶CW, Hymn on Isa. 38:20, *Scripture Hymns* (1762), 1:334.

Last Saturday I was taken very ill, and about 10:00 in the forenoon went to bed. My complaint seemed a violent colic. They endeavoured to make me warm by applying hot flannels, and giving me tincture of rhubarb and senna mint, which after some time had the desired effect. Toward evening it went off, and I still continue better. The Lord kept me comfortable in my soul while exercised with violent pains. Life or death was equal, so I should but glorify my God. Every wish is lost in this: Let me live and die to thee alone. O what hath Jesus done for helpless man. Who would not love such a Saviour as this? Lord increase our faith, confirm our hope, and perfect us in love.

May you ever feel beneath you and around are spread the arms of everlasting love. May the eternal God be your refuge, and may your last days be your best days. O that you may see an abundant increase of the Redeemer's kingdom, and after many more victories over the powers of darkness, may you return unto him with songs and everlasting joy upon your head. Then eternal joy without the least degree of pain will be forever attained. All sorrow and sigh shall forever flee away. We shall then see him without a veil between, whom unseen we love. The blessed bliss inspiring hope, the cross will be exchanged for the crown; and God himself wipe every tear away. Farewell dear sir. Continue to increase the obligations I lie under by reproof freely and advising wherever you see needful, dear and honoured sir.

Your truly affectionate though unworthy daughter,

Eliza. Ritchie

Address: 'To Mr Wesley'.

Annotation: another hand, '7'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

From Samuel Bardsley

Doncaster
January 30, 1775

Reverend and very Dear Sir,

May the God whose you are and whom you serve bless you in your body, soul, and labours, now and forever. Amen.

I think it my duty and privilege to write to you and inform you how I go on. Blessed be God, I have enjoyed and good state of health and the Lord has been good to my soul since I came into this circuit. I find a desire to go forward and to be more than ever devoted to God and given up to his work. Pray for me, dear sir, that I may be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We have reason to believe the Lord is reviving his work in this circuit. We have large congregations at Sheffield and Rotherham and the societies are in a prosperous way. We have taken in several new places. I hope good will be done at Chesterfield. They seem to be very willing to hear, and the Lord has raised up friends there to smile upon us (and persons of ability) so that at present we enjoy much peace. There is also a blessed work broke out at Eyam near Grindleford Bridge.¹ About nine years since Mr. Mayer² went to preach there and met with hot persecution. The person that received him had his windows broke and the stones flew so fast into the house the wife and children were glad to take shelter upstairs. The landlord obliged him to leave his house, and no one would let him an house in the town, so he was obliged to remove to Grindleford Bridge. About three years since he went to live in Eyam again, where several remained who were awakened by Mr. Mayer's preaching and met in society. Of late they were very cold and indifferent. But within these few months there is a flame kindled (I cannot tell how). So they would have us to come, and I have been twice and was well paid for my labour. I found a remarkable blessing amongst them. There are³ now 24 in society and they appear to be in good earnest. O that the Lord may arise and plead his own cause, that thousands and tens of thousands may be converted unto him!

I was lately at Manchester to see my dear mother.⁴ She was as well as I could expect, considering her years. I trust her desires are towards the Lord for mercy. My brother, who was so very thoughtless, is now remarkably serious. Blessed be God for it. He is now a comfort to my dear parent.

I love my fellow-labourers. I lately saw them. They were tolerable. Sister Mitchell⁵ is got bravely again, and the little one is likely to live. I am informed brother Greenwood is laid up at Huddersfield with the rheumatism.⁶ I hope, dear sir, you enjoy as good health as when I saw you at Bristol. O that God may

¹I.e., Eyam and Grindleford, Derbyshire. Bardsley spelled 'Aim'.

²Matthew Mayer (1740–1814), of Portwood Hall, Stockport, began preaching in the early 1760s, at JW's encouragement, throughout Staffordshire and southern Lancashire. He remained a (wide-ranging) local preacher rather than a formal itinerant. See *MM* 39 (1816), 1–11, 161–70, 241–51; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 225.

³Orig., 'is'.

⁴Elizabeth Bardsley.

⁵The wife of Bardsley's fellow itinerant in the circuit, Thomas Mitchell.

⁶Parson Greenwood (1727–1810), a native of Huddersfield, entered the itinerant ministry in 1762 and served faithfully for 31 years; see *WMM* 34 (1811): 710. JW had previously counselled Greenwood on his ailments; see *Journal*, Apr. 19, 1774, *Works*, 22:404–05.

lengthen out your days and bless you with all the blessings of the man that feareth the Lord! That you may more than ever

See the prosperous church and share
In her felicity.⁷

I shall esteem it a great favour if you will write to me and advise me as the Lord directs you. I hope Mrs. [Mary] Wesley is tolerable in body and comfortable in soul.⁸ Please to give my dear love and service to her. Dear sir, I remain

Your dutiful son and servant,

Sam. Bardsley

Please to direct to me at Mr. James Walker's, Sheffield. Madam Eyre bids me give her best love to you.⁹

Address: 'To the Rev. John Wesley at the Foundry London'.

Source: manuscript copy for records; MARC, MA 1977/205 (Bardsley letterbook), 3:164–69.

⁷Cf. CW, 'Psalm 128', st.7, *HSP* (1743), 94 (CW has 'prosperity' instead of 'felicity').

⁸JW makes no mention of Mary in his reply; they had recently separated again.

⁹Phebe Eyre (d. 1777), a widow in Doncaster, left a bequest in her will to the preachers of the people called Methodists assigned to the Sheffield circuit at the time of her death.

From Peter Böhler¹

Nevil's Court [Fetter Lane, London]
February 13, 1775

Reverend Brother,

Your kind letter of the 5th instant came duly to hand,² and I cannot forbear to acknowledge with these lines the receipt thereof in the most friendly manner. At the same time I will take notice of your last paragraph, and beg the favour of an answer to my question.

You write, 'As to what is to come, I have no desire or design to speak of them' [the Moravians] 'at all.' This I heartily wish also, it may neither happen without a previous design. You add, 'unless in their favour'. For my part, I would heartily dispense even with this. You conclude 'I hope I shall never be constrained to do otherwise.' This is properly the sentence which startles me. For I cannot imagine what could constrain you to pass strictures on us, or to speak against us. For, dear brother, you have really lost sight of us for these thirty years past. You know us since that time only by hearsay, and mostly by what this or that person in his confusion has been pleased to say. Yet perhaps there may be some things in your mind which do not occur to me, and if they should be of such a nature as to be removable on our part, I beg you to mention them to me and I will do all in my power to prevent them.

Our brethren, and I also particularly in my small sphere of acting, have all along been concerned to promote a universal love among all the children of God, and a universal esteem of all the servants of God towards one another in all denominations who heartily cooperate to promote the knowledge of our crucified Saviour as the propitiation for our sins. Indeed, it is one of the most grievous points for our mourning about the breaches in Zion that we find so few heartily inclined for it. I must own that, ever since my last coming to England, this consideration has been a heart-breaking subject to me. For our dear Saviour's last will in John 17 is set aside. His command to love one another is neglected. And consequently the impression which the world should receive of knowing his true disciples, by means of their unfeigned love towards one another, is absolutely lost. And a great loss it is, which all real children of God should heartily bewail—at the same time standing by one another, through his grace, to remedy this essential defect. If this point was at any time absolutely necessary to insist upon, it is in the period wherein we now live. For we see that the wicked work, and even the infidel ecclesiastics as well as laymen in all denominations, rise in open defiance and rebellion against the Lord who has bought them with his most precious blood. Ah how much more then should all who truly love our crucified Lord Jesus, and who indeed want to promote his glory, stand up in mutual support of each other, comfort, strengthen, and where need is set each other to rights, in love, meekness, humility, forbearance, friendliness, etc., as the Head of our most holy religion has set us a spotless example! Ah, if this were the case with the children of God and servants of Christ in all denominations, how would the glory, saving knowledge, and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ increase all over the world! Yea, thousands who are now stumbled at the controversies, back-bitings, sly and satirical strictures on each other, etc., etc., would be linked into this body of love and peace in our crucified Lord.

¹Peter Böhler was now overseer of the Moravian communities in Europe and North America. He had recently come to London, and became aware of the interchange between James Hutton and JW over some characterizations of the Moravians published in 1771 by JW in an extract of his *Journal*; see JW to Hutton, Dec. 26, 1771 (28:447–48). In either a letter or face-to-face meeting Böhler raised questions about this which drew a letter from JW on Feb. 5, 1775. This letter is not known to survive, but its final section is quoted in Böhler's reply. Böhler died of a stroke in London two months later.

²JW's letter is not known to survive; but can be partially reconstructed from this reply.

Excuse this digression, my dear brother. It comes from a full heart, that is ready to overflow as soon as this subject is touched upon. I feel an inexpressible tenderness when I take a view all over the so-called Christian world.

Towards the end of this or beginning of next month I hope to go on a journey of about four or five weeks. After my return to London, not many weeks will elapse before I, God willing, shall set out for Germany—which of course reminds me of taking leave of you and all my friends and brethren in England, which is not so easy a thing for me, as my heart is in the strictest union with them.

You, my dear brother, may firmly assure yourself that my prayers for you and your societies will continue for your prosperity in the crucified Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that we might be delivered from the hands of all our spiritual enemies, and serve him all the days of our life in holiness and righteousness before him. In whom I also am, dear and reverend brother,

Yours affectionately,

Peter Böhler

Source: published transcription; *Wesley Methodist Magazine* 77 (1854): 690–91.

From Martha (Abba) Thompson¹

[Rufforth]
c. March 1775

I was born in the year 1702 at Rufforth,² a village near the city of York, of religious parents who endeavoured to bring up their children in the fear of God, and diligently taught them to escape the pollutions of the world. Having no sister, I made choice of a serious young woman who lived in the neighbourhood for a companion. We constantly laboured to flee from everything which appeared sinful, and embraced what we thought amiable and praiseworthy. But all this did not satisfy my mind. For I still felt an empty void, and knew not what was to fill it. I frequently cried out to my friend, 'For what purpose are we created? Surely for something more than to perform the common affairs of this life.' For notwithstanding the grace of God wrought in us a fear of offending, yet were we entire strangers to his pardoning love, and unacquainted with the work of heart-conversion.

When I was about twenty-five years of age God was pleased to visit my friend with a fever, in the beginning of which she had a strong persuasion it would prove mortal. In it the Lord revealed his pardoning love to her soul, and she declared she would not part with her interest in Christ for a thousand worlds. I waited on her till her decease, with great composure. But when she was gone I was inconsolable. Like Rachel, I refused to be comforted. I murmured against God. And like Jonah, thought I did well to be angry. Only I knew self-murder was a sin, or I would not have lived. The spirit of despair took such possession of me that I could neither see, nor enjoy, any of the mercies of God.

After several months spent in this misery I began to read Dr. [Isaac] Watts's hymns, which gave me some consolation. At length the Lord discovered to me in a dream the utter insufficiency of all things under the sun to make the soul happy. From that time I began to see my sin and folly. I saw I loved the creature more than God. I was humbled under his mighty hand, and with a calm resignation looked unto him for mercy. He was then pleased to give me that peace which passeth all understanding. The world and all its allurements were put under my feet, and as far as I know have never been able since to draw away my affections from God. I now became conversable, and attended upon the necessary affairs of life without reluctance.

Soon after my justification I discovered the evils of my heart. I enquired of several of my acquaintance, 'Why cannot we keep our hearts from rising against persons whose behaviour is provoking and unreasonable?' Alas, I met with miserable comforters! They told me those evils were natural, and that it was impossible to be delivered from them in this world. However the Lord was pleased to teach me the method of overcoming these unholy tempers. He strongly impressed on my mind to keep silence whenever I found the least degree of resentment kindling against anyone; and when my mind regained its wonted serenity, I was then at leisure to reprove as the case required. By being obedient to this conviction, these happy effects followed: It brought peace into my own soul, and made the reproof, when necessary, more cordially received. So that those I was daily conversant with both loved and feared me. From many years experience, and in different stations of life, I most earnestly recommend this method to all who are exercised with the remains of their inward corruptions.

About a year and a half after the death of my friend, I entered into the marriage state with one of her brothers [Samuel]. He was an affectionate husband, a tender parent, and a good master. I had seven

¹Martha Abba was baptized in Rufforth on Dec. 4, 1702; on Nov. 16, 1729, she married Samuel Thompson (b. 1693) of Rufforth. It does not appear that she wrote her portion of the following account specifically for JW, but we include it in this collection because he published it in *AM*.

²Orig., 'Rufford'.

children, five of whom survived their father. Twelve years we lived very comfortably together. The Lord was then pleased to take my husband to himself. This was a severe trial, to lose such a partner, who was more dear to me than she had been, and with whom I lived as happy as most that ever entered into that connection. But the Lord so far subdued my mind that, though I deeply mourned, yet I durst not murmur against him. I had a large farm to manage, in order to bring up my children, and was obliged to keep five servants. But all these concerns the Lord enabled me to go through with far less difficulty than could be expected.

In a few years after the death of my husband the Methodist preachers visited these parts, and testified openly that we were to receive in this life the knowledge of salvation by the remission of our sins. This greatly alarmed the whole country. The first preacher I heard, I did not rightly comprehend his doctrine. But his deportment much affected me. There appeared such a solemn reverence of God in his very looks as I had never seen in any person before. Mr. [William] Shent, of Leeds, was the next preacher who came this way. I was so astonished with the heavenly truths he unfolded that I was almost lost in wonder, love, and praise. I invited them to my house, and the Lord opened my understanding to know what he had formerly wrought in my heart. I was kept in wonderful peace, and refreshed with the comforts of his Spirit.

They not only preached justification by faith in Christ Jesus, but sanctification through the influence of his Spirit. This was an additional blessing to me, who had been so long complaining of the remains of sin.

I was greatly animated with love and zeal for God's glory and the salvation of souls, and procured the preachers to visit every place where my friends lived that would receive them. And praised be the Lord, the word proved to be the savour of life to many souls. Several years we were thus employed, and the preaching was established in the city of York, though not without difficulty. I went forward in the ways of the Lord without regarding either the smiles or the frowns of men.

At first when I met with persons who opposed the truth, I found a warmth that did not spring from love, and for which I was reprov'd in this manner, 'If thou wantest to do my work, thou must do it in my Spirit. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.'³ This gave me more and more to see that the remains of evil often rendered my best performances unacceptable in the sight of God; but the possibility of an entire freedom afforded me great satisfaction.

One day being in company, where I was not so watchful as I ought to have been, and afterwards meeting with a few who were singing hymns, I found my spirit did not join them with its wonted love and zeal. I was surprised, but the Lord made me sensible I had been off my guard. And from that time he bestowed on me such a power of watchfulness as I shall praise him for while I have a being. One great reason why many converted persons advance but slowly in the divine life is unwatchfulness. If we earnestly prayed for a watchful spirit, and believed the Lord would enable us to be faithful, our souls would prosper daily; we should make a swift progress in holiness.

When I met with unreasonable treatment (which indeed, I did very often), the Lord taught me that it was my duty not to be offended. By constantly observing this rule I soon found that it was not in the power of anyone to deprive me of inward peace, unless I first gave place to some wrong temper. Resentment of injuries arises when the eye is withdrawn from God, and gazeth at the temptation. This darkens the judgment, and we think it right to render evil for evil. But when the eye is single, and steadily fixed upon the proper object, we shall find divine grace sufficient for us. We often suffer loss, not for want of grace, but through neglecting to use the grace we have. When we indulge our own will, and reject the will of God, we are the authors of our own unhappiness.

³See James 1:20.

When persecution arose I did not regard it, till my personal character was aspersed. This I thought was very cruel, but the Lord suggested to my mind, 'Art thou not willing to bear it for Christ's sake?' I was astonished at the divine condescension, and my heart replied, 'Yes, Lord, yes.' And ever since I do not know that reproaches have given me any uneasiness.

I remember one person who entertained such a bitter prejudice against me for endeavouring to direct his wife in the way of salvation that he often declared he was not willing to kill me himself, but would freely die for anyone who would. Sometime after, he was afflicted with a fever, which confined him for many days. As soon as he recovered, he came to see me on purpose to tell me he had seen his errors, and was now perfectly reconciled. From that time he continued a fast friend to me as long as he lived.

When the distemper among horned cattle raged in these parts, I lost to the value of sixty or seventy pounds. But the gentlemen who acted as landlords often declared I should be considered by them. Yet when my losses were laid before them, they reproached me for my religious connections and absolutely refused me any assistance. This was a heavy trial, but the Lord upheld me with the arm of his power, and I could stay my soul upon his promises. When my flock was tolerably increased, those gentlemen sent me a discharge. This gave me an opportunity of quitting business. My children being grown up, I left my son on the farm and visited my friends at London, among whom I continued near a year, which was a comfortable, refreshing time.

Though the Lord dealt with me in this gracious manner, yet I had no thought of looking for the witness of purification, till he unexpectedly certified to my conscience what he had wrought in me, by applying with sovereign efficacy that precious promise, 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you: a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh,' Ezekiel 36:25–[26]. O how I was astonished at the unbounded mercy and love of God to such an unworthy creature, in making me a witness that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin! Now I knew I loved God with all my heart, and my neighbour as myself. Now I was saved from barrenness and unfruitfulness. My heart was no longer obdurate or inflexible, but like melting wax to the seal, ready to receive and retain all divine instructions. Pride and self-sufficiency had no more any part in me. Divine grace humbled me to the dust, and stripped me of all self-righteousness; for I saw and felt my own nothingness, and inability even to think a good thought. But by acting faith upon the Lord, I was enabled to do all things that are commanded in his word—to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks; and to add to faith all the fruits of righteousness. This blessed liberty I have now enjoyed for above fourteen years. And if I thus continue to the end, I am well-assured that an abundant entrance will be ministered to me into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. [Here ends Martha Thompson's own account]

The foregoing relation is extracted from a short memorandum written by herself, above seven years ago, at the request of some intimate friends. It may not be unnecessary further to add that her natural disposition was friendly, open, and generous; which, being purified by grace, rendered her conversation agreeable and edifying to all who relished internal religion. She had a remarkable facility in speaking to the consciences of sinners. Her address was mild and affectionate, yet penetrating the heart, and engaging the attention. Nor were her efforts to save souls unsuccessful; we have good reason to believe that many were induced, through the divine blessing upon her earned entreaties, to flee from the wrath to come. She knew how to encourage mourners, to pour the balm of consolation into their aching wound, leading them to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. But she excelled in urging believers to lay hold on the purifying blood of Christ, that they might enjoy an entire freedom from all tormenting tempers. This blessed liberty she possessed with increase for above twenty years, and adorned her

profession by an unspotted life. She was not ashamed to acknowledge that God had taken entire possession of her soul, according to his own faithful promises. And she enjoyed such an uninterrupted plenitude of peace and joy as not only surprised lukewarm professors, but many adult Christians. When she met with professors who entertained prejudices against the doctrine of Christian perfection, who were advocates for the abiding presence of indwelling sin, her answer was similar to that of the father of Gideon to the men of Ophrah: 'Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye serve him? If he be a god let him plead for himself.'⁴ But when all the arguments deduced from Scripture, reason, and experience were ineffectual; when the great promises which certify God's intention to purify his people were opposed or explained away, she was grieved for her mistaken brethren. She wept over them in secret before the Lord. Her cry was, 'O that all the children of God were but willing to receive the precious blessings which Christ hath purchased. O that they would but suffer him to cleanse their hearts from all impure propensities, how soon would he accomplish the work! Then they might live a holy, happy life, and in due time enter his kingdom in the full triumph of faith.'

One thing remarkable in her experience was that for many years she enjoyed an entire freedom from all distressing temptations. The enemy approached at times as usual, but his suggestions found no place in her mind. She did not enter into temptation; it made no impression. This appeared singular, if not mysterious, to most of her acquaintance. However we expected she would meet with some severe trials from the powers of darkness when on a deathbed. But in this we were happily mistaken. The day before her departure an intimate friend enquired into the state of her mind, with a view to have this part of her experience cleared up. He found her in her usual tranquillity, praising God, and on the wing of joyous expectation to meet him whom her soul loved. She repeated the words of our Lord to the Philadelphian church, 'Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation';⁵ and observed that God had performed that promise to her in an uncommon manner, not only during the time of her sickness but for many years together. Next morning, being the 13th of February 1775, she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 6 (1783): 468–71, 524–28.

⁴Cf. Judg. 6:31.

⁵Cf. Rev. 3:10.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Cross Hall [near Leeds]
March 14, 1775

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I praise my God and thank you for your last invaluable favour,¹ and should not dare to intrude so much on your precious time, did not you kindly encourage me. Indeed, I may truly say the Lord not only hath, but continues, to deal bountifully with me. I am as nothing in his sight, and yet he remembers me for good. I feel he daily brings me nearer to himself, and give me more fully to abide in him. He is indeed the circle where my passions move, the centre of my soul. I am more and more delighted with the way of simple faith. And glory be to God, who hath at last conquered the most rebellious of his creatures, and made me willing to become a fool for Christ's sake. Yes, blessed be the Lord, I am saved by grace through faith, and feel this salvation the free gift of God. For some time lately my soul has been sweetly kept in uninterrupted peace. Jesus is my all in all. I am safe and happy

While in his dear arms I rest
Sin and Satan cannot hurt me
Whilst upon the Saviour's breast.²

Glory be to his dear name, I want to be all love. This is all that to me seems worth living for: to know more of this precious Jesus, who is indeed the plant of renown. I often find Satan throws things in my way, with an intent to hinder me from cleaving to the Lord. But he defeats all the enemy's artifices, and gives me by all I meet with to feel fresh cause to praise his love and guardian care. I will praise my God forever and ever, for he is my refuge. Jehovah is my strength and my song. He also is become my salvation.

About a week ago I came to Leeds, where after a long absence I met my dear and valuable friend sister [Sarah] Crosby. We have had a precious time. The love of Jesus crowns all our meetings, and last Saturday I was favoured with an opportunity of coming here. I find Jesus is everywhere, but glory be to his dear name, more abundantly amongst his faithful followers. May his presence be more powerfully revealed in all our hearts. I greatly desire to praise our dear Lord for what he is doing amongst us. Many at Otley who were very far from God have lately turned their faces Zionward. There is a shaking amongst the dry bones. May the Spirit of the Lord breathe on them. My dear brother³ and two more (who have set out very lately) have found peace with God and go on sweetly. Mr. Stocks was over to see us some weeks ago.⁴ He is truly simple. God has blessed him about two months ago with purity of heart. His soul is filled with love and his mouth with praise. Indeed, the Lord is sweetly working; may every spirit bow before him. I long for all to feel his power to save unto the very uttermost.

¹JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, Jan. 17, 1775, *Works*, 29:121.

²This is a loose rendering of the end of the first stanza of a hymn by an unknown eighteenth-century author with the first line 'Saviour I do feel thy merit'.

³John Ritchie Jr. (1751–99) and Elizabeth were the sole beneficiaries in their father's will in 1780. John Jr., a linen draper, married Elizabeth Scurr in Leeds on Aug. 9, 1780. Among their children was Joseph Ritchie (c. 1788–1819), a noted explorer of Africa.

⁴Richard Stocks (1735–1803), a grocer who lived in the Little Horton area of Bradford, was active in and a supporter of Methodism, contributing to building the Octagon chapel there in 1772. See Stamp, *Bradford*, 43–45, 56, 62

Since I last wrote, my health has been much as usual. I do not yet feel much difference, but am through mercy able to do all the providence of God calls me to. Exercise I feel exceeding good, and think the using more of this than I often can at home has been one means in the hand of God for my good. The electrifying I feel very useful, but have not had it in my power to use it much. My brother has ordered a machine, but we have not got it yet. I have never been forced to take a vomit yet. The other things seemed to answer the intended end. But I hope the Lord will now give me more strength than heretofore. His will be done. If he does, it shall be devoted to him; if not, he will accept my mite. All I want is to glorify him, and whether he gives me to suffer or to do his blessed will he shall choose, for he doth all things well.

May the Lord bless you, dear and honoured sir. I can do but little to return the repeated obligations your care over me lays me under. I can but tell the Lord he must repay you and fill your soul with all his fullness. But this he shall do, for he takes the favours done to his little ones as done unto himself, and shall fill your borders with plenty and crown you with tender mercy and loving kindness. May he bless and prosper your intended journey,⁵ and ever keep your spirit in perfect peace, is and shall be the prayer of

[Your affectionate but unworthy daughter,

Eliza. Ritchie]

Address: 'To the Revrd Wesley'.

Annotation: another hand, '8th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁵JW was preparing to sail for Ireland the end of March.

From Thomas Bond¹

Castle Street [Dublin²]
April 4, 1775

Reverend Sir,

I forgot to tell you this morning that I found lately among some papers a letter that I received from you about ten years ago, with a copy of my answer.³ I think it my duty (in sincerity and truth) to return you my most hearty thanks for the love which is evident in yours, and to request that you will pardon the impertinence which is as apparent in mine.

I see plainly that I was driven from you by a *satanical force*, which laid me under a kind of necessity of looking into the world, and of seeking in dissipation for relief. But I think I can say in truth that the Lord has delivered me from all evil. I find my heart united to you in love. I wish to be the servant of his servants, to wash his disciples feet, and to make every recompense in my power for the injuries which I have (mistakenly) attempted, against pure and undefiled religion.

I cannot tell you the feelings of my heart, nor the assurance of his mercy. I could wish to give you a short account of an unworthy life (from the very beginning) filled with unsettledness and folly, and with the unbounded grace and mercy of *our Lord Jesus Christ*.

I am reverend and dear sir, in pure love

Yours forever,

T. B.

P. S. You may make any use you please of this letter, and of the writer of it, that you may think will contribute to the glory of the grace of God.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 470–71.⁴

¹Thomas Bond was one of the original trustees of the house on Whitefriar Street leased for the housing of indigent widows in Dublin in 1766; see Crookshank, *Ireland*, 1:188.

²JW had just arrived in Dublin and was examining the society on the day Bond wrote this letter.

³Neither JW's letter to Bond, nor Bond's reply, are known to survive.

⁴The letter was titled in *AM*: 'The Backslider's Return; or Mr. Thomas Bond's candid account of himself, in a letter to the Rev. John Wesley.'

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
June 14, 1775¹

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I would sooner have wrote but knew not how to direct. This I hope will meet you on your return to England,² where I shall be truly glad to hear of your safe arrival. When may we hope to see you? Do remember Otley, and favour us with as much of your time as you can spare. The Lord is sweetly working amongst us. Within this last month we have had three justified, one backslider restored, and a believer set at perfect liberty. I hope these are as drops before a shower. All your friends will be glad to see you, and I need not tell you it will rejoice my heart to see you enter our roof. For though I am often with you in spirit, yet I feel no small pleasure in thinking I shall soon see my dear and much honoured father.

You say, can spirits at a distance attract each other? I believe, nay I feel they can. The morning you was at Manchester,³ while joining in prayer with some friends, I felt such a particular nearness to you as I do not ever remember to have felt before. But sure it is, as the soul gets nearer to Jesus, it feels more of that true communion of the saints which those who live distant from God can have no idea of. When pure love fills the heart, we have indeed fellowship not only with the Father and the Son, but also with each other, and no time nor place can ever separate the souls thus made one in him.

Glory be to his dear name, I feel my soul enters deeper into this secret of the Lord. I am kept in perfect peace, and daily feel my soul grows in grace. Jesus is more abundantly precious! I am often, as it were, lost in fellowship with the Holy Trinity; and within these last two months have felt my soul sink into such an entire nothingness before God that I have often been constrained to say, 'Behold what manner of love is this, that I who am less than the least of all saints should be thus favoured!'

But oh the price! The precious ransom! It cost my Lord his life. Here is the spring of all my joys! Yea, though to me they all are freely given, yet for them was my dear Lord greatly bruised. On him were my iniquities laid, and by his stripes I am healed.

When I thus reflect on what Jesus has suffered, and suffered for me, how does my heart burn with love to this adorable Saviour! Lost in astonishment and love I say, 'Thou art worthy! Shall I ever keep back what thou so dear hast bought? No, take the purchase of thy blood. I am henceforth no more my own, but thine. If I had ten thousand hearts, they should all be thine. But what I have and am to thee I give.' And thus, glory be to God, am I enabled to live continually offering up my little all to Jesus. He graciously deigns to accept my mite, and tells me ere long I shall see his lovely face without a veil between. Then I worthily shall praise. Then I perfectly shall love. O that all with us may find the art of living thus to thee! For thy service is perfect freedom.

And glory be to God, many are stepping into this glorious liberty about us, but especially at and about Bradford. I was there last week. Indeed there is a glorious work—many are awakened, numbers justified, and not a few testify that they are cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. I do not know the exact number of these, but by what I have seen and heard [I] think there may be about thirty. Upwards of twenty met in the select band, and all spoke very clearly and scripturally on Sunday after Mr. [William] Brammah had done preaching. One woman seemed much distressed for more of God. She took no notice of those around her, but went to her knees and began to wrestle with the Lord. Her prayer was soon sweetly lost in praise, and she testified she could love the Lord with all her heart. We called on her the next day; she was blessing and praising the Lord and told us she had been but about five weeks

¹The *AM* published extract is misdated September 14, 1775.

²JW arrived in England from Ireland in late July 1775.

³JW preached in Manchester on Mar. 20, 1775, before heading to Ireland.

justified, but that the last week she was much distressed for a clean heart and now believed the Lord had given her one.⁴

Many who have been lately justified are set at full liberty in Little and Great Horton.⁵ The power of God is greatly shown. With one accord they seem to cry out, 'What shall we do to be saved?' Many have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and feel the mighty power of faith. On Tuesday night, as Mr. [Richard] Stocks was meeting his class at Little Horton, one young man cried out for a full deliverance. The power of God shook almost every heart. The Lord was present indeed, and before we parted the young man told us, he would forever praise God, for he had delivered him and now he could love him with his whole heart. He said he had been about three weeks justified, but he heard of some who had set out lately who had gotten what they called a 'second blessing' and he was determined not to rest till God had given it to him; and now, glory be to God, I feel I have it.⁶ Indeed his very look showed the love of Jesus had filled his breast, for he seemed quite changed. These are times of refreshing from the presence of the most high. Glory be to God forever.

The Lord has sweetly and powerfully manifested himself to Mrs. Stocks about a month ago.⁷ She feels an entire change, and seems to herself only now to begin to live. Mr. Stocks is a *very* lively precious soul. He continues steadfast in the faith, testifying to all around 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin'. He desires I would give his kind love to you and tell you how very glad they will be to see you at Bradford. Indeed, dear sir, you will rejoice to see them. They are a simple, lively, happy people. He bids me tell you how very thankful they would be to God and you, could they have the preachers they now have continued another year, for what has been seems only like the first fruits of a glorious harvest, and were they to get men of contrary spirits it might not only put a stop to the progress of this blessed work but hurt many of the new ones. They are both universally liked, and the faithful souls are determined with one consent to ask them of God; and Mr. Stocks desires if possible that you will be kind enough to consider them.

Dear sir, if the length of my letters intrudes too much on your precious time, do reprove me. I oft think I will learn to say a deal in a few words, lest I should quite tire my friends. But when my pen gets set to paper, and love to Jesus and my friends warms my heart, I seem as if I knew not how to leave off conversing with them till my paper is almost filled. Excuse me. I will only add my ardent prayer to Almighty God for your constant prosperity. May you come amongst us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace, prays

Your unworthy daughter,

Eliza. Ritchie

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wesley / to be left at the Preaching House / Liverpool'.

Annotation: another hand, '9th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6). Cf. JW's published extract; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 661–62.

⁴JW omits these six sentences in *AM*.

⁵JW omits this sentence in *AM*.

⁶JW omits this sentence in *AM*.

⁷Richard Stocks married Elizabeth Withington (1737–1800) in 1764.

Proposal of Joseph Benson

c. June 30, 1775

To be laid before the Conference

Complaints having been made concerning the insufficiency of many of the preachers for the work in which they are engaged, both on account of their want of grace and abilities, would it not answer a good end —

1) To inquire particularly into the character, experience, and qualifications of each individual person who is now employed among us, without any exception, from the eldest to the youngest? Thus it would be discovered who were qualified, and who not.

2) To set apart those who are judged qualified for the work of the ministry, by fasting, prayer, and imposition of the hands of John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Fletcher, and other presbyters of the Established Church. Thus they would be more solemnly devoted to the work, would consider themselves more seriously entrusted with it, would more heartily and confidently engage in it, and would be more united to each other and more connected together, whence they might expect more of the divine blessing, and of consequence greater success in their labours. Thus would we be furnished with an answer to those who allege we have no authority to preach for want of ordination; the minds of many, both preachers and people, who have been distressed with doubts and reasonings on that head would be satisfied, and one main plea for seeking episcopal ordination, or that of other churches, would be quite set aside.

3) Of those who are judged unqualified to be thus set apart for the work of the ministry, to consider who are most blameable in their character and conduct, who have not had, or appear to have lost, converting grace, and who are remarkably deficient in common sense, or natural parts, or capacity for improvement, and to set these quite aside.

4) Of the rest, who, though not thought fit to be admitted into full connexion, yet are unexceptionable in their conduct, appear to be truly serious, and have a capacity for improvement, to admit part of them upon trial, and send the rest to Kingswood School. There let them stay a year (or longer if thought necessary) under the tuition of some of the ablest and most respected preachers, to study, not Latin and Greek, but their own mother-tongue, the Scriptures, the best English writers in divinity, church history, and the history of their own country.

5) For this purpose, to keep no boarders at Kingswood School, but only the preachers' boys and the preachers here mentioned; to appoint proper masters, both for the preachers and the children; and make public collections and receive private subscriptions to defray the expense of such an undertaking once a year.

Source: published transcription; Curnock, *Journal*, 8:328–29.¹

¹I.e., Nehemiah Curnock (ed.), *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, 8 vols. (London: Epworth, 1909–16). The underlying source for this proposal is a manuscript life of Joseph Benson, by his son Samuel Benson, which was once in the Conference Office in London (but its current whereabouts is unknown). Benson sent the proposal to John Fletcher, who notes in a letter of July 12 that he had sent it on to JW.

From George Robinson¹

Langham Row [Lincolnshire]
July 6, 1775

Reverend Sir,

The following lines are to acquaint you with the Lord's dealings with me in body and mind.

About twelve or thirteen years ago he inclined me to go amongst the people called Methodists. The nearest place they came to was at least twelve or thirteen miles from where I lived. From thence I used to come home on foot in the night. But when that dear man of God, Mr. Robertshaw come into Lincolnshire,² he came into the marshes and preached the gospel amongst us. The next year he joined three small societies: one at Trustthorpe, one at Saltfleet, and one at Langham Row where I live, for which many will have cause to bless God to all eternity.

On account of going to hear the gospel, my relations were set against me. My landlord, who was my second uncle, under whom I held a very dear little farm, said no Methodist should live under him. Neither would he give me anything if I would not give up my new religion, as he called it. My parents also opposed me. But blessed be God, my wife and I had both found the pardoning love of God, and did not much fear what man could do unto us, though we were at that time very poor and low in the world. But we knew the Lord was our shepherd, that the earth and all its fullness was his, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God.

Accordingly, before the time came that we were to leave our house, the old, rich man died! And upon his death-bed he altered his will and gave a cottage (value fifty shillings a year) to me and my heirs forever—for which I was much more thankful than I should have been for thousands of gold and silver, without the grace of God! My uncle joined my brother and two near kinsmen executors, and left nine or ten thousand pounds amongst them. My father died soon after and gave me but five shillings, for fear I should give anything amongst the Methodists. My mother a little after died, and had not an opportunity to make a will, so I joined with my brother in what she had and got about 150£.

The two relations who were joined with my brother in the estate came to hear the preaching and were something convinced that it was the truth. But they let the world laugh them out of their good desires, and soon gave over. About a year after, they were both deprived of their senses. One of them hanged himself, and the other is now under confinement.

My brother had been under great disorder of body for some years. In April 1772 he married a young woman, but died in May 1773.³ His widow not being with child, he left a freehold estate to me and my heirs forever, to the value of 50£ per annum at old rent; paying his widow nineteen pounds a year in lieu of her thirds, during the term of her natural life. He also left me a new large brick house, in which we have preaching every fortnight. But as it will not always hold the congregation, I will give bricks and ground to build a preaching-house upon, and will be at some expense besides, and convey it over to the use of the people called Methodists before one stone be laid.

¹George Robinson (c. 1737–1813) resided in Langham Row, a tiny hamlet near Mumby, Lincolnshire. He was for many years a steward of the Grimsby circuit.

²Jeremiah Robertshaw (d. 1788) was admitted in the itinerant ministry in 1762 (see *Works*, 10:294). On his death in 1788 he was described as 'a pattern of patience for many years, labouring under sharp and almost continual pain, of meekness and gentleness to all men, and of simplicity and godly sincerity' (*Works*, 10:645). See Atmore, *Memorial*, 373–74.

³John Robinson was buried at Mumby, Lincolnshire on May 11, 1773.

Glory be to God, he is reviving his work in Lincolnshire! Three have lately found a sense of pardon, and I have two servants, youths about sixteen years of age, and three of my children (all between ten and fourteen) that seem much in earnest about their souls. I have four more servants that walk in the light of God's countenance, and several more in our little society who seem fully convinced of the necessity of full salvation.

There has been a stir amongst the people ever since that dear man of God, Mr. Joseph Garnet⁴ died at my house. His dying prayers are about to be answered. I think myself highly favoured that I had him five weeks before he died.

Dear sir, I beg an interest in your prayers for myself, my family, and the society. I hope you will praise God on my account, for things temporal and spiritual, and pray that the Lord may help me to devote my all unto him. Reverend and dear sir, I am

Your affectionate, though unworthy servant for Christ's sake.

G. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 496–98.

⁴Joseph Garnet (d. 1773), a native of Barnard Castle, was admitted to the Methodist itinerant ministry 'on trial' in 1768 (see *Works*, 10:353). He was assigned to east Lincolnshire 1772–73 (10:407) and died that Spring. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 156.

From Ann Bolton

Finstock
July 7, 1775

Reverend Sir,

I praise the Lord that I have another opportunity of writing to you! It is a favour I had little hope of last week, being first informed of your dangerous illness, and afterwards of your death.⁵ Since which, S. A. has sent me the good news of your being yet in the land of the living, and in good health. May the Lord continue his goodness to you, renew the vigour both of your body and mind, and grant that every future day may greatly increase your weight of glory!

The mercies of the Lord toward me are renewed every moment. I am enabled to hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life. Under a consciousness of the vanity and transitoriness of earthly things, and the durable and satisfactory nature of things eternal, I am enabled to bid adieu to the former, and earnestly to pursue the latter. The experience I have already had of the happiness arising from such a conduct mightily confirms me in my choice. The being freed from inordinate passions; and by the light of truth to have the contracted ideas of my mind enlarged and capacitated to contemplate⁶ the glorious perfections of God in his works of nature, providence, and grace; and to have the mind at free liberty to devote itself to him; and above all, to have his smiles and approbation continually; this surely is an abundant compensation for the parting with those vain delights which we cannot long enjoy, or with those evils which, if we part not with in time, will hold us in eternal torment. O happy choice! What reason have I to praise and adore God, that he ever caused the joyful sound of salvation by faith to reach my ears, and affect my heart! Glory be to him that he imparted to me the spirit of bondage, whereby I feared because I had sinned! And thanks be to him that he left me not without hope, but revealed in me the Son of his love, and enabled me by the Spirit of adoption to cry 'Abba, Father'. Since which, I bless him, he has been with me, to establish, strengthen, and settle me in the truth. I feel the need of constantly adverting to Jesus, and in the fullest sense to pray without ceasing, and with most intense vigour to do all things to his glory. I shall be very thankful to be instructed how to improve every gift and grace to the utmost, while I remain, dear sir,

Your much obliged servant,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 499–500.

⁵JW became ill with a high fever in mid-June 1775, while in Ireland, and struggled with the illness for about two weeks. See *Journal*, June 13 – July 10, 1775, *Works*, 22:455–58. The *London Chronicle* (June 29–July 1, 1775), p. 1, reported that JW had died in Dublin on June 23 (a report echoed in other newspapers).

⁶Orig., 'compleat'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

From Philothea Briggs

Hoxton
July 8, 1775

Reverend Sir,

I cannot refrain from this testimony of joy on your account.¹ And yet I am not sure whether my overflowing gratitude will sufficiently justify my addressing you at a time when you will most likely receive more warm congratulations than it may suit your convenience to attend to. But I have been favoured with too many proofs of your goodness to think you will quite overlook my small tribute of congratulation.

The anxious suspense in which we were so long kept was, I hope, an universal blessing; as it was a time of self-examination and prayer. Everyone mourned as if they had lost their great earthly good. And yet it did not seem a selfish sorrow: 'We mourned for millions': for souls yet unconverted, for children yet unborn.

For my own part, I saw no human possibility on which to ground any hope of your recovery, and yet I could not help pleading the promises of your future success. But now you are, I hope, restored. We shall honour you more than ever, for your work's sake. And I hope it will be the universal strife who shall best improve by your future ministrations. May you increase in health and strength, and every blessing our gracious Master can bestow!

We are all greatly obliged to good Mr. B[radford]² for his care of you, and trust he will be rewarded in this life, as well in the resurrection of the just.

O sir, consider yourself! And consider your friends and children. And be content to guide the helm without undertaking the labourious part, which others may do, though they may not be able to pilot the vessel.

I trust I am making some proficiency in the school of Christ. I desire to devote myself afresh to his service, in return for every instance of his mercy.

I remain, reverend and dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

P. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 554–55.

¹For news of his recovery of health.

²Joseph Bradford (c. 1741–1808) entered the itinerant ministry in 1773. He was currently accompanying JW on his preaching tour in Ireland and helped care for him during his illness.

From Miss J[ane] T[hornton]¹

London
July 8, 1775

Reverend Sir,

God who comforteth those who are cast down, hath comforted us by graciously restoring you to us again. All glory and praise be to his gracious name for this interposition in favour of a life so precious. The prayer of faith has saved the sick. Admit sir the congratulation of a heart inflamed with gratitude to the Source of good for this instance of his good-will to man. The voice of joy and gladness is now found in the dwellings of the righteous—where eight days past was mourning, lamentation, and woe. Every social repast was embittered, and we literally mingled our drink with our tears. Could you from the bed of sickness have cast your eyes on the congregation the first Sabbath in the month, and beheld the solemn assembly! Distress in every face, keen anguish in every heart, while streams of tears bedewed the place, your generous soul would have been willing to have tarried awhile absent from your Lord to return to comfort those mourners in Sion. Surely these Christians do love one another! And surely they do love, not in word only, the man to whom under God they are all indebted.

The tidings of your recovery was received in general with melting gratitude, with joyous tears. I hope both the affliction and mercy will have the intended effect, and be a means of stirring up those that are at ease in Sion, and of encouraging her earnest mourners.

My worthy brother G. showed such unfeigned sorrow, and poured out such fervent prayer, that you must love him better and better for it. O sir, what a week of suspense and anguish had I! You will not surely blame me that I could not give you up, that my prayers helped to detain you in the vale below. Forgive your weeping friends if they have brought you back from the skies. Surely in the end you will be amply recompensed! O yes, being longer employed in the work of faith, and labour of love, your crown will be the brighter!

P. G. who has been long in darkness, received a manifestation of divine love with the news of your recovery. She found an uncommon power to intercede for your life, and after prayer opened on these words, 'Epaphroditus was sick nigh unto death. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.'² And being told you were better, the following words came to her mind, 'They shall be to me a people, and I will be to them a God.'³ Accept of this small token of duty and love from, reverend sir,

Your obliged and affectionate,

J. T.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 552–54.

¹This is likely Jane Thornton (b. 1738), a daughter of Lazarus Thornton (1704–74) and Marie (Despaign) Thornton (1702–57), Methodist supporters in Canterbury. She lived for a time in London, as a companion of Jane Catherine March; see JW to March, Apr. 14, 1771. See also JW to Mary Bosanquet, Dec. 18, 1780.

²Cf. Phil. 2:27.

³Cf. Jer. 32:38.

Rev. John Fletcher to Joseph Benson

Madeley
July 12, 1775

My Dear Friend,

I thank you for your last.

I approve of your desire to do what you can to promote the purging of our branches, that we may bring forth more fruit. Whether the scheme of Kingswood would answer, without some men truly alive to God to inspect and direct the preachers there, I question. Their taste might lead them to impertinent lectures or studies; and a bookish, literary emulation; or downright sloth; rather than a devotional eagerness for the wisdom and power of God. Proper men would not be found easily. I mentioned the scheme to Mr. [William] Collins, our Assistant in this round, who says that some of the preachers who could hardly speak sense have been the means of more good than many who had matter, manner, method, and parts at command. This argument shuts my mouth. The fact needs only be proved to throw down your scheme of *improvement*. I wish Kingswood were so ordered as to answer the most important ends; but as matters are, I question whether it is so. I am not acquainted enough with its state to judge of it.

I sent some time ago your letter to Mr. J[ohn] Wesley to Ireland.¹ I second[ed] your request with respect to sifting the preachers. With regard to their ordination, I see a good and a bad side in it. The good side is obvious—it would cement our union, it would make us stand more firm to our vocation, it would give us an outward call to preach and administer the sacraments. But at the same time it would cut us off, in a great degree, from the national churches of England and Scotland, which we are called to leaven. My one particular objection to it respects the Messrs. Wesley [i.e., JW and CW], who could not with decency take the step of turning bishops after their repeated declarations that they would stand by their mother [church] to the last.

I mention[ed] to Mr. [John] Wesley that before he take that step it will be expedient that he desire in print the bishops to take it. It would be but form, I grant. It might however show that he would not break off without paying a proper deference to episcopacy. The point is of such importance as to require the coolest deliberation, and that view of the work and acquaintance with the preachers which my retirement here deprives me of. A proper way would be for those who are for the step you mention to put their reason on paper, and vice versa; and then with prayer and love to compare the reasons pro and con, without prejudice.

God has lately shook Mr. [John] Wesley over the grave. But notwithstanding, I believe he will (from the strength of his constitution and the weakness of mine, which is much broken since I saw you) survive me. So I do not scheme about helping to make up the gap when that great tree shall fall. Sufficient to the day will that trouble be, nor will the divine power be then insufficient to help the people in time of need.

Your affectionate friend,

J. Fletcher

Address: 'To / Mr Benson / at Leeds / By favour / of Mr. Shaw.'

Endorsement: by Benson, 'J Fletcher / July 75'.

Source: holograph; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box CO 4, folder 1.

¹I.e., the letter with the proposal of c. June 30, 1775 shown above.

From Thomas Wride

Limerick
July 17, 1775

Reverend Sir,

I was always unwilling to write. But more so now, because I know the matter must be disagreeable. But I venture to say it is not more so to you than to me.

The time was when I should have thought him a vile slanderer who would have said of any Methodist that he would tell a lie. But I know not what name I should have thought bad enough for a person who would have said it of a preacher. But facts are obstinate, and before me the *Minutes*, by which (page 44, section 5¹) it is plain you have seen reason to believe the sad truth that preachers have been found in lies.

I should be glad if I could write as if I was not a party. But as I cannot, I do not intend to affect it.

John Floyde has threatened *how* he will oppose me.² I know not what he intends to say. But if you give me the liberty of a common highwayman, I will not fear his wrath or court his favour, for in my esteem they are of equal worth.

I think he hath said enough, if true, to prove me a knave and a fool. But if it is false, then it is enough to prove him what would appear bitter in me to pronounce. Then how he ought to be dealt with is plain: Deuteronomy 19:16, etc.

The chief part of his aspersions may be summed up in few words: first, that I never gave tickets to any society on the Athlone circuit; second, that in Limerick I told the people that I was apprenticed to a councillor, and that I said that I was apprenticed to a physician, etc. Now sir, here are plain facts, which soon may be proved to be true or false. I join issue with him here.

As to the first, I insist on it that I gave tickets to *every* society on the Athlone circuit. I farther insist on it that I gave tickets *twice* to every society on the Athlone circuit. And excepting Clareen and Birr, I say and *insist* on it that I gave them *regularly twice* to every society on the Athlone circuit. So what must you think of, or how can you countenance, John Floyde?

Secondly, that I should say that I was apprenticed to a councillor; now sir, how improbable is this? But how much more so that in the same place I should say that I was apprenticed to a physician? But how are these things to be proved? Why, on the evidence of sister Moore (if John Floyde is to be credited). And sister Moore, in your presence (together with John Floyde and myself), said she never said it, nor ever heard me speak such a thing. Now sir, what must an unprejudiced person think of John Floyde?

I will take liberty to say that if I made no more conscience of my words than he did, yet I would use more common understanding than to talk of 'apprenticeship' to either a councillor or a physician.

I was told that afterwards he gave Miss Glass for his author. That this is no better founded than the other I appeal to brother [George] Snowden, who was present when she utterly denied it. What shift he will make next, I know not. But this I say *of* him, as I said to him: I ask no favour of him; nor do I expect common honesty from him. What treatment I have received from him already I take as a sample of what I may expect.

As to the truth of what I have said or denied, I hereby lay myself under obligation to swear it is the most solemn and formal manner whensoever, and how often soever, I shall be reasonably called upon to do it. And if I refuse it, then let John Floyde be believed in everything he hath said or shall say. And if

¹Wride is referring to the 1770 edition of *Minutes of Several Conversations*; which corresponds to 'Large Minutes' (1763), §57.5, *Works*, 10:864.

²Floyde and Wride were both currently stationed at Athlone.

he refuse or neglect to give as good proof, let him be dealt with as Scripture and conscience doth or shall determine.

I must add that at Tyrrell's Pass he told you 'By his preaching he appears to have no notion at all of the Methodist doctrine, etc.' This is quite a new objection, unheard of (at least by me) until this year. My most malicious foes never (to my knowledge) dreamed of this objection. My opportunities has been as great, I think, as his—barring I have no knowledge of the learned languages, of which me makes such boast that he told sister Charles of Rosmead that he could dispute in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

I may be bourne with, as our contest is physical (as well as moral, etc.), to speak a few words on this side [of] the question. I confess this may cost me some labour, as John Floyde has said in my hearing, as well as several beside (but believe it who can) that he hath spent a good fortune in physic. But for an instance of his profound skill, sister Clay of Blackwater was much afflicted with an overflowing of her monthly visits. She applied to John Floyde for advice. He ordered her to take powder of valerian and tincture of castor every morning—of the latter a teaspoonful every morning (I am not certain how much of the former). Did ever the most ignorant QUACK prescribe in a more unmerciful, senseless manner? His good fortune is spent to bad purpose.³

At N-M.⁴ J. W. applied to him for advice. He took his patient's word as to his disorder. He said 'I have a g[onorrhoea] simplex'.⁵ Accordingly he wrote for him:

RX: Rad. Jalapii pulv. xi; Calomet ppt. xii; Rad. Zinzeber pulv. xii. F. pilule xxx.⁶ Take one every third night. Take care not to take cold. J[ohn] Fl[o]yd] Surgeon.

What a prescription this! It appeared that he took it for granted without reason or enquiry that it was a g[onorrhoea] virulent. But how was this likely to cure? There was no regard paid unto, nor indeed enquiry after, any of the usual concomitant symptoms of this disease. The man is mighty fond of S. A. But I should think much more *ignorance* than *art* here. The lad's disease was really what he described it, g[onorrhoea] simplex. Now sir, what work mercurials would probably produce in ninety days I need not say.

John Floyde told you that I should say there was no danger in calomel. I did say so. But I never said nor *thought* that the giving it in this inconsiderate manner was without danger. If I had, he might have given it as a proof of *my* ignorance, as I do now of *his*.

I remember on the 27th or 28th of September, at Cooleylough, John Floyde said, 'I have authority to kill or cure.' I suppose he spoke it ludicrously, but one would imagine by such prescriptions that he meant it simply.

I would add another instance of his integrity. While I was on Athlone circuit sister Charles was ill. I gave her what I thought fit. The success she will I suppose tell you, as I expect she is now in Dublin. Sister Charles wrote this in a letter to Limerick and some in Limerick told John Floyde of it. He told them that what I gave Mrs. Charles was powder of human skull. How mean this, if true! How wicked, if false! However this I say, that I have not for full two years given a single grain of human skull to anyone; not but that I have given it to many in time past, and should again if occasion and opportunity offered.

³The transition from PLP 115/9/32 to PLP 115/9/14 takes place at the word 'spent'.

⁴Likely Newmarket (now Pallaskenry), Co. Limerick, Ireland; 8 mi. SW of Limerick. JW had preached there often and there was an army camp nearby.

⁵I.e., herpes.

⁶Root of jalap (*Exogonium purga*) pulverized, 11 [measures?]; Mercury protochloride precipitate., 12 [measures?]; root of ginger pulverized, 12 [measures?]; fashion 30 small pills.

I will dare tell you my real thoughts (time may make proof). John Floyde will travel no longer than until he can find opportunity to settle to his satisfaction.⁷ His heart is not in the work of God. (This I apprehend many in Dublin thinks as well as me). That his tongue scorns the bounds of truth I have too much reason to know.

John Floyde is mightily displeased that I call him liar. (I remember a few words of yours in a sermon at London; exactly to my purpose: 'Touch a galled horse and he will wince.') But have I not as much right to call *him* so as *he* me? If what he said of me be true, I am a most horrid liar indeed. But if it be false, then he is, in reason and by Scripture, to all intents and purposes guilty of all he falsely lays to my charge.

Far be it from me to become your dictator. I may not rebuke an elder. But I may entreat him as a father. Sir, bear with my plainness (God is my witness I desire to please you, although I cannot or will not flatter—I cannot offer you such an insult). I beseech you for honour of God, for the success of the gospel, and for the sake of yourself, that you would never hear a charge without a full hearing of both parties. Then you will soon have fewer accusers and more honest men.

Subscribers to the History of England⁸ are:

Mr. George Moore, Master Seymour Herr<... ⁹ >	
Thomas Lindley Esq. Jr., Mr. Charles Ha<...>	
Mr. John Kearsy	1-8-<...>
on account of other books	0-9-<...>
Kingswood Collection	<u>1-9-<...></u>
(Total)	3-7-<...>

Jonathan Hern is to send my money to the Pr[eacher's] F[und].
The number of members — 185.

I am, reverend sir,
Your devoted son,

T. W.

Source: Wride's manuscript copy for his records; MARC, PLP 115/9/32 & 115/9/14.

⁷Floyde did settle in 1782.

⁸JW was soliciting subscriptions for his four-volume *Concise History of England* (drawn heavily from Oliver Goldsmith; see *Bibliography*, No. 357), which appeared in 1776.

⁹Binding tape covers the ends of these lines.

From Francis Okeley

c. July 26, 1775

[Okeley introduces the summary of his letter to Wesley 'at Leeds' with the note that 'I took no copy of it,' but that it was 'to this effect.']

After some previous reflecting relative to his late recovery, I then related to him the fact that I had consulted my brethren about it;¹ and that, for order's sake, and on account of consequences which (though I meant nothing but a furtherance of the common salvation of souls upon the ancient plan of 'repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ', without respect to party either way) I could not stand for, I should therefore not proceed any further unless he should *desire* me so to do. I repeated the word 'desire', adding that I had no reason to expect any such thing, but only begged an answer from him, which I should conform myself to.²

Source: summary in Francis Okely manuscript letter to General Synod (August 14, 1775) Herrnhut, Germany, Unitätsarchiv der Evangelischen Brüder-Unität, R.13.D.46.a.7.³

¹Okeley had preached once at the Methodist house in Towcester, and had been invited to preach again.

²See JW to Okeley, July 31, 1775, expressing desire that Okeley continue preaching at Towcester.

³Published in Jonathan Yonan, 'The 1775 Correspondence of John Wesley and Francis Okely', *Journal of Moravian History* 12 (2012): 93–103; here, 101.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

Bristol
c. July 26, 1775

What can be done with William Pine? [He] every week publishes barefaced treason.²

Source: excerpt in JW's reply; MARC, DDWes 3/44 (JW to CW of July 31).

¹The holograph of this letter is not known to survive; we have only this excerpt quoted in JW's reply.

²William Pine (1739–1803) one of the printers for Wesley publications in Bristol since the mid-1740s. After the death of Felix Farley he became their main printer there, including most recently JW's collected *Works*. But since 1767 Pine had also been publisher of the *Bristol Gazette*, a weekly newspaper strongly aligned with the Old Corporation of Bristol and the Whig party. With growing open rebellion in the colonies in North America, Whigs (and Pine's *Bristol Gazette*) became vocal defenders of the colonists—and critics of the monarchy.

From the Rev. Dr. Thomas Ford¹

Nottingham
July 27, 1775

Honoured and Dear Sir,

As I was passing through this town, some of your people knew me and carried me to Mr. Bagshaw's.² And finding some of the preachers hastening to the Conference,³ I could not omit the favourable opportunity of sending a line to you.

I rejoiced with much sincerity when I heard that the Lord had spared you a little longer on earth. May he continue to bless you, and enrich you with more and more of his love! Who can tell but he means to make you a nursing father to thousands yet to be born! I desire to reverence your age, and pray for your increasing usefulness.

As you are almost ripe for glory, oh may your head bow low in humility, and you come into the Lord's eternal harvest like a shock of corn in its season! If you come to Nottingham or Loughborough, you are not a great way from Melton-Mowbray, where I shall be glad to see you and welcome you to my heart. When you are on your knees, praying for ministers, do not leave out of your intercessions

A very unworthy one,

T. F.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 443–44.

¹See note on CW to JW, Dec. 8, 1772.

²Matthew Bagshaw (d. 1803) was a local preacher and Methodists met at his house until the Hockley chapel was opened in 1783.

³JW's annual Conference with his preachers convened in Leeds on August 1, 1775.

From the Rev. Dr. John Jones

Harwich
July 29, 1775

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I cannot express what I felt when I was informed by Mr. D. that you were both senseless and speechless.¹ Although, when I looked up, I could not believe that God would yet deprive his people of so able and useful a minister. It was like life from the dead when I heard you were out of danger, and able to sit up. It gave me some hopes that God has not yet given up these sinful nations, and that he will strive with us a little longer.

Time was when you would have taken my advice, at least in some things. Let me entreat, let me beseech you to preach less frequently, and that only at the principal places. You must be satisfied with directing others, and doing less yourself. You yourself do not know of how great importance your life is. Far be it from me to desire you not to travel. I only beg you not to go beyond your strength.

I have given some proofs of my friendship to you, although you are not privy to them, since I have been here. And if any opportunity happens, I shall always readily do it while I can speak or write. My health, although you will not believe me, is the sole cause of our being at a distance from each other.² But my health or life are of little importance compared with yours. Therefore I must again beg of you to take the utmost care of them. I do what I can, not what I would. And I hope my labour is not altogether in vain.

To receive a line from you will afford me no small pleasure. That God may fill you with all his fullness, and strengthen your mortal body, is the earnest desire and prayer of, reverend and dear sir,

Your very affectionate brother,

J. J.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 444–45.

¹During his illness in Ireland in late June.

²Jones had been JW's assistant with the society in London, until he decided that his health concerns required him to move near the coast.

From Ann Tindall

Scarborough
c. July 30, 1775¹

**A Word of Praise to God and Congratulation
to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley on His Recovery
from a late Illness – 1775**

- 1 Come heavenly muse, my frozen breast inspire
 Afresh thy sacred influence impart,
And let the flames of pure celestial fire
 As incense burn on this devoted heart.
- 2 Purge and refine me from the dross of sin,
 The carnal mind, the earthly part consume,
And spread the fragrance of thy grace within
 And shed abroad thy mercy's rich perfume.
- 3 Awake eternal Spirit of my God,
 Awake ye winds and from your treasures pour
Ambrosial sweets and nectar, angels' food
 Give, till with joys my flowing cup runs o'er.
- 4 Breathe on my soul, let all my passion join
 In heav'nly numbers, in seraphic days.
Aid with your powers to sing in songs divine
 Jehovah's matchless bounty and his grace!
- 5 Being of beings, source of life art thou.
 The creatures all from thee derive their breath.
To thee our life, our health, our all we owe
 Sole arbiter of human life or death!
- 6 Amongst the bright angelic hosts on high
 Thou dost thy pleasure with a sov'reign hand!
And here below the blue ethereal sky
 All is subservient to thy wise command.
- 7 Thou only canst upraise the dying soul,
 Rebuke diseases, check their rapid tide.
Thy power alone their raging can control,
 Repel their fury, and repress their pride.

¹This was surely among 'the verses you sent me at the Conference' (which began Aug. 1, 1775) mentioned by JW in his letter Ann Tindall, dated Jan. 19, 1776. It related to JW's illness June 13–July 10, 1745; see *Journal, Works*, 22:455–58.

- 8 That power by which the heav'ns and earth were made
That power which out of nothing form'd our clay,
Which in the deep proud Egypt's honour laid,
Which Israel brought through the parted sea!
- 9 That power by which the chosen tribes were led
Thro' devious paths, thro' deserts lone and wild,
Which in the wilderness a table spread
And with its bounty all their cares beguiled.
- 10 That power which put their hostile foes to flight,
Which in its course arrests the rapid sun,
And strange exertion of its boundless might,
In Ajalon stands still th' astonish'd moon!
- 11 That power which nothing finite can withstand,
Not all th' insulting hosts of earth and hell.
Israel it plants in the blest promised land
And to his heirs th' inheritance does seal.
- 12 Twas this omnipotence, this power divine,
Clothed in the robes of sympathy and love,
Which rescued Westley [sic], that dear life of thine,
Ready from earth to make its last remove.
- 13 In pity to his numerous saints below
The dear redeemer suffers thee to stay,
Our loving head still feels his children's woe,
Nor takes as yet our father, friend away.
- 14 Nor grieve at this great patriarch of our age,
Thy loss, self-love still wishes — for our gain!
But as the curtain closes life's last stage
With double zeal thy Saviour's cause maintain.
- 15 Awhile endure – till thy reward shall come,
Thy God, thy Jesus – lo his sign appears.
Who waits to take thee to thy heav'nly home,
Where his soft hand shall wipe away thy tears.
- 16 Rejoice in hope of that unfading crown
Which Christ will to his faithful servants give,
Heirs with their Lord of his imperial throne,
The life immortal evermore to live.
- 17 Exult in prospect of that glorious hour
When wide unfolds the pearly gates of light.

Farewell thou earth, thy pleasures, pains are o'er,
Affliction's day and sorrow's gloomy night.

18 Farewell my friends, ye objects of my care,
Farewell my charge whose precious souls I love.
The Lord for *you* has often heard my prayer!
Ever to Jesus may *you* faithful prove.

19 Farewell to all that's near and dear below.
To heaven my all of good I would commend.
And now to yon empyrean seats I go,
Where joys begin that ne'er shall have an end.

20 At some late period, when your work is done,
When the full spirit longs to leave its clay,
Emitting rays like the declining sun,
When he's fulfill'd the duties of the day.

21 May you to Zion wing your happy flight,
Beyond the skies and this inferiour clod,
In fields of aether, and in seas of light
Possess your heaven, your paradise in God.

Source: manuscript copy in Tindall records; British Museum Add. MSS. 43696, ff. 14–15.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
Tuesday afternoon, August 1, 1775

Reverend and Dear Sir,

This is the day your Conference with the Methodist preachers begins.¹ As I prayed early in the morning that God would give you all the spirit of wisdom and love to consult about the spread of the power of godliness, the motion made by Mr. [Joseph] Benson in the letter I sent you came into my mind,² and I saw it in a much more favourable light than I had done before. The wish of my soul was that you might be directed to see and weigh things in a proper manner. About the middle of the day, as I met with you in spirit, the matter occurred to me again in so strong a manner that I think it my duty to put my thoughts upon paper and send them to you.

You love the Church of England and yet you are not blind to her freckles, nor insensible of her shackles. Your life is precarious. You have lately been shaken over the grave. You are spared, it may be to take yet some important step which may influence some generations yet unborn. What sir if you used your liberty as an English man, a Christian, a divine, and an extraordinary messenger of God? What, if with bold modesty you took a step toward the reformation of the Church of England? The admirers of *The Confessional*, and the gentlemen who have petitioned the parliament from the Feathers Tavern,³ cry aloud that our church stands in need of being reformed. But do not they want to corrupt her in some things, while they talk of reforming her in others?

Now sir, God has given you that light, that influence, and that intrepidity which many of these gentlemen have not. You can reform, so far as your influence goes, without perverting; and indeed, you have done it already. But have you done it professedly enough? Have you ever explicitly borne your testimony against all the defects of our Church? Might you not do this without departing from your

¹The Conference, convened in Leeds, ran Aug. 1–3, 1775.

²The letter from Benson to Fletcher is not known to survive; but Benson's proposal is clear in Fletcher's reply to Benson of July 12, 1775. Benson had expressed a desire 'to promote the purging of our branches, that we may bring forth more fruit' which included sending potential Methodist preachers to Kingswood school for education, then having the Wesley brothers ordain them. Fletcher responded that this would only be helpful if there were at Kingswood 'some men truly alive to God, to inspect and direct the preachers there'; otherwise it might promote a 'bookish, literary' mind-set rather than a 'devotional eagerness for the wisdom and power of God. While he appreciated that ordination would make sacraments more available, he also worried that it would 'cut us off in a great degree from the national churches of England and Scotland, which we are called to leaven'. Finally, he ventured that the Wesley brothers would be hesitant to take on the role of bishop (in ordaining these preachers), at least until they had first sought again for Anglican bishops to fulfill this office. This letter is held in Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana and British Methodism, Box CO 4, folder 1. It is published in *The Works of the Rev. John Fletcher* (London: Edwards, 1806), 1:190–91.

³In *The Confessional; or a full and free inquiry into the right, utility, edification, and success of establishing systematical confessions of faith and doctrine in protestant churches* (London: S. Bladon, 1766) Francis Blackburne (1705–87) argued, drawing on William Chillingworth, that a profession of belief in the Scriptures as the word of God, and a promise to teach the people from the Scriptures, should be the sole pledges demanded from Protestant pastors. Consistent with this view, he decided never again to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles. In 1772 a meeting was held at the Feathers Tavern that led to a petition to Parliament signed by 200 persons calling for abolition of subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles and its replacement by a simple declaration of belief in the Bible. The petition was rejected.

professed attachment to her? Nay, might you not, by this means, do her the greatest service? If the mother who gave you suck were yet alive, could you not reverence her without reverencing her little whims and sinful peculiarities if she had any? If Alexander's good sense had not been clouded by his pride, would he have thought that his courtiers honoured him when they awkwardly carried their head upon one shoulder as he did, that they might look like him?⁴ I love the Church of England, I hope, as much as you do. But I do not love her so as to take her blemishes for ornaments. You know, sir, that she is almost totally deficient in discipline, and she publically owns it herself every Ash Wednesday. What are her spiritual courts in general, but a catchpenny?⁵ As for her doctrine, although it is pure upon the whole, you know that some specks of Pelagian, Calvinian, and popish dirt cleave to her articles, homilies, liturgy, and rubrics. These specks could with ease be taken off, and doing it in the circle of your influence might sooner or later provoke our superiors to godly jealousy and a complete reformation. In order to this, it is proposed:

1. That the growing body of the Methodists in Great Britain, Ireland, and America be formed into a general society—a daughter church of our holy mother, the Church of England.
2. That this society shall recede from the Church of England in nothing but in some palpable defects about doctrine, discipline, and unevangelical hierarchy.
3. That this society shall be the *Methodist* Church of England, ready to defend the as yet *unmethodized* Church against all the unjust attacks of the dissenters, willing to submit to her in all things that are not unscriptural, approving of her ordination, partaking of her sacraments, and attending her service at every convenient opportunity.
4. That a pamphlet be published containing the 39 articles of the Church of England rectified according to the purity of the gospel, together with some needful alterations in the liturgy and homilies—such as the expunging the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed etc.
5. That Messrs. Wesley, the preachers, and the most substantial Methodists in London—in the name of the societies scattered through the kingdom—would draw up a petition and present it to the Archbishop of Canterbury, informing his Grace (and by him the bench of bishop) of this design, proposing the reformed articles of religion, asking the protection of the Church of England, begging that this step might not be considered as a *schism*, but only as an attempt to avail ourselves of the liberty of English men and Protestants to serve God according to the purity of the gospel, and the strictness of primitive discipline, and the original design of the Church of England, which was to reform, so far as time and circumstances would allow, *whatever* needed reformation.
6. That this petition contain a request to the bishops to ordain the Methodist preachers which can pass their examination according to what is indispensably required in the canons of the Church. That instead of the ordinary testimonials, the bishops would allow of testimonials signed by Messrs. Wesley and some more clergymen, who would make it their business to enquire into the morals and principles of the candidates for orders. And that instead of a title, the Lordships would accept of a bond signed by twelve stewards of the Methodist societies certifying that the candidate for holy orders shall have a proper maintenance. That if his Grace, etc. do⁶ not condescend to grant this request, Messrs. Wesley will be obliged to take an irregular (not unevangelical) step, and to ordain upon a Church of England independent

⁴In 332 BCE Alexander the Great received a serious shoulder wound during a battle in Egypt. From that point his head typically inclined to his left shoulder, as reflected in many historical busts.

⁵*OED*: 'A product that is superficially appealing, but typically of inferior quality or little value.'

⁶Orig., 'does'.

- plan such lay preachers as appear to them qualified for holy orders.
7. That the preachers so ordained be the assistants in their respective circuits. That the helpers, who are thought worthy, be ordained deacons. And that doubtful candidates be kept upon trial as they now are.
 8. That the Methodist preachers assembled in conference shall have the liberty to suspend and degrade any Methodist preacher, ordained or unordained, who shall act the part of a Balaam or a Demas.⁷
 9. That when Messrs. Wesley are dead, the power of Methodist ordination be lodged in three or five of the most steady Methodist ministers, under the title of moderators, who shall overlook the flocks and the other preachers as Mr. Wesley does now.
 10. That the most spiritual part of the [Book of] Common Prayer shall be extracted and published with the 39 rectified articles, and the minutes of the conferences (or the Methodist canons) which (together with such regulations as may be made at the time of this establishment) shall be, next to the Bible, the *vade mecum*⁸ of the Methodist preachers.
 - 11.⁹ That the important office of confirmation shall be performed with the utmost solemnity by Mr. Wesley or by the moderators, and that none shall be admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper but such as have been confirmed or are ready to be confirmed.
 12. That the grand plan upon which the Methodist preachers shall go shall be to preach the doctrine of grace against the Socinians, the doctrine of justice against the Calvinists, and the doctrine of holiness against all the world. And that of consequence, three such questions as these be put to candidates for orders at the time of ordination:
 - a. Wilt thou maintain with all thy might the Scripture-doctrines of grace, especially the doctrine of a sinner's free justification merely by a living faith in the blood and merits of Christ?
 - b. Wilt thou maintain with all thy might the Scripture-doctrine of justice, especially the doctrine of a believer's remunerative justification by the good works, which ought to spring from justifying faith?
 - c. Wilt thou preach up Christian perfection, or the fulfilling of the law of Christ, against all the antinomians of the age; and wilt thou ardently press after it thyself, never resting till thou art perfected in humble love?Perhaps to keep the work of the Church it might be proper to add:
 - d. Wilt thou consider thyself as a son of the Church of England, receding from her as little as possible; never railing against her clergy, and being ready to submit to her ordination, if any of the bishops will confer it upon thee.
 13. And lastly, that Kingswood School be entirely appropriated: 1) To the reception and improvement of the candidates for Methodist orders; 2) to the education of the children of the preachers; and 3) to the keeping of the worn-out Methodist preachers, whose employment shall be to preserve the spirit of faith and primitive Christianity in the place by which means alone the curse of a little unsanctified learning may be kept out.

⁷Balaam was an Israelite prophet (see Num. 22–24, 31). New Testament writings hold him accountable for leading the Israelites into sin and idolatry (see 2 Pet. 2:15, Jude 1:11, Rev. 2:14). Demas was one of the apostle Paul's early associates, who deserted him 'because he loved this world' (2 Tim. 4:10).

⁸A handbook or guide.

⁹Fletcher's manuscript omits '11'. This number has been inserted into the order and those that follow adjusted accordingly.

Tuesday evening

P. S. The preceding pages contain my views of Mr. Benson's proposal. I wrote it immediately after dinner and was going to send it to you, thinking that now is the best time to deliberate upon this plan. But when my servant was gone to look for a messenger to go to Leeds my heart failed, as not having had time enough to consider what I had wrote, or to pray over it. So I called her back. This evening the young man whom I mentioned to you in my last¹⁰ being come to see me, I asked him if he would carry a letter to you. And as I had some mind of sending him barely as one that might labour on trial, if you accept of him and had need of help, upon his consenting to go I send you my scrawl, that if there is anything therein worth your attention you may have it while you can yet consult with the preachers. That the God of all grace may preside over your every deliberation is, dear sir, the ardent prayer of

Your affectionate son and servant in the gospel,

J. Fletcher

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/88–89.¹¹

¹⁰This letter is not known to survive.

¹¹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 325–30.

From Ann Bolton¹

Finstock
August 2, 1775

Reverend Sir,

The repeated mercies and favours of the Lord towards me call for all the powers of my body and mind, to celebrate his praise. I adore him that he hath brought me out of darkness into his marvellous light, and that his banner over me is love!

Many have been the trials I have past through since I wrote to you last. But my heavenly Father knew I needed them, to prove and try me, to strengthen, establish, and settle me. And glory be to his name, I see they *have* and *do* answer this valuable end! I find my mind more resolutely bent to be *all* for God. My soul confides in him as its sure refuge. And I am persuaded (if I use the grace I have) that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall be able to separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus. My soul therefore rejoices in hope that he will perfect what is lacking, and in every future trial give me grace according to my day. So that although I say '*if* I use my present grace', yet I cannot say I have any disquieting doubt whether I *shall* or *not*. But rather a confidence in God that enables me to *enjoy* him the *present* moment, and to *trust* him for the *next*. I am obliged abruptly to conclude myself, dear sir,

Your much obliged friend and servant,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 608–09.

¹It is not clear from this letter whether Bolton had already received that of JW to her on July 30.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Bristol]
[[August]] 7, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

[[I am glad you have me excused from meddling with William Pine.¹ He cannot be too cautious what he says. I say nothing against any party, but none I trust shall stop my mouth from crying everywhere 'Fear God and honour the king'.²

[[I am not qualified, th[erefore] not con[cern]ed, to vindicate every step of our government; no more than of the Americans. Much less am I called to condemn either side. But how very hard is it to stand [with] neither, or rather a common friend and lover of all. An Atticus³ or Fenelon!⁴ Your advice would be of great use to me as well as to all your children. Meantime consider my advice to you, which is 'Keep yourself pure of the spirit of party. Keep your thoughts to yourself. Hear, but say nothing. Let no man⁵ surprise you into his prejudice; that is draw you into his vortex.' I reserve myself for hearing your thoughts.

[[Still I want what you want, the love of Christ Jesus. Can we be fit to die without it?]]

Source: shorthand copy; MARC, DDWes 3/44 (on JW's letter of July 31).

¹See CW to JW, c. July 26; and JW's reply of July 31.

²1 Pet. 2:17.

³Titus Pomponius (c. 110–32 BCE), who took the name Atticus, was a close friend of Cicero. Cicero dedicated to Atticus his *Treatises on Friendship*, and their correspondence, often written in subtle code to disguise their political observations, is preserved in *Letters to Atticus*.

⁴François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (1651–1715), who in works like *The Maxims of the Saints Explained, concerning the Interiour Life* (London: H. Rhodes, 1698) stressed the importance of transcending self-love to pure love of God and others.

⁵The shorthand is actually “^mnmn,” but no plausible expansion of the initial “m” has been determined.

From [Edward Slater¹]

[Staffordshire]
August 16, 1775

About three weeks since, a person came and told me Martha Wood, of Darlaston, was dying and had a great desire to see me. When I came into the house, which with all that was in it was scarce worth five pounds, I found in that mean cottage such a jewel as my eyes never beheld before. Her eyes even sparkled with joy, and her heart danced like David before the ark. In truth she seemed to be in the suburbs of heaven, upon the confines of glory.

She took hold of my hand, and said, 'I am glad to see you, you are my father in Christ. It is twenty years since I heard you first. It was on that text, "Now ye have sorrow. But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."² In that hour God broke into my soul, delivered me from all sorrow, and filled my heart with joy; and, blessed be his name, I never have lost it, from that hour to this.'

For the first ten years she was sometimes in transports of joy, carried almost beyond herself. But for these last ten years she has had the constant witness that God has taken up all her heart. 'He has filled me', said she, 'with perfect love; and perfect love casts out fear. Jesus is mine. God, and heaven, and eternal glory, are mine. My heart, my very soul is lost, yea swallowed up, in God.'

There were many of our friends standing by her bedside. She exhorted them all, as one in perfect health, to keep close to God. 'You can never', said she, 'do too much for God. When you have done all you can, you have done too little. O who that knows him can love, or do, or suffer too much for him?'

Some worldly people came in. She called them by name, and exhorted them to repent and turn to Jesus. She looked at me, and desired I would preach her funeral sermon on those words, 'I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day.'³

She talked to all round about her in as scriptural and rational a manner as if she had been in her full strength (only now and then catching a little for breath), with all the smiles of heaven in her countenance. Indeed several times she seemed to be quite gone. But in a little while the taper lit up again, and she began to preach, with divine power, to all that stood near her. She knew every person, and if any came into the room whom she knew to be careless about religion, she directly called them by name and charged them to seek the Lord while he might be found. At last she cried out, 'I see the heavens opened. I see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with numbers of the glorified throng, coming nearer and nearer. They are just come!'—At that word, her soul took its flight, to mingle with the heavenly host. We looked after her, as Elisha after Elijah; and I trust some of us have caught her mantle.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 16, 1775 (*Works*, 22:462–63).

¹John Shaw and Edward Slater were stationed on the Staffordshire circuit in 1774. Of these two, the more likely writer is Slater. This is *not* the Edward Slater who assisted JW during the Wednesbury riots (see JW, *Journal*, Oct. 20–24, 1743, *Works*, 19:348). Instead it is Edward Slater (c. 1738–89), a native of Liverpool, who assisted JW in his travels a few years and was admitted to the itinerant ministry in 1770; he desisted travelling in 1776, married, and settled in Manchester. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 397 (spelling 'Slator'); Pawson, *Letters*, 3:140; and *Works*, 10:380, 451.

²John 16:22.

³2 Tim. 4:7–8.

From Samuel Bradburn

c. September 4, 1775

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have often been struck by the beauty of the passage of Scripture quoted in your letter.¹ But I must confess that I never saw such *useful expository notes* upon it before.²

I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your obedient and grateful servant,

S. Bradburn

Source: published transcription; Blanshard, *Bradburn*, 53.

¹Bradburn had communicated to JW his current distressed financial state. In his Aug. 31, 1775 reply JW quoted Ps. 37:3, 'Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.'

²JW included five pound-notes (£5) in his reply.

From S[usannah] D[esigne]¹

[Bristol]

September 16, 1775

Reverend Sir,

I think it my duty to tell you what is the present state of my mind. Your forbearance with me has been very great, but the long-suffering of God has been much greater. O what pains hath he taken to save such a sinner! So inclined have I been to wander that he hath been forced to hedge up my way with briars and thorns, that I might not struggle out of his embrace! But notwithstanding my perverseness and unprofitableness, yet I knowest that I can in truth say, 'Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee!'² And what is stranger still, I find a keener appetite for the means of grace than ever, and a more intense desire to glorify God. But O how weak and insufficient am I! A deep sense of this lays me in the dust, and causes me to depend on Jesus, who perfecteth his strength in my weakness. I rejoice that I can tell him all my wants, and that I can believe he will give what is best for me, both in time and in eternity. And that he will hold me in life till he hath made me meet to see his face in glory.

As the Lord has so wonderfully spared your valuable life, I hope we shall receive you as a fresh instance of his good-will towards us, and endeavour more than ever to profit under your ministry. That we all may is, dear sir, the fervent prayer of

Your unworthy servant in Christ,

S. D.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 609.

¹This identification is not certain, but Susannah Designe was still living in Bristol in 1775, active as a school mistress. The letter reflects one who had known JW for some time.

²John 21:17.

From John Henderson

Hannam Green [Bristol]
October 1, 1775

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for your kind letter,¹ and for the pleasure I received by being informed that you had not heard anything which tended to hurt me in your esteem. I speak not thus because I would have any particulars about me kept from you. For I am ready to give you any account of myself you shall require.

But there is one thing for which I am much more obliged to you. I mean your kind concern for me. You have shown this in cautioning me against what you fear may hurt me, and by directing me to what you think will help me. It was kind in you, and I thank you for it. I have read Dr. Clarke and many others, the *Theological Repository*, Priestl[e]y, Graham, Lindsay, etc.² and have seriously considered what they argue against our Saviour. But I still firmly believe that Jesus is very God of very God, is my God as much as the Father, and I adore him and pray to him as such. I believe that he, as God in his divine nature, took upon him human nature, that is, the soul and body of man. I believe that the Godhead was fully and wholly in his humanity, and that the Father, whom none hath seen or can see in his own person, became visible in Jesus. And therefore that whoever simply beholds Jesus as his Lord and his God need (in order to his peace) look no farther, nor puzzle himself in the disputes of men concerning their Maker.

I do not boast that I have escaped the Arian or Socinian pollutions of myself. I do not pretend that I am a match for the subtlety of those men unassisted. If I have discerned the truth from falsehood, it was not by my own light. I always beg understanding of the Spirit of the Holy One. I pray that he may lead me into all truth. I know I need not ask your prayers for me to the same end. And it is the least return I can make for your love, in endeavouring to be a worker together with him for my good, to pray that he may always abide with you, and work all your works by you. Then you will not be ashamed when you are reviled, even as your master was before you. Nor will your labours be in vain in the Lord, but rather be a more abundant means of advancing his glory on earth, and of promoting still more effectually the present and eternal welfare of your fellow-creatures.

I remain, reverend and dear sir,

Your much obliged and very respectful, humble servant,

J. H—son

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 662–63.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Referring to several writers challenging the traditional doctrines of the Trinity and atonement, including Samuel Clarke (1675–1729), William Graham (of Leeds), Theophilus Lindsey (1723–1808), Joseph Priestley (1733–1804); many of their articles were gathered in a journal *The Theological Repository*, edited by Priestley, that began publication in 1769.

From 'Americanus' [Rev. Caleb Evans¹]

Bristol
October 2, 1775

[p. 3]

Reverend Sir,

The grand question which is now debated, as you justly observe, is this, 'Has the English parliament power to tax the American colonies—for with respect to the power, *sub judice lis est*.²

Your answer to this question is very extraordinary indeed. For you not only tell us that the English Parliament has an *undoubted* right to tax all the English colonies (p. 12 of your *Address*³) but roundly assert that every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects; that is, to grant their property, with or *without their consent*' (p. 21⁴). Which you seem to think you sufficiently explain by adding, 'Our sovereign has a right to tax me, and all other Englishman, whether we have votes for parliament-men or no.'

And can you then mean it sir as anything but an insult to put such a question to the Americans, as you do: 'Am I or two millions of Englishmen made slaves because we are taxed *without our own consent*?' (p. 22⁵). Yes sir, if you *are* taxed without your own consent, you are slaves. If every man that is taxed *without* [p. 4] *his own consent* is not a slave, wherein consists the different betwixt slavery and liberty? You say to the Americans, 'What civil liberty can you desire which you are not already possessed of? Do not you sit, without restraint, every man under his own vine? Do you not everyone, high or low, enjoy the fruit of your labour?' (p. 16⁶). But pray sir, how can it be his *own vine* when another claims a right of taking it from him *without his consent*? Or what man can be assured of enjoying the fruits of his labour, if liable, under the colour of right, to be deprived of it *without his consent*? 'What property have we', says the immortal Locke, 'in that which another may by right take when he pleases to himself?'⁷ If this be not the very quintessence of slavery, what is?

He must however be extremely ignorant of the nature of the English constitution who does not know that the *granting our own property* and not having it disposed of without our consent is considered as the very soul and vital spirit of it, the grand palladium of British liberty and the bulwark of freedom.

¹Caleb Evans (1737–91) was at this point a co-pastor of the Particular Baptist congregation at Broadmead in Bristol. He also assisted in the Baptist Academy of Bristol. While a supporter of the Hanovers on the throne of England, Evans was a strong champion of personal liberty and emerged as one of JW's most vigorous critics in the debate over the declaration of independence by the North American colonists. See *DEB*, 366–67.

²Homer, *Ars Poetica*, i.8; 'the question is still under consideration'.

³Evans cites from the first printing of JW, *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies* (1775). Since Evans's tract is the one JW most engages, we will annotate his quotes from *Calm Address* with the appropriate section markers (in this case, §8) so that references can be found in *Works*, vol. 15.

⁴JW, *Calm Address*, Appendix, §6.

⁵JW, *Calm Address*, Appendix, §8.

⁶JW, *Calm Address*, §10

⁷John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, Sect. 138.

*Spiritus intus alit, totamque in fusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.*⁸

I am sure sir you need not be informed that in England the king or *sovereign* has nothing to do, strictly speaking, in the matter of taxing his subjects, nor the nobility, but *the people alone*, the [House of] Commons the representatives of the people; who have ever been so jealous of this fundamental privilege that no money bills are ever suffered to originate but from themselves, and when framed are never permitted to pass under the least alteration. And it is this power of *the people* which, in our well-balanced constitution, serves as an equipoise [p. 5] to that power which is lodged in the other branches of the legislature.

‘Were the *executive power*, that is the sovereign, to determine the raising of public money’, says that celebrated Montesquieu, ‘otherwise than by giving it’s consent’ (and surely you will not call this a *power of taxing*) ‘*liberty would not be at an end.*’ – *Spirit of Laws*, Book XI, Chapter 6.

‘Taxation and representation’ (says that able lawyer and truly great man Lord Camden, in his speech on this subject⁹) ‘are inseparably united. God hath joined them. No British parliament can separate them. To endeavour to do it is to stab our vitals. My position is this—I repeat it—I will maintain it to my last hour: *taxation* and *representation* are inseparable. This position is founded on the laws of nature; it is more, it is itself an eternal law of nature. For whatever is a man’s own is absolutely his own. No man hath a right to take it from him without his consent either expressed by himself or representative. Whoever *attempts* to do it, attempts an *injury*. Whoever does it, *commits a robbery*. He throws down the distinction between *liberty* and *slavery*. Taxation and representation are coeval with and essential to this constitution.’ Did this doctrine stand in need of formal proof it were easy to refer you to a variety of ancient statutes which in the most express terms recognize this great principle of the constitution. In the time of Edward I, 1297, a statute was made to confirm the great charter in which it is expressly declared that ‘aids granted to the king shall not be taken for a custom, and shall not be raised *but by consent.*’ And in the year 1306, that ‘the king or his heirs shall have no aid without consent of parliament’; and [p. 6] that ‘nothing shall be purveyed to the king’s use *without the owner’s consent.*’ But you are no stranger sir to these and many other authorities of a like nature, having seen and read them in a performance you once admired, however you must now be supposed to despise it. ‘When the parliament laid a tax upon the palatinate of Chester’, says Lord Camden in the speech before referred to, ‘and ordered commissioners to collect it there, as commissioners were ordered to collect it in other counties, the palatinate refused to comply. They addressed the king by petition, setting forth that the English parliament had no right to tax them. That they had a parliament of their own. That they had always taxed themselves, and therefore desired the king to order his commissioners not to proceed. The king received the petition, and he did not declare them either rebellious or seditious, but allowed them their plea and they taxed themselves. You may see both the petition and the king’s answer in the records in the tower.’ ‘There is not’, says the same truly noble peer, ‘*a blade of grass*, in the most obscure corner of the kingdom which is not, which was not ever *represented*, since the constitution began. There is not a *blade of glass*, which when taxed, *was not taxed by the consent of the proprietor.*’

To overturn all this reasoning, you tell us that you have no freehold, and consequently no vote for a parliament-man. That multitudes besides are in the same situation. From whence you infer that the *sovereign* (and it matters not what meaning you are pleased to affix to this word) has a right to tax his

⁸Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi.726–27. ‘The spirit within nourishes, and the mind that is diffused throughout the living parts of nature activates the whole mass and mingles with the vast body of the universe.’

⁹This speech given by Lord Camden (Charles Pratt) in parliament in early 1768 was published in settings like *London Magazine* 37 (Feb. 1768), 88–90.

subjects with or *without their consent* (see p. 21 of your *Address*¹⁰). And can you sir consider this as solid [p. 7] argument, or would not you yourself, in any other case, look upon it as the most contemptible sophistry.

Whether you have or have not a freehold, you must either be able to purchase one if you choose it, or else your property must be so small that it can be of no consequence to you who has the granting it; especially as they cannot, you know, give away any of your money without at the same time giving much more of their own. Forty shillings a year freehold gives an Englishman a voice in the legislature of his country. And in many parts of the kingdom this privilege is extended to every freeman of a corporate town, to everyone that pays the rates to king and poor, and not in a few boroughs to everyone that boils a pot. Can it then be pretended with any colour of justice or reason that in England the *sovereign* hath a right to tax his subjects *without their consent*, when it is so glaringly evident that there is not a man in England who is able to boil a pot in ever so despicable a hovel but many, if he pleases, have a voice in the disposal of his property. Suppose there were ever so many millions of Englishmen who undervalued their birthright, and did not think it worth their while to exercise it. Yet still the right itself would exist, nor could it be said they were taxed *without their consent*, since by not exerting the power the constitution gave them of dissenting, had they been so disposed, they implicitly and to all intents and purposes *gave their consent*. And to keep up this power in its full vigour, and to transmit it, unimpaired, from generation to generation, you well know sir that parliaments were originally never chosen for more than *one year*, at the expiration of which [p. 8] term the people again exercised their right of election, and thereby made it as clearly appear to be *true*, as you are pleased peremptorily to assert it is *absolutely false*, that ‘every freeman is governed by laws to which he has consented’ (p. 5¹¹). It is therefore fallacious to the last degree, and unworthy of a man of integrity and candour, to insinuate as you are pleased to do that the people have ‘*ceded to the king and parliament the power of disposing without their consent of both their lives, liberties, and properties*’ (p. 7¹²). How is it *without their consent*, when they retain their place in the legislature by their representatives, and no act of parliament is passed but *with their consent*? By the like mode of reasoning you undertake to prove that ‘When the electors are near equally divided, almost half of them must be governed not only *without*, but even *against their own consent*’ (p. 6¹³). According to which every act of parliament that meets with any opposition should not be called an act of *parliament*, but only an act of *part* of the parliament, since it was *against the consent* of many of the members of parliament. As though every man did not know that in all collective bodies the determinations of the *majority* of that body are always considered as the determination of the *whole body*, and that every man who enters into society implicitly *consents* that it should be so. You may call these childish quirks, sir, *arguments*. I call them, and so I believe will every impartial person call them, mere quibbles. But possibly you think to evade the force of criticism by what you afterwards observe (speaking of an implicit *passive* consent to laws made before we were born); namely, ‘that *any other than this kind of consent* the condition of civil life [p. 9] does not allow’.¹⁴ But if it allows of any *kind of consent*, why talk of our being taxed *without our consent*, and *against our consent*? Unless it be with an artful design to inflame your readers’ minds against the Americans because they object to having their money disposed of *without their own consent*, that is without the consent of their representatives in their provincial assemblies.

¹⁰JW, *Calm Address*, Appendix, §6.

¹¹JW, *Calm Address*, §3.

¹²*Ibid.*, §4.

¹³*Ibid.*, §3.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

‘All the inhabitants of the several districts ought to have’, says Montesquieu, speaking of the English constitution, ‘a right of voting at the election of a representative, excepting such as are in so mean a situation as to be deemed to have no will of their own.’¹⁵ ‘The [House of] Commons’, says Judge [William] Blackstone (in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Book I, page 158). ‘consist of *all such men* of any property in the kingdom as have not seats in the House of Lords; *every one* of which has a voice in parliament either personally or by his representative. In a *free state*, *every man* who is supposed a free agent *ought* to be in some measure *his own governor*; and therefore a branch at least of the legislative power should reside in the *whole body of the people*. And this power, when the territories of the state are small and its citizens easily known, should be exercised by the people in their aggregate or collective capacity. But in so large a state as ours is, this would be impossible. It is therefore very wisely contrived that *the people should do* that by their representatives which it is impracticable to perform in person.’

But so low are your ideas of the power of *the people* that you challenge any man living to produce any instance in all history wherein *the people* gave the sovereign power to anyone, except to Masaniello of Naples (p. 24¹⁶). And I know [p. 10] of no reason for your excepting him, unless it was to render as you might think the old Whig doctrine of the *origin of power* being from *the people* the more ridiculous. However, in return to your challenge I ask you sir, from whence any sovereign ever received his power or could receive it, but *from the people*—except you will come boldly forth and avow the old *jure divino*¹⁷ doctrine. In which case we shall expect to see the *charter* of tyranny under the broad seal of heaven, and to have the miracles wrought in confirmation of its divine original well authenticated. You will not fail at the same time to favour us with the *consequences* of this doctrine, and to point out to us the man who is *our king de jure*, whoever may be considered as our king *de facto*. Till this is done we shall still consider the *origin of all power*, under God, to be *the people*, unless you will undertake to show that *one man* has more power than a *thousand men*, and is able to govern them without their own consent, either expressed or implied. What is it, sir, but a pitiful sophism to deny that any sovereign but poor Masaniello ever received his power from *the people*, because you know of no other instance in which all the people of any particular state of kingdom met together and formally conferred the sovereign power upon anyone. What if only *fifty*, or *twenty*, of the electors of the city of Bristol had thought proper to have appeared and actually given their votes for members of parliament at the last election? Would not the rest, by not voting though they might have done it, be considered as having implicitly *consented* to the choice made by those who actually did vote? And so in every change of government, the Revolution particularly, was it not *the people* that, under [p. 11] God, transferred the sovereign power from King James to that glorious patron of British liberty King William? The many that were inactive at the juncture, implicitly, or *passively* (if you like that word better), united with those that were active in bringing about that important event. And however you may play upon the words, and call the use of them ‘political cant’,¹⁸ *the people*, the people *only*, are the *source of power*. And when Dr. Smith, in his sermon (p. 31),¹⁹ talks

¹⁵Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, Book XI, Chapter 6.

¹⁶JW, *Calm Address*, Appendix, §11; referring to Tommaso Aniello (1622–47), whose name was popularly abbreviated to ‘Masaniello’. See also JW, *Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power*, §19.

¹⁷‘Divine law’.

¹⁸JW, *Calm Address*, Appendix, §11.

¹⁹William Smith, *A Sermon on the Present Situation of American Affairs* (Philadelphia; reprinted in London: Dilly, 1775; and in Bristol: William Pine, 1775). Like JW, Evans cites from an edition on small sheets running over 40 pages that was published by Pine in Bristol. Only one copy of this edition is known to survive. We will cite from a more common printing in both London and Bristol that ran 32

therefore of the people's *resuming* the power into their own hands when not exercised for the common safety, he does not talk of their resuming, as you suggest, what they *never had*, but that they *always had*, and *necessarily* had, and which no sovereign on earth *could have* but by *their consent* (p. 23²⁰). The *army* with us, is a part of the *people*, raised from amongst them, clothed, fed, and paid by them. In the case of William the Conqueror, the Norman *people* it is true were too powerful for the Saxon or English *people*. But how this proves that no sovereign but Masaniello ever received his power from *the people*, you have not yet shown us. I shall therefore still consider *the people* as the *origin of power*, notwithstanding all you have said to the contrary, both in your present *Address* to the colonies, and in your little piece on the *Origin of Power* published some years ago—in which, as I remember, under an artful disguise,²¹ you have revived the good old Jacobite doctrine of *hereditary, indefeasible, divine right*, and of *passive obedience and non-resistance*.

And as the origin of power is from the people, so no fact can be plainer than that the people of this country never parted with the power of disposing of their own money, but always retained this privilege as a pledge of their constitutional [p. 12] freedom, and a glorious mark of their distinction from the subjects of an arbitrary government, who not having the disposal of their own money, can be considered in no other light than that of slaves.

And why should we even *wish* to deprive of this privilege our fellow-subjects in America? You yourself acknowledge that the colonists have not *forfeited* any of their privileges by emigration. But the sum of your argument to prove the right of the British parliament to tax them is this. The Americans by crossing the sea, have rendered the *exercise* of their right of voting in the election of members of Parliament (supposing they had such a right before their emigration) no *longer possible*. But 'they have not by abandoning their right in one legislature acquired a right to constitute another, any more than the multitudes in England who have no votes have a right to erect a parliament for themselves.' That they are therefore reduced (this you intimate is the only consequence) from the condition of voters to that of the innumerable multitude here in England who have no votes (see pages 8–10 of your *Address*²²). This is your argument, let us weight it in the balance of sound impartial reason.

If the Americans by crossing the sea have rendered it no *longer possible* for them to have the disposal of their own money, you cannot surely represent their case as being only parallel to that of those in England who have no votes. It is *fundamentally* different. In England, though the people are by no means *equally* represented, which is an acknowledged defect in the constitution, yet *every man* that has almost any degree of property *may* acquire a voice in the legislature if he pleases, and if he does not, he *consents* in [p. 13] fact to what is done by others, and cannot therefore with any propriety be said to have his property disposed of *without his consent*, for he really *gives consent*. What could he do more if there were a thousand new parliaments constituted? And he may the more easily be satisfied with *this mode of consenting* to the disposal of his property, because he has always this security, that those who take an *active* part in the disposal of his property, must at the same time dispose of an equal proportion of their own. But not so with the American. If he has—not forty shillings a year, but forty pounds, or forty thousand pounds a year—yet still, if the British parliament claim the power of taxing him, he can have *no voice* in the disposal of his property. And which is still worse, those who are to have the power of disposing of it are under every possible temptation to *abuse* that power, because every shilling they take

pages plus a four-page preface. In this case, see pp. 22–23.

²⁰JW, *Calm Address*, Appendix, §11.

²¹The tract *Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power* (1772) was published without any attribution of author; but JW included it the next year in his collected *Works*.

²²JW, *Calm Address*, §6.

out of the pocket of an American is so much saved in their own. If the American, sir, are indeed subject to such a power as this, their condition differs not from that of the most *abject slaves* in the universe. If their property may be disposed of *without their consent*, it matters not who disposes of it: the Great Mogul the Grand Monarque, or the British parliament. They have no longer any property they can call *their own*, they are *slaves*, and the whole of their property lies at the mercy of those who rules over them.

And is this, sir, a *necessary consequence* of their becoming colonists? And did they fly from persecution here, brave the terrors of the seas, and transplant themselves into an American wilderness, to obtain the poor consolation of being *necessarily* involved in slavery, from the very circumstances of their situation? Who [p. 14] can soberly entertain such a thought? No, sir, their support under all the fatigues they bore, was the hope of enjoying unmolested the sweets of liberty, or as you express it, of *sitting every man under is own vine*. ‘They left their native country’, says Mr. Hutchinson, ‘with the *strongest assurances* that they and their prosperity should enjoy the privileges of *free* and natural-born English subjects.’²³ ‘The Americans’, as Lord Chatham expresses it, ‘are the *sons*, not the *bastards*, of England.’²⁴ ‘The forefathers of the Americans’, to use the words of Lord Camden, ‘did not leave their native country, and subject themselves to every danger and distress, to be reduced to a state of *slavery*. They did not give up their rights. They looked for protection and not for *chains* from their mother country.’²⁵

But you insist upon it that by crossing the sea, though they did not *give up* nor *forfeit* any of their rights, they rendered the exercise of some of them *no longer possible*. True, *it is not longer possible* that they should vote for members of their British Parliament, consequently *no longer possible* they should be *represented* in the British parliament. And therefore *no longer possible* that the British parliament should dispose of their property *without their consent*, by their own representatives in their respective houses of assembly, without involving them in *absolute slavery*.

And *must* they be *slaves*? Is it *no longer possible* that they should exercise the right of *freemen*? That they should have parliaments or assemblies of their own, and grant their own money by their representatives as we do by our here, because the Atlantic ocean rolls between us and them? You say, they have no right to [p. 15] *constitute another legislature*. But why then were they from the very beginning of their existence permitted to form a legislative body, the *effigies parva*, as Mr. Hutchinson styles it, of the mother state?²⁶ The commons of America, sir, represented in their several assemblies (to use the expressions of Lord Chatham) have *ever been in possession* of the exercise of this their constitutional right, of *giving* and *granting* their own money. *They would have been slaves if they had not enjoyed it*. ‘The idea of a *virtual* representation of America in this house’ (says his Lordship, who was then a commoner) ‘is the most contemptible idea that ever entered into the head of man. It does not deserve a serious refutation.’²⁷

But if the colonists contend for the exercise of this right of granting their own money, you assert in your usual dogmatic style, ‘they contend for neither more nor less than independency’ (p. 20²⁸). And immediately add, ‘Why then do they talk of their “rightful sovereign”?’ They acknowledge no sovereign at

²³Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay* (London: M. Richardson, 1760), p. iv.

²⁴From a speech by William Pitt (Lord Chatham) in the House of Common on the Stamp Act, Jan. 14, 1766; widely reproduced.

²⁵Lord Camden (Charles Pratt), speech in Parliament, *London Magazine* 37 (Feb. 1768), 89.

²⁶Hutchinson, *History*, 37.

²⁷Pitt, speech on Stamp Act.

²⁸JW, *Calm Address*, Appendix, §2.

all.' To which I answer, in the words of the judicious and truly dispassionate author of *An Argument in Defence of the Colonies* ..., p. 112.

'We need not (says this author) go so far back as the act of union to find a people that will not allow the *supreme legislature* of Great Britain, to alter a *single letter* in a law to *tax them*; and yet are no more *independent* than the people of the colonies. Ireland is subject to the same sovereign as America. The people in Ireland choose their own representatives; so do the people in the colonies. The people in Ireland are taxed by their own representatives; so have the people in the colonies been *ever since their first settlement*. The crown appoints the [p. 16] Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; the crown appoints the governors of colonies. The Lord Lieutenant calls the meeting of the legislative body in Ireland; in the colonies the governor calls an assembly when he thinks proper, and adjourns, prorogues and dissolves it at his pleasure. The Irish acts are sent over to be allowed (not by the British Parliament, but) *by the crown*; the acts of the colonies are the same. The representatives chosen by the people of Ireland will suffer no duties to be collect from the people, but such as they grant themselves; and the representatives chosen by the people in the colonies claim the same right.²⁹

Why then do you not ask the Irish why they talk of their rightful sovereign, and tell them 'they acknowledge no sovereign at all' because they claim a right of granting their own money? Your argument holds as good with respect to Ireland as ever it can with respect to the colonies. And why the colonists should not be permitted to have the disposal of their own money as well as the Irish of theirs, without supposing they contend for *independency* (which they solemnly disclaim), and without being told they acknowledge *no sovereign at all*, I am sure it is past the art even of Mr. Wesley's logic to show us. (As much as it is for the Middlesex justices—see their late curious address—to show us how the colonies are courting the king to *accept of absolute power* by claiming it as their undoubted right to dispose of their own property by their own representatives.³⁰ These justices seem to have mistaken the claims of the colonies for the powers *actually granted and accepted* by the Quebec bill.

But you intimate to us that the colonies have implicitly *engaged* to submit to the taxation of [p. 17] the British parliament by the very letter as well as spirit of their *charters*. But how does this appear? The colonists with one voice declare the contrary, in the most express and solemn manner. And Mr. Hutchinson, one of their late governors (who will not be suspected of partiality to them) declares, as I have before observed (see the preface to his history of Massachusetts Bay, published 1760), 'They left their native country with the *strongest assurances* that they and *their posterity* should enjoy the privileges of free and natural-born English subjects.' But how could they enjoy these privileges if the first and fairest of them all, the right of *granting their own money*, was to be no longer enjoyed by them. How could they enjoy the privileges of Englishmen, if by their charters they were to be slaves? How could they enjoy the privilege of *freedom*, if from the very nature of *subordinate government* they are necessarily involved in slavery (as you suggest, p. 11³¹).

'The charter of Pennsylvania', you tell us, 'has a clause admitting in express terms taxation by parliament. And if such a clause be not inserted in other charters, it must be omitted', you observe, 'as not necessary. Because it is manifestly implied in the very nature of subordinate government. All countries

²⁹[Thomas Parker], *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves* (London: Brotherton and Sewell, 1774).

³⁰Reported in settings like *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Sept. 28, 1775), p. 4.

³¹JW, *Calm Address*, §7.

which are subject to laws, being liable *to taxes*.³² (To make your argument hold good here, you should have added *without representatives*, for the colonists have *always* been *taxed*, only it has been by *their* representatives.)

'It is true', you further observe, 'the first settlers in Massachusetts Bay were promised an *exemption from taxes for seven years*. But', say you [p. 18] immediately, 'does not this very exemption imply that they were to pay them afterwards?'³³

To all this I reply that, as to the exemption from *taxes* for seven years promised to the Massachusetts colony, I am credibly informed it has no reference at all to what we commonly mean by *taxes*, but *quit-rents* for the land occupied by them, an exemption from the payment of which for a certain number of years is commonly granted to the first settlers in every new colony. Were we to suppose it to refer to an exemption from parliamentary taxation, we might well ask you sir, upon your own principles, what right had *the king* to promise by charter that *the parliament* should *not tax* them for seven years. If, as you say, the parliament always had this power of taxation over the colonies, *the king* could not promise, anymore than you or I could, that the parliament should not exercise this power *for sever years*. And with respect to Pennsylvania, whatever construction the clause you refer to may bear, that it was *never understood* to mean what you suppose, a power of internal taxation for the purpose of raising a revenue, but merely the laying on of such duties as might be necessary solely for the *regulation* of trade, is evident from this simple fact. *No such taxation was imposed* upon the colonies till the fatal era of the Stamp Act, and it was then universally reprobated by the colonists as an *innovation* and fundamental breach of their *chartered* as well as inherent rights.

And may we not ask with wonder, If parliament always possessed this power of taxing the colonies, or however judged it consistent with the spirit of the English constitution to exercise this power, why did they uniformly through a course of perhaps one hundred and fifty years, permit the colonists to tax themselves, by their own representatives, in their own assemblies? [p. 19] And having been so long *in possession* of this right of granting their own money, have they ever forfeited it by an abuse of it? Not surely in the late war. For though this war *not undertaken*, as you assert, on their account, but in defence of the new plantation of Nova Scotia (the inhabitants of which have no concern in the present dispute), yet it is well known to all the world that the colonists exerted themselves in this war even *beyond their power*, so that the king and parliament judged it reasonable to make *large reimbursements* to them at the close of the war. 'They themselves', as Dr. Smith expresses it in his truly patriotic sermon, 'testified on our behalf that in all things we not only did our part but *more* than our part for the common good. And they dismissed us home loaded with silver and with gold, in recompense for our extraordinary services' (p. 20³⁴). A fact this, which ministerial writers *never attend to*, but *cannot deny*. And yet you are pleased to talk of the *mother country's* desiring to be *reimbursed* for some part of the large expense she had been at in the late war, and that to this end she laid a small tax on one of her colonies.' I wish sir, you would discover more fairness and ingenuity in your representations.

Besides, do we not possess a *monopoly* of the American trade; and is there not hereby an *immense revenue* secured to us? 'When I had the honour of serving his Majesty' (says Mr. Pitt, now Lord Chatham) 'I availed myself of the means of information which I derived from my office. I speak *therefore from knowledge*. My materials were good. I was at pains to *collect*, to *digest*, to *consider* them; and I *will be bold to affirm* that the profit to Great Britain from the trade of the colonies, through [p. 20] all its branches, is *two millions a year*. This is the fund that carried you triumphantly through the last war. The estates that were rented at two thousand pounds a year, threescore years ago, are at three thousand pounds

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Page 12 in the more commonly available printing (see fn 19 above).

at present. Those estates sold then from fifteen to eighteen years purchase; the same may be sold now for thirty. *You owe this to America. This is the price America pays you for her protection.*³⁵

Upon the whole sir, I cannot more fully express my sentiments on this subject, or more decisively, than in the words of the author of *The Defence of the Colonies* ... before quoted, which are (pp. 91, 92) as follows:

If the people in American are *taxed* and not *represented*, their rights as subjects under the English constitution are as clearly invaded as they were in the case of *ship-money*; and the province of Massachusetts Bay now stands in the same situation, in behalf of the rights of the people of America, as Mr. John Hamden did for all the people of England in the last century. I am as much for the obedience of the people in America as I can be against their illegal oppression. I would wish to be as far from willfully shutting my eyes and thinking all the people of the colonies faultless, as I would be to give up my reason and believe those *incapable of mistake* who exclaim so much against them. I am equally afraid of being misled in the mists that are raised by violence or interest on either side of the question. I contend not for men's prejudices. It is the rights of my fellow-subjects in America that I only mean to defend. And those rights not such as are of vague and uncertain interpretation, but such as the English constitution makes the *unalterable property of every man* that lives under the protection of its laws. And if [p. 21] the people of England, Scotland, Ireland, or America are ever to be taxed *without* having, or the possibility of having, *any choice* in those that impose the taxes upon them, they are no longer the subjects but the *slaves* of government. Our constitution, as established by the laws, is utterly repugnant to every attempt to divide the *right of taxation* from the *privilege of representation*. And could any pretense ever justify the separation of those rights with *a part of the subjects*, the same reasons would hold good *with the whole*. These are rights so essential to our constitution that they make a part of the rules by which the *legislature itself is bound* to walk. And it can no more take away the provision the constitution has made for the security of *the people's property*, than it can *the privileges of the peers*, or *the known prerogative of the crown*.

Your account of the *original cause* of all our disputes and disturbances about American affairs is curious. You tell us with a grave face that you *make no doubt* but that *a few men in England* who are determined enemies to monarchy are the *original cause* of the present breach between England and her colonies (p. 14³⁶). That these good men *cordially hate* the king, at least his office, and are in hopes of overturning the government and erecting their grand idol, their dear commonwealth, upon the ruins of it. You doubt whether any of the Americans are in the secret (p. 18³⁷). The designing men, the Ahitophels, are in England.

But the Americans, sir, if we may judge of their dispositions by that of the Pennsylvanian farmer, will not thank you for your compliment. 'It has been said in Great Britain', says this Cato of America, 'that Lord [p. 22] Chatham, Lord Camden, and some other great men have taught the colonies to despise her authority. But it is as little true as the multitude of invectives vented against the colonies. The constant practice in these publications is to confound facts and dates and then *to rail*. It should be remembered that the opposition in America to the Stamp Act was *fully-formed*, and the congress held at New York, before it was known on the continent that our cause was *espoused by any man of note* at home' (see his *Essay*,

³⁵Speech reported in *Gentleman's Magazine* 36 (April 1766), 158.

³⁶JW, *Calm Address*, §11 (was §9 in first printing).

³⁷*Ibid.*, §14 (§12 in first printing).

p. 26³⁸).

The opposition to the measures of the ministry respecting America, you will have it however, is owing to these bad men, these *king-haters* you are so intimate with. For it seems, though they have let but *few* into the secret, the Rev. Mr. Wesley is one of that chosen few. Well sir, this serves to explain a matter which, I assure you, till now puzzled me not a little.

All the world knows that in your *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs*, published 1770, you were pleased to say, 'I do not defend the measures taken with regard to America. I doubt whether *any man* can defend them, either on the foot of *law, equity, or prudence*' (p. 14³⁹). And it is well known that you recommended the book I have repeatedly quoted in this letter, entitled *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves*, as a performance that would convince *any impartial person* of the justice of the American cause. It is moreover well known that at the time of our late election, and many times since, you expressed yourself *very warmly* in different companies, and upon different occasions, in *favour* of the Americans, affirming that they were in your opinion an '*oppressed, injured people*'. That if they submitted to taxation by our parliament, they '*must* [p. 23] be either *fools or knaves*'. That they would then be *enslaved*. And if they were once enslaved, Ireland would follow next, and then England. That you wished well to our late American candidate *because* he was a *friend* to America. And when addressing the electors of your own society, told them, with no small degree of vehemence, that now was the time for them to exert themselves if they wished to continue a free people; or words to that effect. Now really sir, I thought you had been *in earnest*, and *meant* as you said when you expressed yourself in this manner, and have taken pleasure in assuring many persons who were not over-well affected to you that you was a hearty friend to civil and religious liberty. I beg pardon for misrepresenting you, sir. I perceive now that all your design was to get into the confidence of these bad men, these *king-haters* you talk of, and so by a *pious fraud* to blow up their abominable schemes. I perceive now that when you said the American were an *oppressed and injured people*, you *meant* the very reverse. When you *said* that if they submitted to parliamentary taxation they would be *enslaved*, and must be either *fools or knaves*, you *meant* no such thing; but that '*they would still have all the liberty they could desire, and might still rejoice in the common rights of freemen, and sit without restraint, every man under his own vine* (pp. 16 and 22 of your *Address*). And yet perhaps I am still mistaken in your meaning. For your next publication may be as much in *favour* of the Americans as the present is against them. And possibly you may disclose to our view *another set of Ahithophels* who are plotting the destruction of the present royal family, by first endeavouring to push on the ministry to the exercise of arbitrary power. And when it is become indifferent to the [p. 24] people what king rules over them, then, by the revival of the good old doctrine of *hereditary indefeasible* right, making a grand effort for the restoration of the banished family of the *Stuarts*, of *blessed memory*.

*Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo?*⁴⁰

For my own part, I am in no secret. I love, I honour the king. [I] have been taught from my very infancy to venerate him almost to idolatry, and am ready cheerfully to sacrifice my fortune and my life in defence of his royal person, and the constitution of which he is the guardian. I love and honour *all good men*, all men of real principle and *integrity*, however they may differ from me in political or religious

³⁸John Dickinson, *A New Essay by the Pennsylvanian Farmer on the Constitutional Power over the Colonies in America* (Philadelphia; reprinted London: J. Almon, 1774).

³⁹JW, *Free Thoughts Upon the Present State of Public Affairs*, III.9.

⁴⁰Horace, *Epistles*, I.i.90. 'What knot can I use to restraining this Proteus that is constantly changing his shape?'

sentiments. Nor can any wish glow in my heart more fervently than that which I have long panted to see accomplished—which is that a permanent peace and reconciliation may speedily take place between us and our American colonies, upon an honourable constitutional basis, and that our beloved sovereign George the Third may long live to sway the sceptre over an *united, harmonious, free* people.

Hoping, sir, for the sake of the multitudes that follow you, that you will be more *steady* and *consistent* as a *divine* than I am sure you are as a *politician*. And that when you publish again upon politics, you will not, under the idea of a *Calm Address to the Colonies* (the inhabitants of which will probably never see your address) endeavour to inflame the minds of the people here against their American brethren (already sufficiently exposed, surely, to the resentment of their rulers), but that you will write in a strain more becoming a minister of the Prince of Peace.

I subscribe myself, reverend sir,

Your sincere well wisher and humble servant,

Americanus⁴¹

Source: published transcription; Caleb Evans, *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his 'Calm Address to the American Colonies'* (Bristol: William Pine, 1775).⁴² Also serialized in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Oct. 21, 1775), p. 4 (Oct. 28, 1775), p. 4 (Nov. 4, 1775), p. 4 (Nov. 11, 1775), p. 4 (Nov. 18, 1775), p. 4; and excerpts in *London Chronicle* (Nov. 9–11, 1775), pp. 457–58.⁴³

⁴¹Changed to 'Caleb Evans' in 3rd edn.

⁴²Evans's tract went through five printings (three identified editions) by the end of 1775. The first printing in London was published Oct. 21, 1775; see *Public Advertiser* (Oct. 20, 1775), p. 1.

⁴³The full tract was in print by the latter part of October, because it was being reviewed by early September. There are minor variants between the full tract in the first edition and the serialized form in the *Bristol Journal* (which follows the 3rd edn.). We reproduce the text in the first printing. Additions to later editions will be noted below, as they were published.

'A Friend of the Constitution' to *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*

[Bristol?]

c. October 7, 1775

Sir,

Permit me by your journal to lay before the public a few remarks on Mr. Wesley's *Address to the American Colonies*. In the first place it is observable that, in the true spirit of controversy, he decides by positive assertions, without attempting any arguments, some of the most important points in debate. For example, p. 5, he says 'whatever holds with regard to taxation holds with regard to all other laws'—a doctrine which is denied by our ablest statesmen and lawyers, who have proved in the clearest manner, that taxing is an act peculiar to the representatives of the people from whom they immediately receive that power.

However, as it is not likely that the Americans, who have always seen a difference between legislation in general and taxation in particular, will submit to the latter on his bare assertion though ever so positive, he proceeds by arguing to convince them of the reasonableness of submitting to the parliament of Great Britain in this instance. Let us attend to the force of his reasoning. The sum of it is this. Because he and many other individuals here who have no votes for members of parliament submit to its power, therefore the Americans should obey it. That is, because he, whose brethren, friends and neighbours, all whose interests are connected with his have votes, is liable to be taxed; they, whose brethren, friends and neighbours, whose interests are united with theirs, have no voice in appointing members of parliament ought to be taxed by them. That because individuals in a country in which everyman who has a freehold of forty shillings per annum and multitudes of other persons have votes, are taxed, the inhabitants of another country in which not one freeholder nor other person has a vote ought in reason to be so too. That because the parliament may levy taxes on its own property and on the property of its constituents and others who are in familiar circumstances, it may also levy them on the property of others who never appointed it and whose circumstances are in various respects different! I need make no observation on this kind of reasoning. Everyone whose eyes are not darkened by party prejudice must see its weakness, its absurdity! From the imperfect manner in which the representatives of the people are chosen he would infer there is no necessity for any representation at all, and eventually destroy that inestimable privilege of Britons, as he actually denies it the Americans.

What the author's sentiments on this subject are may possibly be conjectured from an expression p. 21: 'every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects: that is, to grant their property with or without their consent'. This is doing the business effectually. Yes, it does much more than the controversy requires. It asserts not that the parliament may tax America, but that the king at pleasure may raise money on his English subjects. A doctrine which propagated by court-flatterers in the reign of the Stuarts and practised by the unhappy Charles deprived him of his crown and life. Which strikes at the very foundation of our excellent constitution and if espoused would open scenes of confusion similar to those of the last century. Whatever the conduct of others may be with respect to monarchy, it is evident such writings tend to destroy our free and happy constitution and bring us under the yoke of tyranny.

Another passage there is towards the close of his address which, if it do not so directly strike at our constitution as a limited monarchy, yet seems to aim a blow at the right which the house of Hanover has to the sovereignty of these realms. Speaking of the source from which William the Conqueror derived his power, he asks 'and to which of his successors did the people of England (six or seven million) give the sovereign power? This is mere political cant.' Is it so indeed! From whom if not from a convention of the people did William III and Mary derive their power; and what other title had they to the crown? If they did not receive a just title from them, it is beyond dispute they had none, but were usurpers. It is likewise manifest on that supposition that all the acts of their reign, and particularly the settling the crown on the house of Hanover was invalid. And consequently that our late excellent kings had and our present

gracious sovereign has no just title to the dominion which he exerciseth. Though there be no reason to charge Mr. Wesley, as he does others, with hating the kingly office. Yet if one were to regard the natural consequences of his expressions one would apprehend he has no great opinion of the real and just authority of the persons who have filled it these 60 years with so much advantage to their subjects. If these are not his sentiments, let him disclaim them in as public a manner as he has suggested them to the world. At present it is natural to ask with concern, what shall we think of the times when a pamphlet which appears to contain principles so inconsistent with our free government and happy settlement under the protestant house of Hanover meets with a kind reception? Will all their zeal in addressing prove those who applaud and disperse it the best friends of our gracious sovereign?

I am, yours, etc.,

A Friend of the Constitution

Source: published transcription; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Oct. 7, 1775), p. 4.

From 'A Whig'

October 14, 1775

Reverend Sir,

Did you intend in any part of your *Calm Address to the Americans* to maintain the power of the crown, according to the exploded doctrine of kings reigning *jure divino*?¹ Are they the Lord's anointed in such a sense that the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance are doctrines according to godliness? What do you think of the Revolution 1668? (You seem to forget it in your 12th paragraph.) You will please to answer these questions explicitly, because your people are looked upon as inimical to the present government; and if you are intoxicated with the long-exploded doctrines above mentioned, they may well be suspected. For my own part, I ever thought them well-affected.

Your *Address* has made you many friends, and gained you great applause among those who nevertheless wish to see Methodism rooted out of the land, and do pray God, mixed with execrations and violent menaces, that your *Address* may prove the means of their destruction. The violent spirit of the Tories hath, upon the occasion, shown itself beyond anything I ever saw before. And if you have not made a rod for yourself (I mean as the head of a sect of separatists), I am no prophet.

You tell the Americans your opinion, and make your opinion the foundation of slander and abuse, unless you can point out those enemies to our sovereign whose aim is to overthrow our happy constitution. I believe there is not a man of eminence in the kingdom than wishes for any other form of government than that we are now under. But remember sir, it is mixed, and not an absolute monarchy, which you seem to approve. Wishing that even your religious liberties may be continued to you *ad infinitum*, I remain a real friend to the present establishment, and reverend sir,

Your friend and servant,

A Whig

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Oct. 23, 1775), p. 1.

¹'by divine right'.

From 'Civis'

Gracechurch Street [London]
October 16, 1775

Dear Sir,

Returning from the manufactory into the city, I was accosted by a gentleman in the borough, 'Sir, as you are on the livery, will you not sign the address?' No, I am not for blood, but for a reconciliation, therefore have signed the petition.¹ 'Mr. Wesley hath wrote a book very much to the purpose, on the subject.' I directly enquired, and had four pamphlets put in my hands—viz., *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs, Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power, Thoughts on Liberty, and A Calm Address to our American Colonies*.

I was amazed to see one who I supposed a father in God, forsake the view of Canaan and dabble among the fleshpots of Egypt. 'But he desired to write his thoughts on the subject.'² I should have expected that glorious answer, I leave all things behind, and press forward to that kingdom purchased for me by him whom I have determined alone to know, and him crucified. But to write on purpose to take thousands from the one thing needful. To make strife, and thereby to rob God of many hearts by contending about earthly things, as you was well aware of, for say you, 'But am I so weak to imagine that because I am not angry with them, they will not be angry with me?' 'No ... probably both will be angry enough.'³ How much unlike that disciple's doctrine who preached, 'Little children, love one another.'⁴ But cobblers, tinkers, porters, and hackney coachmen are born with rational powers, as well as lords and dukes—who you acknowledge have grants to be fools, because they have large estates. But many are a disgrace to human society. It is true of both sorts. But why that sneer on any part of human society?⁵ Many of whom have full as great natural abilities as any of their superiors, with all the addition of learning (witness the numbers of your own preachers, with John Bunyan the tinker, etc.). Who knew the nature of things more than my respected sir in the affair before us?

'But the king believes the Bible and loves the queen.'⁶ Would Mr. Wesley let such a Bible-believer remain in his society two quarters who frequents operas, Foote's,⁷ to hear religion often ridiculed, balls and playhouses, if he knew it? No! Why this sounding brass, this tinkling cymbal, this flattery? It cannot be for a mitre; you possess a much greater now than the king can give. Riches I believe you despise. Oh, it is praise, your besetting sin, that hath flung you from that zenith of glory, the mount of God, declaring the glad tidings of salvation to lost man, into this muddy hay-stall!

¹Competing petitions were being circulated among the freeman in London regarding whether to condemn or support the North American colonists in their protest; see *Gentleman's Magazine* 45 (Oct. 1775), 476–78.

²JW, *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*, I.4

³*Ibid.*, I.9.

⁴Cf. 1 John 3:18.

⁵Referring to JW's dismissive remark in *Free Thoughts*, I.4.

⁶JW, *Free Thoughts*, II.2.

⁷Samuel Foote's playhouse; Foote was famous for his parody on Methodism, *The Minor; a comedy* (London: J. Coote, G. Kearsly, et al., 1760).

‘But what can be said for his pardoning a murderer? perhaps he did not know or believe him such.’⁸ What murderer? There have been more murderers pardoned and murders committed in this reign than have stained any one since the Revolution. Do you mean the murder committed by the two Kennedys, who came on purpose to imbrue their hands in blood, bringing an instrument of death with them, and killed the poor watchman; were convicted on the clearest evidence by their country and pardoned by our Bible-believing king? ‘But he did not see, and perhaps could not believe it.’ Doth not this man’s blood cry out now before God?

I shall think no more of any passage in this pamphlet, but the affair of young Allen.⁹ The justices met for several days, ordered the constables out, which naturally drew a number of people to know the meaning. Then comes a party of the army, with drums beating, fifes playing—which accumulated a large number of people. A few of whom behaved ill by throwing dried cow-dung, some of which hit one of the justices on the heads. The soldiers are ordered to fire on the innocent multitude, and murdered many of them.

I saw one poor woman, who they said was big with child, sitting there selling wares, shot [and] brought out upon four men’s shoulders. The barbarity of that day will never be forgot. The bayonets fixed on the soldiers pieces would have kept them at a proper distance, for they had no kind of arms or weapons of defence. And I saw them run before the soldiers as sheep before a shepherd’s dog. You may judge what a turbulent mob this must be, when only three soldiers leave the ranks and all fly before them. They ran from St. George’s into Newington parish, followed an innocent young man unarmed into an outhouse, and in cool blood murdered him. Had he been an enemy that fired at them and they had pursued him, when they saw he was in their power they would have taken him prisoner, and not have shot him, without they had been such cowards indeed as I hope are nowhere to be found in England. And yet Mr. Wesley can cover this atrocious crime of murder, which will ever stain the English annals. Wipe his mouth and say, ‘Now this cannot be excused. Yet was it the most horrid villainy that ever was perpetrated, surely no, notwithstanding all tragical exclamations, which have been made concerning it: what is this to killing a man in cool blood; and was this never heard of in England?’¹⁰ Surely sir, this cannot be Mr. Wesley’s reasoning. Three soldiers run from their ranks into another parish after an innocent lad and find him in an outhouse, whom they might have taken, but murder him! Can any thinking man believe it to be any other than a glaring atrocious murder as any that the annals of England can produce? Surely sir you are out of your sphere, and like a blind man in a wood, who not only runs his head against every tree he meets, but stumbles on every stump.

I could never have believed my worthy friend would have followed such a dirty set, to wipe off their mud. Well, what is the consequence? Why, the wretches are screened, and our Bible-believing king thanks the murderers in the public papers.

As to *The Origin of Power*, I shall have nothing to do with but the situation of the constitution, as founded on agreement between the kings of England and subjects is the power before us. The *Liberty* of an Englishman I shall not consider (what it is not) to swell a pamphlet, but what it is. Then the liberty of an Englishman is, to be protected by her laws, which must be held sacred by both king and people. I have done with these three, and shall consider the *Calm Address*, the right of taxation. How did our present monarch find the constitution when he accepted the crown, and swore to keep it on the same footing both in church and state?

It is a well-known truth that the kings of England and the people have settled the rules of constitution for the British empire on a firm and lasting footing. They delegate the king with the power of

⁸JW, *Free Thoughts*, II.3.

⁹See *ibid.*, III.3.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

the sceptre, on condition he swear to Almighty God that he will preserve the constitution in church and state. [He] then is anointed king, but not to swerve to the right hand or to the left. The state to be governed in every province by king and parliament, who are to watch over and take care to enact such wholesome laws as shall be for the good of the whole province they represent. And that all provinces under the British empire should enjoy the same privileges as Great Britain in parliament make laws and tax their own province.

This is the constitution as appears by Ireland and all the provinces in North America, with the West India islands, having two houses of assemblies, which are exactly the same as our two houses of parliament. The king at the head of every parliament or assembly, so that any act proposed and agreed to by both houses, in any province of the British empire is not binding until the king's signet is set to it. Every province annexed to the British dominions have a right to the constitutional law of the empire. Great Britain, the mother country, for nourishing and protecting them, has rightly the supreme command of the commerce of every province. In this lay the right of Great Britain's supremacy over all her dominions. The protestant churches to bear rule in every province, however the Roman churches might be tolerated. Now I want to know how came this innovation of the constitution in church and state: the Roman religion made by a law the ruling church in Canada, the English constitution set aside, and another contrary to it established, one province tax another, not know before this reign?

But why, do I wonder, when even in our own kingdom the king is advised and actually did step from the constitutional throne into a despotic chair, and gave the Portland estate, formerly granted to that family and their heirs, to Lowther? But the constitutional law checked him, and settled him back on the British throne. But again he leaves the throne, and attacks the grants of the crown in America. And in order still further to infringe on the constitution, gives his sceptre to the parliament of one province, and they weak enough to receive it. And tax the Americans—they might as well have taxed Ireland. Why had not the monarch caused estimates, and constitutionally laid before each assembly what he wanted to support the dignity of the British Empire? It will not avail to say, If the king had, they would not have raised any. This is begging the question. Has it been tried, or were they found wanting last war? Oh, how happy would the king of the British Empire be, was he not to swerve from the constitutional line. He would reign in the hearts of his subjects in general; neither would they mind the six hundred thousand out of the civil list, any more than the eight hundred thousand annually granted to support his dignity.

The ministry, fixed in every department, would take off the weight of government from him. No bribery nor corruption in order to get a majority to carry on an unconstitutional plan would be wanting. If any man still clamours he would be despised by almost all the kingdom. But this lust after power, this brat of hell, is the ruin of love and harmony. But could I have supposed that my venerable friend would have left the mount of God to have stirred the fire in the devil's kingdom? As those things are truths known by almost all people, what is become of your reasoning concerning power, taxation, and all the doctrine of the four pamphlets covering despotism and murders with vellum, so that the way-faring man though a fool can see through. Why like the basest vision of the night dissolved, and leaves not a reek behind.

Civis

Source: published transcription; *A Letter to the Reverend John Wesley*. London: s.n., 1775.

‘Algernon Sydney’¹ to *Lloyd's Evening Post*

c. October 16, 1775

A Voice from the Foundery

Mr. John Wesley, in his *Address* to the American Colonies, speaks the language of [Thomas] Hobbes, and will have it ‘that power gives right’. He will also have it that despotism is the attribute of sovereignty. ‘Every sovereign’, says he, ‘under heaven has a right to tax his subjects’ (that is, to grant their property), *with or without* their consent.’² So that *non-resistance* and *passive-obedience* is a universal law to the governed. Whereas the end of government is the weal of the public, the preservation of their persons, properties, and the rights of conscience. Liberty, civil and religious, is the glory of all good government. Nor can any claim of sovereignty be of God, but of the devil, that would invade and infringe these unalienable rights of mankind.

In truth and fact the fountain of civil power ought always to reside in the people, who invest any with sovereignty; so that every reigning prince is amenable to their tribunal if he is unfaithful to that great trust repose in him. What else can be the meaning of that oath taken by our kings at their coronation? No, says Mr. Wesley, nothing like it. ‘I know but of one instance in all history wherein the people gave the sovereign power to anyone, that was to Masaniello of Naples; and I desire any man living to produce another instance in the history of all nations.’³ If he meaneth this to suggest that the source of all sovereignty is not in the people, or ought not to be there, all history is against him. The deposition of kings speaks loudly. Witness the decollation of Charles, and the exile of James. If he would be understood to affirm the *jure divine* of kings, one would advise him to read a little more carefully the history of all nations.

There is a most invidious insinuation, a poisoned arrow shot in the dark at the best friends of the British constitution, but with an evident design to cover the traitorous measures of present administration, a manufactured shield and buckler for them. ‘My opinion is this: We have a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy. Whether they hat his present Majesty on any other ground that because he is a king, I known not. But they cordially hate his office, and have for some years been undermining it with all diligence, in hopes of erecting their grand *idol* upon its ruins.’⁴ This is a very malicious thrust at the enemies of despotism, who, God knows, appear but too few to make any successful effort in favour of our liberties under a most bloody and savage Scotch junto, who take the reign of government, and who are the king’s greatest enemies.

As to the right of taxation of our American colonies without representation, much can be written both *for* and *against*. I shall only give my opinion with as much freedom as Mr. Wesley has given his. Fully persuaded I am the plan of administration has not been to reduce to colonies to the obedience of subjects to a rightful authority, but to enslave, or else ruin and destroy. Not one measure has been taken but what is hostile, inhuman, and diabolical; of which no notice is taken by this Foundery oracle, and who seems to have shown the *cloven foot* which some time ago was uncovered by Mr. [Augustus] Toplady.

Algernon Sydney

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Oct. 14–17, 1775), p. 4.

¹Using the name of a prominent seventeenth-century republican political theorist.

²JW, *Calm Address to Our American Colonies*, Appendix, §6.

³Ibid., Appendix, §11.

⁴Ibid., [main body], §11.

From Thomas Joel¹

London
c. October 19, 1775

The Foundry Set to Work

Ammunition made and sold by J. W. Cracker-maker
to Laird Boot and Miss Jenny Cameron.

We grant altho' he has much wit,
He's very shy of using it,
As being loth to wear it out,
And therefore bears it not about,
Unless on holidays or so,
As men their best apparel do;
Besides 'tis known he can speak Greek
As naturally as pigs [can] squeak,
And Latin is no more difficile
Than for a blackbird 'tis to whistle.

To JOHN WESLEY, M.A.A.P.A.T.F.

Sir,

I propose to *misspend* a few moments in selecting the most *cool* thoughts contained in your *calm*, jesuitical *Address* to our American colonies. You need not be under any *alarms* from apprehending I shall presume to *answer* the same. This attempt I promise you is not in my thoughts. It is an Herculean labour I cannot expect to accomplish, for I confess your *politics*, *philosophy*, and *divinity* are beyond the reach of my feeble understanding.

You tell your brethren, Mr. [Augustus] Toplady I suppose among the rest, 'The *grand question* which is *now debated* is this: Has the English parliament power to *tax* the American colonies?' With humble submission you are here guilty of a small wilful mistake. I do not say in your own words (p. 5) as confidently as it has been asserted, 'it is absolutely false'. You know very well this question has been *fully discussed*, and has given rise to *another* of a more serious nature. The *grand question now* is whether the ends and purposes of a wise government can be answered by the present unnatural war, which promises no favourable consequences, even upon a supposition of a doubtful *victory*? It is not a time *now* to enter into the justice of the cause which has occasioned what some are pleased to term 'spirited measures against the colonies'. It is *your* duty, and that of every good man, to remind his brethren of the *folly of such measures*, and the small prospect there is of *success* from them, not forgetting how much the whole nation may suffer from future destructive and calamitous events. But these are points from which it is very evident you and your employers are industrious to avert public attention. In the ensuing session of parliament our political *speeches* will be compelled, from dire necessity, to cry 'Give, Give'. It is no wonder then that they should now plead for *war*. For if this can, by the help of your *grand question*, be proved *necessary*, the *necessity* of the good people of England's *money*, *lives*, and *fortunes* follows of

¹Secretary of the London Association, founded by a group of 'friends of liberty' on Aug. 31, 1775; see announcement in *London Evening Post*, Sept. 23, 1775.

course. Hence then it is the vein of *addressing* from petty boroughs has been opened. And hence it is the Rev. Mr. Wesley has been inspired with so many learned arguments in favour of *taxation*, and labours so hard to convince his brethren that the supreme power (the king) in England has a right to order his slaves (the people) to make bricks without straw, or to lay burdens upon them for *any ends* which the supreme wisdom of his parliament shall pronounce beneficial to the whole empire. This is comfortable doctrine for our men of property; and it will, without doubt, receive their implicit assent.

In the name of *commonsense* what is your meaning (page 6) when you say, 'As all men are *born* the *subjects* of some state or other, so they are *born passively* as it were consenting to the laws of that state?' Some would call this the bathos.² You have really dived here into the profound of politics. And I shall not wonder if, at your next plunge, you touch upon the *animalcula* so learnedly treated of by Lewenbeck; or tell us that 'the naked sons of nature' give their consent to laws, and are to be considered as subjects even when *embryos*.

A little farther you speak, it must be confessed, plain enough. And in your 7th page you have favoured us with a glimpse of the *cloven foot*. Far be it from me to misrepresent one opinion of so *honest* and *well meaning* a man as the Rev. Mr. Wesley, who addresses himself in simple language to the understanding, and not to the *passions* of his brethren. I shall therefore, with submission, premise that, *if I understand you*, your 7th page contains as rank a Tory's doctrine as is to be found in the *Leviathan*,³ the writings of a [Henry] Sacheverell, or those of any other flaming Jacobite. Having somewhat the air of a syllogism, I shall thus state it:

Subjects who acknowledge a king and parliament have a right to English privileges.
If they have a right to English *privileges*, they are *accountable to English laws*.
And if accountable to English laws, they *cede* to the king or a parliament the power of
disposing without their consent of both their *lives, liberties, and fortunes*.

Now according to this logic, if a king of England should give up his authority to a parliament—or which is *more likely to happen*, should a *pensioned* parliament, such a one as existed in the reign of Charles the Second, *surrender* their *power* to the king—I am bound to be governed by *laws* 'not only *without*, but even *against my consent*'. And why? Because truly I gave my consent, or became a liege subject, *before I was born*. I think your first chapter, from page 1st to the 12th, might justly have been entitled 'Passive Obedience'; in which Mr. Wesley, with the *canting lore* of an *old Jesuit*, pleads for obedience of subjects to *any authority*, exercised to *any ends*, no matter whether to enslave, destroy, or ruin. So much, sir, for your principles as a *learned civilian*. In my next letter I expect the honour of addressing the *Christian divine*, who will allow me, I hope, the liberty of 'telling *my opinion* freely'. And should by any *chance* my hand slide upon the *swelling hemispheres* of *non-resistance*, you will permit me to say to this comely dame, in your own words (used upon another subject) 'come dear Betsy, let us be up and doing'.

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (Oct. 19–21, 1775), p. 4.

²I.e., triviality.

³By Thomas Hobbes.

From Augustus Toplady

London
October 19, 1775¹

‘In Politics I dabble too,
Brave Jack of all Trades I!’
Caeciliane, FUR es.²

[p. 2]

Advertisement

The following sheet does not enter, seriously and argumentatively, into the merits of either side of the dispute now depending between England and America. This has already been done by others, and probably will be by more. The intention of these pages is: 1) to sheo Mr. Wesley's honesty, as a *plagiarist*; and 2) to raise a little skin, by giving the fox a gentle flogging as a *turn-coat*.

[p. 3]

An Old Fox, ...

Section I

‘Another face of things was seen,
And I became a Tory.’³

Whereunto shall I liken Mr. John Wesley? And with what shall I compare him?

I will liken him unto a low and puny *tadpole* in divinity, which proudly seeks to disembowel an high and mighty *whale* in politics.

For it came to pass, some months since, that Doctor Samuel Johnson set forth an *eighteen-penny* pamphlet entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*.

And, some days ago, a methodist weather-cock saluted the public with a *two-penny* paper (extracted by whole paragraphs together from the aforesaid Doctor) ycleped,⁴ *A Calm Address to our American Colonies*. The occasion whereof was this: [p. 4]

There dwelleth, about 99 miles, one furlong, and thirteen inches from a place called the Foundery, in Moorfields (next door to a noted mad-house), a priest named Vulposo. This priest is a *perfect* man, and an upright: hating forgery, adultery, and covetousness.

Now he happened to buy Dr. Johnson's pamphlet above-mentioned, and upon reading thereof he thus mused within himself. ‘This tract, called *Taxation no Tyranny*, cost me one shilling and six-pence. What a man *buys* and *pays for*, is certainly his *own*. Therefore, this tract is no longer it's *author's*, but *mine*. Consequently, I shall do no evil if I gut the substance of it, and republish it under my own name.’

¹While dated Oct. 19, Toplady's tract was first published on Nov. 6, 1775, as advertised that day in *Lloyd's Evening Post*.

²Caeciliane is a character in Martial's *Epigrammata*.

³Lines from the satirical poem ‘The Vicar of Bray’.

⁴I.e., ‘styled’.

‘There is an old Greek proverb which saith, γνωθι καιρον, *know thy opportunity*, and seize it. There is also a Latin poet who saith, *Malè dum recitas, incipit esse tuum*.⁵ No tense like the present. Doctor Johnson has been, for several weeks, absent from the kingdom, on a tour to Paris. Therefore, it is now or never. Like a mouse that has robbed a pantry, I’ll venture forth with my stolen morsel, while the cat’s out of the way.’

‘Now, it is not that I care for government, any more than Judas cared for the poor. But I have long wished to be taken notice of at Court, and this [p. 5] pilfering may procure me some preferment in the Church. I once begged and prayed a foreign vagrant (who stiled himself Erasmus, Bishop of Arcadia) to give *me* episcopal consecration, that I might be a bishop at large, and have it in my power to ordain my ragged regiment of lay preachers.⁶ Notwithstanding though I gave the man many fair speeches, he would not hearken to my voice. But who knows whether, in the borrowed plumes of Dr. Johnson,⁷ I may not, per chance, obtain a pension, if not slip into an English Ccthedral; or (at least) be appointed to the first American bishopric?’

‘Alas, Alas! A sudden thrill goes through me, and my cogitations are perplexed within me! For [p. 6] before I can be made a bishop,⁸ my infamous plagiarism may be found out. However, worst come to worst, what if it be? It is not the first time that my old foxship has been started, and my impositions have been detected. Many writers have lustily plundered the works of other men. But I am resolved to out-plunder, and to out-blunder, them all.’

[p. 7]

Section II

And it came to pass, while the priest thus communed with his own heart, that a very aged man in black clothing rendered himself visible, and said: ‘Fear not, my son, to do the thing which thy soul lusteth

⁵Martial, *Epigrammata*, i.38; ‘when you begin to read it, it becomes yours’.

⁶Toplady adds a note: ‘See some account of this curious transaction in Mr. Toplady’s *Letter to Mr. John Wesley*.’ [Letter of March 26, 1770]

⁷Toplady adds a note: ‘Aesop relates that a certain vain jack-daw picked up all the peacocks’ feathers he could meet with and stuck them among his own, in hope that the elegant spoils might pass for the native productions of his back. The cheat was soon discovered, and the enraged birds not only striped him of his artificial decoration, but made him feel the vengeance of their bills besides.

‘On this fable Dr. Croxall very properly remarks that, for a man ‘to be barely pleased with appearing above what he really is may justly render him *contemptible* in the eyes of his equals. But if, to enable him to do this with a better grace, he has feathered his nest with his neighbour’s goods, he has nothing to expect when found out but to be stripped of his plunder and used like a ____ into the bargain.’

⁸Toplady adds a note: ‘In the *Address to the Colonies* Mr. Wesley expresses himself thus, “I gain nothing, either by the government or by the Americans, and *probably* never shall” (p. 12). Is not this something like hanging out a signpost to invite custom? Or, *si mavis* [if you prefer], putting up a bill importing lodgings to let? Or, setting himself up to auction, saying “The party, whether *ministerial* or *American*, that bids *most* for me shall have me.” At least, is there not in the above declaration a loophole or reserve? A back door to creep out at? Not to notice that, in affirming he ‘*gains nothing* by the *government*’ his is very *ungrateful* and advances a known *untruth*. He *gains* protection, at least, and toleration from the *government*. And instead of calling this ‘much’, has he the face to call it ‘nothing’? I should be glad to know what his gratitude would term ‘something’! Moreover, time was when Mr. Wesley *gained* even from *American* bounty and civility. Has he forgot his residence in Savannah, and some certain incidents therewith connected?

after, for much riches, and renown, and comfort shall it add unto thee. Nothing venture, nothing have. Snatch the precious moment. Distill the Doctor's pamphlet. And when thou hast extracted the substance thereof, cork it up for sale, in two-penny phials. Yet a little while, and revolving winds will waft the doctor back to his native shore. Imitate, therefore, certain worthy sons of mine (vulgarly called housebreakers), who are never better pleased than with committing an unmolested burglary when a family is from home.'

And therewith the black veteran gave the priest a tweak by the elbow—who, shaking his locks, and taking his quill in hand, entered immediately on the business of distillation.

How faithfully, how dextrously, how judiciously, and how plentifully,⁹ he executed the task; will [p. 8] appear from the following synopsis: wherein the *very words* of Dr. Johnson are given, on one side; and the *very words* of the Foundery priest, on the other.

[pp. 8–18 are devoted to side by side comparison of pp. 25–45 of Johnson's text with Wesley's abridged version in §§1–7 of *Calm Address*.]

[p. 19]

Thus, gentle reader, it appears, that the Foundery wasp has made very free with the Johnsonian hive. No fewer than *thirty-one* borrowed paragraphs, in the course of only *ten pages*! In fact, there are *more* of these pilfered goods stowed in the narrow compass of those five leaves. But the adduced specimens may suffice to convince thee, with what an *unsparing* hand the Master of Arts has fleeced the Doctor of Laws.

But are Dr. Johnson's arguments and phraseology *therefore* the legitimate property of John Wesley, *because* the latter puffs them off as his own? By no means. We might as well affirm that Mr. Wesley's body natural is *therefore* the lawful property of a leech, *because* the latter may have thought fit to pay it's compliments to the veins of the former.

Section III

It is not the Intention of this tract to canvas the merits of Dr. Johnson's reasonings, but merely to show that the best part of what Mr. Wesley, *most impudently*, and *most untruly*, calls *his own* address to the Americans is, both as to matter and expression, a bundle of Lilliputian shafts picked and *stolen* out of Dr. Johnson's pin-cushion.

If Mr Wesley had the least spark of shame remaining, the simple detection of such enormous literary theft [p. 20] would be more terrible to his feelings than an English *pumping*, or an American *tarring and feathering*.

I can say, *in earnest*, what this unblushing priest lately declared concerning himself; viz., 'I am no politician. Politics lie quite out of my province.'¹⁰ It is not for *me* to enter deeply, much less with

⁹Toplady adds a note: 'It may be alleged that, in Mr. Wesley's *plentiful* cribbings and carvings from Dr. Johnson, he has rather *borrowed* than [p. 8] *stolen* from the Doctor's paragraphs. To which I answer that, if he has *borrowed* them, he is one of those concerning whom David observes "The *ungodly* borroweth and payeth not again" [Ps. 37:21]. For Mr. Wesley is so far from *acknowledging* himself a debtor to Dr. Johnson that he has never, so much as once, from the beginning of his two-penny tract to the end, mentioned the Doctor's name or made any reference to the Doctor's pamphlet, though the pamphlet is the very *hole of the pit* from which Mr. Wesley has dug and fetched up his own.'

¹⁰Toplady adds a note: 'Wesley's *Free Thoughts on the State of Public Affairs*, p. 3. Printed in 1770. This gentleman laments (*ibid.*, p. 4) that "every cobbler, tinker, porter, and hackney-coachman" can

acrimony, into those public contests which now carry so formidable an aspect on the best interests of the English empire. My department and inclination lead me ardently to pray, in humble and pacific obscurity, for the safety and prosperity of my nation, church, and king. But the *interested*, the *inconsistent*, the *shameless* conduct of Mr. Wesley compels me to put the two following queries to his conscience, if any thing like conscience has fallen to his share.

1. Did you not, within this twelvemonth, openly declare in the pulpit at Bristol that, in your opinion and to use your own canting words, 'America is the favourite land of the Lord?' Adding, 'Woe be to that man, either in England or out of it, that dares to lift up a finger against America!' I only ask, How does this (be it right or be it wrong) comport with the tenor of that sound which you now echo from Dr. Johnson's drum? [p. 21]

2. Did you not, in the year 1770, thus express yourself (whether justly, or improperly, I have no design to enquire): 'I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America. I doubt whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence.'¹¹ Probably the weathercock is not, even yet, completely *rusted*. It may still vary with the wind. To what point of the compass will it veer next? Certainly not a *new* one. For it has, again and again, turned to *all* the thirty two. Go on, sir, to 'prove all things'.¹² But be sure that you do not forfeit your charter, and sully the glory of your past eccentricities, by 'holding fast anything that is good'.¹³ Keep up to your old character:

Stiff in opinion, mostly in the wrong,
Be everything by starts, and nothing long.¹⁴

The fly is *now* perched, with much solemnity, on Dr. Johnson's wheel. But who can tell what a moment may bring forth? The quondam admirer of Junius¹⁵ may possibly, in the twinkling of an eye, commence the panegyrist of an English Cromwell, or of a Scotch Macbeth.

This is the Mr. Wesley who, not long ago, had the *modesty* to tell the world that his principles have been [p. 22] the *same* 'for *eight* and *twenty* years'.¹⁶ Instead of 'principles', in the plural, he should have said 'principle', in the singular. For I grant there is *a principle* by which he has uniformly abode: viz., to *change* and *shift about* like the minute hand of a clock. Nor does he bid fair, ever to stand at a point, till all the vital weights are quite run down and the pendulum ceases to play.

Little more than two centuries ago a famous temporising priest who had turned with every tide, who was an *half* Protestant in the close of Henry VIII's reign and *whole* Protestant in the reign of Edward VI, a good *Catholic* in the reign of Mary and *a Protestant again* in the Reign of Elizabeth, returned the following answer to a friend who charged him with religious and political unsteadiness, and with having either *no* conscience at all, or at least a very *convenient* conscience, made of stretching leather, equally capable of shrinking and dilating, as whim or interest might require.

dabble in *politics*. And yet the lamenter himself actually employs *cobblers*, etc. to *preach* what he calls the gospel!

¹¹Toplady adds a note: 'These are Mr. Wesley's very words, in his *Free Thoughts on the State*, p. 14.'

¹²1 Thess. 5:21.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Cf. John Dryden, 'Character of Zimri', ll. 5–6.

¹⁵Toplady adds a note: 'See Mr. Wesley's tract already referred to; viz., *Free Thoughts*, p. 4.'

¹⁶See Sermon 20, *The Lord Our Righteousness*, II.6, *Works*, 1:456.

‘You are much mistaken,’ said the pious divine: ‘I am by no means that *changeable* person you take me for. No man in the world was ever more *steady* to his principle, or acted a more *consistent* part. When I was first presented to the vicarage of Bray, I resolved to hold it as long as I breathed. And I have acted accordingly. Vicar of Bray I was. Vicar of Bray I am. And Vicar of Bray I will be, to the end of the chapter.’¹⁷

By way of winding up the whole matter, I’ll take my present leave of Mr. Wesley, with submitting to the [p. 23] reader a very notable specimen of Father John’s wretched, but (in him) not astonishing, *inconsistency*.

‘Your ancestors ... had *ceded*, to the king and parliament, the power of disposing, without their consent, of *both their lives, liberties, and properties*.’ Wesley’s *Calm Address to the Americans*, p. 7.

‘No man can dispose of another’s life, but by his own consent. I add, *No, nor with his Consent*. For no Man has a *right* to dispose of his own life. Now, it is an *indisputable* truth, *Nihil dat quod non habet*: none gives what he has not. It plainly follows that no man can *give* to another a right which he *never had* himself, ... [viz.] the power of the sword, any such power as implies a right to take away life.’ Wesley’s *Thoughts on the Origin of Power*, p. 11. Printed A.D. 1772.

How delightfully do those two opposite paragraphs coalesce and hang together! But what are Contradictions, to John Wesley? I congratulate administration on their acquisition of so *wise*, so *knowing*, so *honest*, so *uniform*, so *disinterested*, so *steady* and so [p. 24] *respectable* a politician. A politician who in some companies affirms that his sudden approbation of government-measures was occasioned by his perusal of Dr Johnson’s *Taxation no Tyranny*; and, without a Blush, avers in other companies that his said political conversion was brought about by virtue of a long conversation with two Members of Parliament. Pity it is that great truth-tellers, like great wits, should be so famous for short memories!

Postscript

Should Dr. Johnson’s echo be asked to preach a charity sermon, larded with Tory politics, in Bethnal Green church,¹⁸ we shall have the title of a good old song realized afresh, and the charity girls may squeak a stanza, to the tune of ‘The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green’.

Source: published transcription; A Hanoverian [i.e., Augustus Toplady]. *An Old Fox Tarr’d and Feather’d, occasioned by what is called Mr. John Wesley’s ‘Calm Address to Our American Colonies’*. London: John French, et al., 1775.

¹⁷Distilling the satirical poem ‘Vicar of Bray’.

¹⁸See JW, Sermon 111, ‘National Sins and Miseries’ (*Works*, 3:564–76), preached at Bethnal Green church on Nov. 12, 1775.

'A Briton' to the Printer of the *London Evening Post*

October 20, 1775

Sir,

Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address* to the Americans having engaged the attention and conversation of the public, permit me through the channel of your paper to make a few observations on that ingenious performance.

I shall not undertake to follow the author of that celebrated work in every argument he has used, but endeavour to answer some of the most material, which are in effect as follows: 1) that the Americans gained no superior privileges by emigrating from this country; 2) that the idea of a people's governing themselves is in fact chimerical; 3) That the colonists are to be governed by the same laws as their ancestors were; and 4) that success on the part of the Americans would be more detrimental to their liberties than a defeat.

In answer to the first of these arguments it may with propriety be urged that if the Americans gained no advantages with respect to their freedom by a removal from this country, the changing their situation would have been useless, since they must have submitted to the same oppressive laws in America as were then exercised over the inhabitants of England. The very nature of this circumstance proves the argument to be fallacious, and also serves to evince that the laws which were binding in this country were not so in America.

The second argument produces some benefit, as it serves to discover the servility of the author's principles. I admit that every individual has not a share in the government, nor in electing his governors, yet when he is master of sufficient property to entitle him to the latter he may by means thereof obtain the right of electing his representative in parliament, provided he fixes upon one who is esteemed by the majority of his fellow voters. Any other advantage than this would be repugnant to the general welfare, and consequently inadmissible. With respect to the inequality of the representation in England, it has long been justly complained of. To give to such an inadequate body as the British parliament is esteemed the power of taxing America would be increasing the evil. It is also to be observed that the effects of the inequality of the representation here are very different from those produced by the want of it in America, since in England the represented and unrepresented pay an equal share of all taxes. Not so the colonists; they are taxed by those who pay no share of the imposition, but on the contrary are relieved by the increase of it. That taxation follows the admission of laws is a point that may be contended against with authority, since the people of Ireland have received laws from our legislature and yet do not admit of taxation by that body.

To the third argument I shall answer that those laws which are applicable to colonies in their infant state are not so when their numbers, trade, and riches are increased. When the Americans first left this kingdom, they were small in number and of too little consequence to require a legislature of their own. The case is now widely different. They are become a wealthy and powerful people, and as such have a right to claim those privileges in America which are enjoyed by the inhabitants of England. If by a removal they have rendered their immunities as Englishmen useless, that removal being justifiable according to the law of nations, and they submitting themselves to the external laws of this country, have an undoubted right to those internal advantages they would have possessed provided they had remained in England.

I now come to the fourth and last argument which I proposed to examine. Mr. Wesley has given the Americans this security for the limitation of taxation that perhaps they may, and perhaps they may not, be taxed equal with Scotland or Ireland. But shall a free people give up their rights because forsooth government *may not* exert their authority? No! Since all power originates in themselves, let them never give up the privilege of granting their own money, when and how they please.

With respect to the convulsions which poor America must feel before any other government is settled, and which give Mr. Wesley, the pious advocate of administration, such exquisite pain; I would wish the Americans to consider that many of those convulsions are already over. But should they now submit, tyranny and oppression will shortly make their appearance again to disturb their peace. Whereas they may render their felicity (by persevering in the present glorious struggle) permanent and unfading. Better therefore I conclude it is to bear the evil attendant on the formation of a good constitution at first, than endure the lasting mischief of a bad government.

What the author has asserted relative to the British patriots is known here to be false, and the Americans possess too much good sense and discernment to be led away by such artful insinuations. I shall therefore, without troubling you farther, subscribe myself,

A Briton

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (Oct. 24–26, 1775), p. 1.

'A Consistent Methodist' to *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*

October 21, 1775

Pray print the following extract of a letter from a gentleman in London¹ to his friend in this city, and you'll oblige

A Consistent Methodist

Sir,

I cannot help wondering at Mr. John Wesley's confidence, in giving an address to the world on American affairs, when two-thirds of it are evidently a transcript from the *pensioner* Johnson's *Taxation no Tyranny*.² I should have thought, self-denying as that priest affects to be, that he had too much pride to become a notorious *plagiary*. But when once a man contents to make himself a tool to others, and in a cause which is indefensible, what can he do but steal from the little which tools like himself have advanced before him?

Source: published transcription; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Oct. 21, 1775), p. 2.

¹This letter may well have been from Josiah Dornford; see his letter to JW dated Oct. 21.

²This may be the first published recognition (or accusation) that the opening sections of JW's *Calm Address* are an (unacknowledged) abridgement of Samuel Johnson's *Taxation no Tyranny*. While Toplady's tract is dated two days earlier, it was not yet in print.

From Josiah Dornford¹

Philpot Lane [Fenchurch Street, London]
October 21, 1775

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Because I love you I write to you. Next to my own, the reputation of the man I love is of the utmost consequence to me. I fear you, like other great men, are surrounded with flatterers. Let not the transitory glory of the sale of your last little tract deceive you. There is likely to be as great a demand for that against it. And I have sent you one to peruse,² hoping your generous heart will emerge from the mist that has blinded your eyes, and made you join in supporting those men who are shedding the blood of multitudes of our brethren because they will not give up the only distinction between freemen and slaves, the right of giving and granting their own property. Did you not tell me and many others that their case was like that of Philip of the Netherlands? And did you not fast and pray that God would disappoint and defeat the counsels of those Ahitophels whose cause now you seem to espouse? O sir, how is this consistent? Should you not, before you suffered yourself to be led away with Johnson's book, have read the answer, and have weighed them well before you became an advocate for an unrighteous cause? Which it seems to me as if the main supporters of were ashamed to look up to God for his blessing upon, by prayer and fasting as the others do. O that you would suffer yourself to weigh these things. Why have you so often warned us against becoming³ a politician? What has a minister of Christ to do with these things? Might not you and your preachers have been the means of converting thousands in America, if you and they had determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified? Sure you cannot delight in the thought of so much bloodshed. Then you should have said at least in your *Address*, though you could not prove it lawful, it was not expedient to tax them—since the remedy does prove ten thousand times worse than the disease. Believe me dear sir, I am grieved to the heart. I cannot vindicate your conduct. And though such men as time-serving Middlesex justices applaud your performance, and drink your health in their Bacchanalian feasts, yet sober thinking men must rather weep over such a book as tends to widen the breach already I fear too wide to be made up against.

I am not without hope that you will see the error you have been drawn into in publishing at all, and suffering yourself to be made the fool of adding weight to so bad a cause. I am, dear sir,

Yours most affectionately,

J. D.

Source: manuscript insert at end of a copy of JW, *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies*, new corrected and enlarged edition (London: Hawes, 1775).⁴

¹Although the insert is signed only 'J. D.', Josiah Dornford lived at 14 Philpot Lane in 1775.

²While others are possible, Dornford may well have enclosed *Tyranny Unmasked; being an Answer to a Pamphlet lately published entitled 'Taxation no Tyranny'* (London: Flexney, 1775). This reply to Johnson was published in early April (see *Daily Advertiser*, Apr. 6, 1775, p. 4). A reprint was advertised in *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Oct. 25, 1775), p. 1, that touted it as answering 'the whole matter contained in the Rev. Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address on American Affairs*, which is a transcript of the other'.

³Orig., 'become'.

⁴The copy is held in The John Rylands Library: MARC, MAW G305 .B1.

From T. S.

ca. October 22, 1775¹

‘Open thy mouth in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction’ Prov. 31:8.

[p. 3]

Sir,

It is rather surprising that a man of your profession, at the age of three score and ten, should enter the list of political controversy. To be sure, you must think that you was the man, and wisdom would die with you. And that you could not leave the world with a good conscience without communicating to [p. 4] the public, by way of *Address*, your political sentiments respecting the present contest between Great Britain and her colonies. Hoping no doubt, by your extensive knowledge and piety, you might be happily instrumental in bringing the colonists to a sense of their duty, and by this means forward a much wished-for reconciliation between them.

If this, sir, was not the motive which induced you to publish a late *Address*, it seems natural to conclude, though you have denied it in your 22nd page, that you have something to hope for from those whose cause you espouse. For can anyone in his senses suppose that a man of your influence, taking part with administration, shall lose his reward?² It is well [p. 5] known that the ministry patronize men of corrupt principles and evil practices, to scribble in support of their destructive measures, because better men refuse such dirty work. Can it be thought then that they will not take especial notice of Mr. John Wesley, who boldly stands forth in the defence of their cause, with the specious epithets of learned, good, pious, etc.? Especially sir as your religious principles, which are a species of popery, do exactly fall in with a late act of parliament which establishes the destructive doctrines of papalism in so vast a country as Canada. I therefore think, sir, you have something to hope for. Nor should I wonder if thy venerable hoary head should be adorned with a mitre. Though for my part, I must confess that I really believe it would much better become thee to sit in sackcloth and pour dust upon thy head, and [p. 6] earnestly cry for mercy; seeing thou hast added to all thine iniquities that of publishing an *Address* to thy brethren in America in which thou consentest unto, and dost thereby become a partaker of, the sins of wicked and ungodly men who are seeking to dissolve our once happy constitution by inculcating and enforcing the detestable doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance—which, if men submit to, their lives, liberties, and properties are no longer their own. And this, it is to be feared, thou has not done in the integrity of thine heart, but with a view to ecclesiastical promotion. By which I perceive thou art still in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. And I think you would do well to pray to God that the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee, lest thy grey hairs come down with sorrow to the grave. [p. 7]

I am a stranger to you sir. But you are not so to me, and from what little I know of you I have hitherto found you a very erroneous inconsistent man, both in preaching and writing, of which I could produce many instances. But as I do not mean to wander from my present subject, I shall only refer to that *Address* to which this is designed as a reply, in which the matter is so partially stated, many things so

¹The pamphlet was first advertised as published on Oct. 25, 1775 in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*.

²Note in original: ‘I am informed that when Mr. John Wesley came to town, previous to the publishing his *Address*, he told the society that he had had the honour of a visit from two of his Majesty’s ministers of state.’

inconsistent, and *ipse-dixits*³ put in the room of argument, that—instead of its being received with applause, as I hear it is by many—it is, in my humble opinion, deserving of the highest censure. In this reply I shall be as short as the nature of the subject will admit. And that I may not be charged with partiality, I shall not leave any part of your *Address* unnoticed. [p. 8]

You begin with telling your brethren and countrymen that the grand question—viz., Whether the English Parliament has power to tax the American colonies, is now debated with warmth enough on both sides. Surely sir, if you thought the question worthy of debate, you would not censure men for zealously maintaining that which in their consciences they think right. If you think it is not worthy of debate, or will not admit of it, I presume you would have acted wisely, and far more consistently, had you saved yourself the trouble of given us your sentiments upon it. But it seems you have thought proper so to do. And in answer to the question you say, ‘In order to determine this, let us consider the nature of our colonies’. And then you give us the description of an English colony, with this inference, ‘Nothing can be more plain than that the [p. 9] supreme power in England has a legal right of laying any tax upon them for any end beneficial to the whole empire.’ Now sir, admitting this description and inference to be just, as at first sight it appears, I would ask you, as you are doubtless well acquainted with our excellent constitution, whether or not there is provision made against any wanton exercise of that power which you call supreme? If so, it supposes that such power may exercise such right illegally and unconstitutionally, and therefore not to be submitted to by Englishmen, who enjoy their liberty upon the same footing that a king of England does his crown. And a man may as well say that our king has a legal right to be as arbitrary as the kings of France and Spain, as to say that the legislative power of this realm has a legal right to bind the Americans in all cases whatsoever. Could it indeed be proved [p. 10] that the end of laying on of taxes of any kind was for the benefit of the whole empire, as you very plausibly suggest, then it would appear feasible. But is not America a part of the empire? How then can laying an additional burden upon them who have been, ever since they first settled as a colony, under such restrictions as have been very prejudicial to their interests, be for the good of the whole empire? But you will perhaps say it will be for the good of the whole, because it would be a means of removing some of the burdens we labour under, and the support of government would be more equally maintained. I wish that could be proved. It might be productive of very happy effects. But it is notorious that the laying on of taxes on the Americans is not designed for the benefit but for the destruction of the whole empire, as the money raised by taxes [p. 11] is shamefully lavished upon placemen and pensioners, bribery and corruption, to the obtaining a venial House of Commons. And I am sorry to say the infection is too visible in the House of Lords, bishops not excepted. By which means the ministry, being sure of a majority, frame and bring into the House what bills they please, though ever so contrary to the constitution, have them passed into a law, and resist who dare. By these things it is that our constitution is not what it was sixteen years ago, but altered by men who, upon its original plan, in pursuance of their present measures could not exist as ministers of state.

I am fully persuaded that if the monies arising from the multiplicity of taxes charged upon the inhabitants of Great-Britain were properly applied, and justly accounted for, there would be [p. 12] more than sufficient for the support of government and the exigencies of state; especially in a time of fifteen years profound peace. But if unnecessary pensioners and placemen are to be kept, and the number of them daily to increase; if a public paymaster is allowed to squander away millions of the public money, without accounting for it; then no wonder that fresh taxes are levied. And because England cannot well sustain the weight of more than it at present bears, they should have recourse to America. Can it be possible, sir, that you can conceive that such proceedings are of benefit to the whole empire? Surely not! And therefore, though it may be legal to levy taxes for the benefiting of the whole empire, it is not legal to do anything that shall be destructive in the present time to a part, and eventually to the whole of that empire. [p. 13]

³‘mere assertions’.

But you go on, in answer to what the Americans plead as freemen and Englishmen having a right to be taxed by their own consent, which they cannot be because they are not represented, and say, 'This argument proves too much. For if the parliament cannot tax you because you are not represented, neither can it for the same reason make laws to bind you', etc. But however, the whole scope of your argument here does not prove what you assert, no more than if you had said because men willingly and cheerfully submit to laws absolutely necessary for the preservation of civil society, that they thereby must subject themselves to whatever depredations on their property the legislative authority may think proper to make.

But you say, 'You object to the very foundation of their plea. Because it is [p. 14] absolutely false that every freeman is governed by laws to which he has consented.' Your reason for this assertion is, 'That all public business is done by delegation, and the delegates are chosen by a select number, and the far greater part stand by idle and helpless spectators.' And you farther say that such must be governed not only without but even against their consent. Need I remind you, sir, that originally delegates were not chosen by a few of the people, as they are now, but all had a liberty of choice and a right to vote? But not to mention that some unjust means have been used to deprive men of their natural right in this respect, it became necessary, in a great measure, as the number of the inhabitants increased, to circumscribe the number of electors, to prevent unnecessary trouble and endless confusion, which it would inevitably [p. 15] create, were our delegates chosen in that manner at this day. And if you consider that the delegates, taxing their electors, do by the same act tax themselves, it will in a great measure set aside that absurd notion of men being taxed without, much less against their consent. For if these delegates make laws which are as binding upon themselves as they are upon their electors, what ground is there for complaint? It lies not in unequal representation, but in having so many court-dependents in the House, who care not how many taxes are laid upon them while they are supplied with a salary more than equivalent to answer such demands, which they would not have were they not the servants of a corrupt ministry. And thus the burden lies heavy upon the people. But the case is very different respecting America. For as they have no representatives [p. 16] belonging to themselves in the British parliament, if the British parliament, who are not Americans, are invested with a power of disposing other peoples property, without in the least affecting their own, what must be the consequence? It is fairly this, that for want of affection to, being ignorant of their state, by reason of their distance, or seeing things through false mediums, as well as looking to the advantages that may arise to themselves as expectants of court favour, they will be disposed to deal with them more like slaves than fellow subjects.

And what you suggest respecting men's consenting to laws made before they were born is equally as futile, unless you can prove that their predecessors were slaves, and under the iron hand of arbitrary power. But as those [p. 17] who made these laws were freemen, the laws made by them were such as all freemen may consent to. And therefore why should you call this a passive consent? Unless you mean to cast an odium upon our once happy constitution, or to prove if men are passively subject in one case they must in another.

You say also, 'That any other than this kind of consent, the condition of civil life does not allow.' You seem very fond, sir, of the idea of slavery. I consent to the laws of England because they are good. I approve of them, and prefer them above any human laws. And will you call this a passive consent? Or will you say that the conditions of civil life does not allow of such a consent as this? Perhaps you will tell me such a consent as this includes the passive. I grant it, but I think it is very necessary [p. 18] to make a distinction between freemen and slaves.

You next proceed to make some remarks on an assertion of the Americans—viz., 'That they are entitled to life, liberty, and property by nature, and have never ceded to any sovereign power the right of disposing of these without their consent'; which you say, 'While they speak as the naked sons of nature is true.' But they presently declare, our ancestors, at the time they settled these colonies, were entitled to all the privileges of natural-born subjects. 'This likewise', you say, 'is true. But when this is granted, the boast of original right is at an end, you are no longer in a state of nature, but sink down into colonists.' I

am sure, sir, if you had any modesty, you must sink down with shame for making such an assertion. You know [p. 19] better, sir, than to suppose that the Americans are contending for the right of civil laws, whereby every man has by nature a right to an equal share of what we call property. But they are contending for the rights of Englishmen, and for those liberties, many of which were purchased with the blood of their forefathers, and are therefore now become their natural right, that which they are born to, and that which the legislative power cannot deprive them of without striking at the very existence of a free state. And though you tell them, with a sneer, 'They sink down into colonists, governed by charter', let me tell you, sir, that the charter granted to such not only maintains that which is their natural right, but contains a grant of some special advantages and privileges, as a kind of stimulation (instead of permission as you call it in your first out-set) to those who [p. 20] are willing thus to settle. For there is no law in being that could force them to leave their native land, and retire to a desert place, unless you can prove they were originally transported as felons. And therefore 'shame burn thy cheek to cinder'.⁴ Now then, their ancestors were subjects not slaves. They acknowledged a sovereign, not absolute. They were entitled to English liberties equally, and on some account more than their fellow subjects. They were accountable to the English laws, if found guilty of the breach of them. But it does not follow from hence that they have ceded to the king and parliament the power of disposing, without their consent, of both their lives, liberties, and properties. I should rather think, as it seems most consistent with commonsense, that the king and parliament did cede to them (not a dispensation from obedience, nor any degree [p. 21] of independence not enjoyed by other Englishmen but) certain privileges and immunities by charter, upon condition of colonization.

I find in the next place, you are obliged to make some concession respecting their not having forfeited any of their privileges by emigration, though it seems to go against the grain. For you say, 'What they do not forfeit by a judicial sentence, they may lose by natural effects.' And this you attempt to prove by a method of reasoning entirely new; that because a man, by removing to a certain distance from his native land, where he cannot exercise his right, does therefore necessarily lose it. But what has this to do with the present question? Does a man, who is legally qualified to vote, but by reason of distance cannot exercise his right, lose his privileges as an [p. 22] Englishman, or even his vote? This argument therefore is too far fetched to be of any use to you. Besides, sir, Ireland might be said to come under much the same predicament, had it not a parliament of its own. And pray, have not the Americans as much right to a parliament as Ireland? I think equally, if not more so, because the people of Ireland might be represented in the British parliament with far greater ease than the Americans possible can, by reason of their distance.

You go on seemingly to make another concession, and say, 'They do inherit all the privileges their ancestors had.' This, sir, is false. For they do not inherit all their ancestors had, nor so much, by a great deal. Their privileges have been sadly abridged within these ten years. Will any man who has heard of the [p. 23] many oppressive acts of parliament which have passed, in order to reduce them to slavery and bondage, say they inherit all their ancestors did? They indeed inherit the same noble spirit. And though you say 'they can inherit no more', yet it is more than possible that they will, to the mortification of their enemies, enjoy greater privileges than their ancestors, if ever they should be independent of the crown of England and, by a more equal representation, make laws for themselves.

In the next place, as you cannot disprove that the colonists have no right to all the privileges granted by the crown, yet you say there is a doubt whether any can be secured by provincial laws. I am very glad it is a matter of doubt, and that you seem to admit it. But by your reasons against it I should suppose [p. 24] it was a matter which you firmly believed. But I humbly apprehend it may with propriety be said that the provincial laws secure the privileges of the colonies in the same manner as an act of

⁴Young, *The Complaint*, Night IV, ll. 548–49.

common council in the city of London is a law which secures the privileges of citizens from the invasion of foreigners; and is of as much force in the city as an act of parliament is in the realm, provided such act of common council is not contrary to the charters granted by the crown.

But I proceed now to consider what you say concerning the charter of Pennsylvania, as containing a clause admitting in express terms taxation by parliament. And if not inserted in the other charters, you say, 'it is admitted as not necessary'. This proves too much, because upon your own hypothesis there [p. 25] was no occasion to insert it in any one of the charters. You very sophistically tell them, 'It is true the first settlers in Massachusetts Bay were promised an exemption from taxation for seven years; but does not this very exemption imply that they were to pay them afterwards?' Admitting it does, what is that to the present purpose? They do not contend that they have no right to pay taxes, but not to be taxed by the British Parliament in what way and manner they shall think proper, but let them tax themselves.

Again you say, 'If there is in the charter of any colony a clause exempting them from taxes for ever, then undoubtedly they have a right to be so exempted. But if there is no such clause, then the [p. 26] parliament has the same right to tax them as any other English subjects.' But why this conclusion, sir? If you could prove that there is a charter in which there is a clause which subjects them to taxation by the British parliament without representation, then your inference would have been just, though the thing itself might be unjust. And indeed the thing itself would not be unjust, had the colonists accepted such charter, on such conditions. But they have not, and therefore the English parliament have not that authority over them which you would have them believe.

After this comes a very bold stroke of yours, wherein you say, 'All that impartially consider what has been observed [p. 27] must readily allow that the English parliament has an undoubted right to tax all English colonies.' Sir, I deny it. And perhaps I have been as impartial in considering what you have observed as you have in your observations, if not more so. As I have proved you have something to hope for, as a reward for your labour, therefore think you may be biassed. But I cannot, in the very nature of things, be supposed to be under any such baneful influence. I may rather expect loss than gain by it. Nevertheless, sir, I say the English parliament has not a legal right to tax the colonists, it being contrary to the English constitution for English subjects to be taxed but by themselves, or men delegated for that purpose. [p. 28]

Having gone on thus far, you begin to upbraid them with that for which you ought rather to pity them. You ask, 'Whence is all this hurry? Why is America all in an uproar? If they would give themselves time to think, they would see the plain case is this', which you go on to relate. Does Mr. Wesley need to be informed that this is a very unfair, uncandid representation of the case? It is well known that the motive that induced us to assist our brethren was no so much out of affection for them as to prevent the common enemy from gaining ground, lest they should have the balance of power in America, which would have been very detrimental to England. It is also well known that most of the conquests gained in America were owing to the valour of the provincials. And do not everybody know, [p. 29] except Mr. Wesley, that with respect to raising money to carry on the war, they did more than could be expected from them—in consideration of which the then English parliament voted several times, by request of the king, two hundred thousands pounds to be repaid them, as an acknowledgment of their services. And will you be so ridiculous as to talk of the mother country 'laying on a tax, to be reimbursed for part of the large expense she had been at'? And will you call this legal, or reasonable? Fie, Mr. Wesley, fie. Throw away your pen, unless you can employ it in a better cause. No wonder then that such a proceeding should set all American in a flame.

But you think you have a reason far more cogent, no doubt, than any that [p. 30] has yet been offered, 'which you tell us freely'. And after asserting a falsehood which I have noted before, you say, 'We have a few men in England,' Indeed sir, in this I am of your mind. There [are] a few men in

England, Tories and Jacobites, friends to the pope and Pretender,⁵ who hate his Majesty and are, by a variety of means, endeavouring and seem determined to overturn the constitution, and lay the crown and dignity of England level with the earth, by opposing, under various pretences, all measures of accommodation with America. From a conviction, I presume, that while there is a good understanding between America and Britain, she is not likely to be ruined. But as you have not pointed particularly to these men, I will. They are his Majesty's ministers and a corrupt parliament—who, we see as a farther [p. 31] proof of the end they have in view, give countenance to flattering fulsome *Addresses* that are calculated to deceive the king, and suppress all that is in their power, every request of his Majesty's most faithful subjects, who wish for conciliating measures and represent things as they really are.

You say, 'These good men' (by which, as I would hope the best, I suppose you intend an irony) 'hope it will end in the total defection of America from England.' Whatever these good men may hope I know not. But I am sure they are going the direct way to accomplish such an end.

As you go on, you put many queries respecting their civil and religious liberties. 'That they have no cause to [p. 32] complain, and that should it be as these good men hope, what advantage will it be to them? ...' To all which, sir, I would reply there is great cause of complaint, inasmuch as their civil liberties are struck at. And when once their civil liberties are gone, farewell to their religious ones. But they do not want to be independent of England. Though perhaps these good men, by these good measures, may make them so; and then you may thank the ministry for it.

You conclude all with a word of exhortation, and that in your usual manner: 'Brethren open your eyes!' Alas, sir, they see too plainly already! 'Come to yourselves.' No. You cannot mean so. You mean come into the measures of parliament. Submit to the yoke of taxation. 'Be not the dupes of designing men.' This [p. 33] they are not willing to be, and that is the reason of their present conduct. Your exhortation therefore, in every part of it, is incompatible with the state and conduct of the persons to whom it is given. But by these designing men, you say, 'You do not mean any of their country. You doubt whether any of them are in the secret.' If sir you had excepted a few, such as the H---s, the G---s, the D---s, etc. I should really agree with you. For I believe the principal men who are enemies to America are on this side the water, and rather too near his Majesty's person.

Now sir, to conclude, I shall only say that the remainder of your harangue, which you conclude thus, 'Fear God, and honour the king', favours more of religious cant than any sincere wish for the welfare of America.

Source: published transcription; T. S., *A Cool Reply to 'A Calm Address' lately published by Mr. John Wesley* (London: J. Plummer, 1775).

⁵I.e., the house of Stuart.

From William Denham¹

c. October 23, 1775²

*'Justa piaeque sunt arma, quibus necessaria; et necessaria,
quibus NULLA nisi in armis SPES est salutis.'* T. Liv. lib. viii.³

Sir,

[p. 5]

You have in most respects been so completely answered by Americanus [i.e. Caleb Evans] that little more need be said to convince any candid enquirer that you are unacquainted with the subject you have undertaken. Nor can I think a gentleman of your confessed abilities would have betrayed such inconsistent reasoning, had not interest blinded the clearness of your judgment. Do not be angry, good sir, at this opinion. [p. 6] You would have the same in such a case of any other, if he was a man that could take an *oath* with *mental reservation*. And you know how often you have done this, when you subscribed articles you totally disbelieved. It is very natural therefore to think you will not be over scrupulous in receiving a handsome reward for your labours. For though you say it is *probable* you may gain nothing from government, by a *mental reservation* it may easily be allowed that you have *hopes* you shall, and your very expression does not deny but that you have such hopes.

But whatever may have been your motives, you have certainly the merit of conciseness. Which you must not expect will be followed by your opponents, for your grand positions are mere assertions. You have so long been used to govern the consciences of your people that you think an opinion is enough to silence the complaints of all America. But sir, to answer you will require proofs. And had you paid a little attention to this necessary ingredient in argument, your pamphlet would have been somewhat longer.

The *end* of all your arguments is to *prove the unlimited right of parliament to tax America*, which grand principle your own arguments effectually [p. 7] destroy. You confess, in page 11, 'The Americans have a right to all the privileges granted them by royal charters. And that if any charter granted by the king should expressly exempt them from taxes *forever*, then they would have an undoubted right to be *so exempted*.' Now what does this prove less than a power in the king superior to the whole legislature? For if he can exempt a part of his subjects from their authority, he may exempt the whole, since there is no law of limitation. And thus not only the *unlimited power*, but even the *existence* of parliament, would become useless and ineffectual.

'It is true' (you say) page 11, 'The first settlers in Massachusetts Bay were promised an *exemption from taxes for seven years*.' But you omitted to tell us this promise was made *by the king, not the parliament*. Americanus has supposed that quit-rents were meant by this taxation. However, if we admit it in its most extensive sense, it only proves an arbitrary exertion of power by the tyrant Charles the First, who not only thus subjected the Americans to the British parliament, contrary to the rights of Englishmen, [p. 8] but he excused them from *all* customs or subsidies in England on goods exported for their use, thereby *dispensing* with the supreme power of the British legislature. This has been justly alleged by historians against Charles as a proof of his despotic principles. And it was equally an infringement on the rights of the English and American powers of legislation.

As to the charter of Pennsylvania which, page 10, you say expressly allows the right of taxation to the British parliament, it should be considered it was granted by the Second Charles, no less an enemy

¹William Denham (1732–1809) a Bristol Quaker whose parents had been awakened by the preaching of CW.

²First advertised on Oct. 26, 1775 in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*.

³Cf., Livy, *Historiarum*, Bk. IX, ch. 1., 'Because a necessary war is a just war, and where there is no hope but in arms, those arms are holy.'

to liberty than his predecessor. And, excepting the dispensing power, was, doubtless copied from the former. It was the aim of both these kings to abridge the power of the people as much as possible, for which the first lost his head, and the other will be remembered with honest indignation. But how comes this to be the *last* charter of America, as you call it, page 22, when that of Georgia was granted by George the Second? Liberty was then safe under the protection of the house of Hanover, and this is the true reason why no [p. 9] mention was made of subjecting the colonies to British taxation.

It is plain then no argument can be well-founded on the acts of two such kings, especially as even their charters expressly declare every condition and circumstance contained in them shall *always* be construed *in favour* of the colonies; and no instance can be found in any other charter acknowledging the right of the British parliament to tax America.

Let us then proceed to your ideas *of the supreme power*, which are indeed very confused and contradictory. For it is doubtful sometimes whether you ascribe it to the three branches of legislation, or to the king alone. Thus, page 4, you say, '*A king grants* charters to certain persons, permitting them to settle as a corporation in some far country, which being a corporation *subsisting by a grant from higher authority* to the control of that authority they still continue subject. Therefore, *the supreme power in England* has a right to tax them.' Now the grant is made by the king, not by a commission from the authority of parliament, but from the exercise of his undoubted prerogative. If therefore the [p. 10] *power of granting* a charter constitutes the *right* of obedience from those to whom the charter is granted, which you affirm it does, the *king* is that supreme power which may tax them. But if you should answer you *mean* the whole legislature to have that power, there must be some other reason for it than that you have laid down, because *the whole legislature were not the granters* of the charters to America. Thus, either your conclusion or premises are absolutely false, and yet this clause is said to cut the most respectable figure of any in your performance.

The fact is, charter are not grants or gifts of the mere will of the king. But they are properly, and in the most simple sense, written confirmations of the ancient and constitutional rights of the people.⁴ such as was *the great charter* granted by King John; and in a lesser sense the king may grant them to certain parts of the community, so as not to be inconsistent with the former. Thus, in the first view, a charter may be considered as an *argument or compact* between the king and his people, to govern them by their own consent. And in the second, it is a partial agreement with *a part* of his people, which can be no longer binding than it is [p. 11] for the benefit of the whole. Of this the whole community, of which they are a part, as being represented in the same body of legislation, are the only judges.

A charter then, whatever privileges it may contain, cannot be binding without it is permitted or consented to by the *supreme power*; which as it has been confusedly spoken of in your pamphlet, I shall next consider.

In England that power is lodged in the king, lords and commons. And the king has no right to grant a charter in England, but what is subject to this supreme authority. The reason is this, because an absolute grant or charter from the king would operate to destroy the connection between such a part of the people, and their representatives in parliament. And having destroyed that, it would go so far to destroy the principles of representation, and thus the king might at length become absolute.

In like manner the king, council, and assembly are the supreme power *in America*. [p. 12] Because when the first settlers departed from this country to form a colony they ceased to be represented here, and therefore ought to have *a new* constitution, similar to and independent of that at home, which I shall prove as follows:

1. If the king had not a power to enter into *a new compact* with the settlers of a *new territory*, there ought to be no power of extending dominion. For if the king might extend his government to remote

⁴Denham cites 'Rapin and Sydney'.

regions, and yet had no power to extend *the actual* exercise of the liberties and rights which the condition of civil life does allow, he might by removing the seat of empire soon annihilate the power of the mother country, and raise himself into the seat of despotism.

2. As our free government is founded on a *compact* between the king and people;⁵ and as by leaving this country the colonists remove from the *possible* enjoyments of their old privileges; therefore the king ought to grant them a new charter, which is the same as renewing the compact that no longer subsisted by their removal. [p. 13]

3. The king, and not the whole legislature of Great Britain, ought to have this power of granting a new charter. For as they have no right founded on justice to tax a people they do not represent either actually or virtually, so they can have no right to *grant* privileges to a people who *have* as much as themselves an inherent *indefeasible right* to those privileges.

4. Though it might be a matter of dispute between the British parliament and the king (was he to establish arbitrary power in the colonies) whether the sovereign of a free people ought to favour arbitrary power, even though he had the voluntary consent of those who submitted to it; and though perhaps the parliament would be justified in exterminating such a king; yet, when he grants charters that *establish liberty*, and *new constitutions* like our own, and united to it by the king, the bond of union between the whole, we as a free people must agree to this prerogative, or else it will follow that *as the privileges of Englishmen cannot be extended beyond their present limits of local situation*, therefore for the *security* of those privileges the *further extent of empire* should be *totally prohibited*.

Nothing, as I conceive, can be a solid objection to this mode of reasoning but a proof the [p. 14] supreme power must of absolute necessity be in one compact and undivided body, and that it cannot possibly be exercised in parts, so as to have one common center of union in the person of the king. And this I am persuaded cannot be proved.

That it may be exercised in parts need not be insisted on from the opinion of learned writers, for we may recur to facts in the history of our own country. Thus Scotland had its parliament. Ireland still has a parliament. And till now, for near two centuries, the Americans have had their assemblies. Each of these exercised an independent power of legislation. And as the king is always a third part of the legislative authority, as well as possessor of the executive power; and as these independent branches of government extend their jurisdiction no farther than the country they represent; no detriment can arise from their different views and maxims. Because the king has a power which visibly blends the whole into one common interest, and yet each may enjoy similar privileges independent of the other.

Thus the right of the Americans to tax themselves is sufficiently clear. But as it would be dangerous to the community at large if there was not a kind of perpetuity in the residence [p. 15] of the supreme executive power, by which I mean the king, so the mother country ought to be allowed something as a token of superiority, but not an absolute one. And this seems happily effected by the Act of Navigation, which as it is recognized by the Americans, and has been exercised so much to their satisfaction, and to the amazing advantage of this country, ought to be considered as a sufficient acknowledgment. Yet this we should observe *is not a matter of right*, but of *political necessity*.

Having therefore a competent knowledge of what a charter is, and what is the supreme power, we may readily agree to your first proposition, that the *supreme power* has a right to tax the Americans, because then we should mean the power of the king, council, and assembly in the different colonies. And to speak of it in any other light is to throw the harmony of a system of government admired and unequalled throughout the globe into the dreadful confusion which we now experience. Nor can it possibly be proved that the supreme power in England have a just right to tax the Americans, any more than that the supreme power in America may tax Great Britain.

⁵Denham cites 'Locke, Sydney, Rapin, Mill'.

The whole of the dispute resting on the idea of what is the supreme power, it must be exceeding [p. 16] plain that if these arguments are just the present proceedings against America are without defence. It is true, there should be a supreme power somewhere. Every friend to the liberties of America, as well as the partisans of administration, allow the position. But we must not expect in a mixed government, like that of Great Britain, whose territories are so divided and extensive, to have the simple idea of supreme power which we have when we talk of small republics, or absolute monarchies. And as it is the happiness of this country to have liberty as the very *end* and *design* of government, so the supreme power, which could not be exercised in one compact body without violating the rights of all America, which it did not appear could be represented in the British parliament, is divided into two parts. And under such wise regulations as no theory, or wisdom of the greatest writers, could ever devise.

In short, the true idea of supreme power is in the people, in all free governments.⁶ In ours it is manifestly so. Hence the unlimited power of parliament, which represents the people. But they have no power over those they do not represent. This is expressly mentioned as the reason why we do not tax Ireland. 'For', says an ancient [p. 17] record,⁷ 'Ireland hath a parliament of its own, and maketh and altereth laws; and our statutes do not bind them, because they do not send knights to our parliament. The Irish are, nevertheless, subjects of the same empire, which is bound together by the king, who may be justly called the center of the whole.' And the same authority concludes with words equally applicable to America and Ireland. 'That they are, nevertheless, the king's subjects, like as the inhabitants of Calais, Guscoigne, and Guienne, while they continued under the king's subjection.'

Thus, having shown that the supreme power may and ought to be divided, according to the old received maxims of the constitution, and according to the principles of natural right—which, as Judge Blackstone justly says, is the surest foundation of law—it were needless to use further arguments. For, except where, in contradiction to yourself, you allow the king to be supreme, everything you have said may be reduced to this single question: Whether the supreme power may not be divided?

If then government is formed better from experience than theory. If we have found by the [p. 18] history of the two centuries past that the plan of government in America was wise and salutary. Why should we wish to shed the blood of our countrymen, whose only fault is a noble, an Englishman-like zeal, for the liberties they were born heirs of?

You tell us they want to be independent. Do you mean to create a commonwealth of their own, and to acknowledge no connection with this country? If that is true, let every Englishman spurn at the attempt. But was ever a charge brought against a people, as a reason for scourging them with the calamities of a civil war, with so little ground? How could they possibly attempt such a revolution? They have no ships, their cities [are] on the coast, and where would be our fleets? The success of such an attempt would be impossible, and they are too wise to undertake it. On the contrary, they wish to have a *reciprocal* dependence with the mother country, as at once promoting their wealth, and what is still more valuable, their liberty with our own.

I know it has been urged, though not in your book, that it would be difficult for a minister to ascertain the proportion to be asked for supplies from so many colonies. To manage a mixed and extended government like ours, so as to preserve its liberties, will always be difficult. And those that are alarmed at difficulty had better [p. 19] give their vote for an absolute monarchy at once. But this should be the criterion of Englishmen: *always to decide* in favour of public liberty. And how easy would it be for a congress to meet, in which all the colonies were represented, to settle for the minister this arduous point. The minister might make a request of such an aid as he wanted, and the congress might examine the propriety of the request, and divide the proportion to the colonies.

⁶Denham cites: 'Locke, Mill, Sydney'.

⁷Denham cites: 'Year Book 1, Henry VII 3, 7. vide Blackstone [*Commentaries* 1:101].'

But as the investigation of this subject is not immediately in reply to your letter, it is time I should conclude. You will please to remember your leading position is destroyed by your own arguments, and your lesser arguments cannot be good, if that is destroyed. I shall, however, hoping the brevity of this letter will apologize for anything not sufficiently explicit, briefly take a survey of your performance, to show that it is, in general, as inconsistent as it is in the leading grand question, of the right of the parliament of England to tax America, which they do not represent.

You begin by supposing a colony is a corporation, page 4, which like a corporation of England is subject to the *supreme power*. Most certainly you are right in the application. But there are two supreme powers, or rather the [p. 20] supreme power is divided, and each corporation must be subject to that in which they have an interest. You next endeavour to show that, as we are unequally represented, therefore the Americans should be so too, page 6, by which the fable of the dog in the manger is amply verified. But Americanus has treated this subject more at large, and has utterly refuted your pretensions. You go on to say, page 7, 'If the Americans claim the rights of *natural born subjects*, the boast of *original* right is at an end.' To which I answer, *the rights* of Englishmen are the *original rights* of nature, as far as is consistent with the good of society, which is the true definition of civil liberty. These therefore are the natural and original rights which the Americans claim and which they have not forfeited. Again, you say what they do not forfeit by any judicial sentence, *they may* lose by natural effects. This is very true, as far as it applies. For instance, if a man goes to Turkey or France, he can no longer possess the rights he did in England. But if a man from Yorkshire should come to London, he may, notwithstanding he loses his vote in Yorkshire by local situation, be a voter where he now resides. And so it should be in every part of the same dominions. It is not enough therefore to say that the right of being represented *may* be lost. But it should be [p. 21] proved that it *ought* to be lost by removing to America, and that the state cannot possibly exist, if the Americans still retain it. Next, by a curious piece of sophistry you seem to consent to their enjoying all the *privileges* of their ancestors, but *no more*, page 8, as if this was granting what they ask. Whereas they say they inherit all the *right* which their forefathers had to *all the privileges* of Englishmen, page 8. So that by substituting the word 'privilege' for the word 'right', you lessen the propriety of their claim, that you may the more easily destroy it.

There is another curious argument, page 10, where you compare the legislature of a colony to a parish vestry. So you may, but it will not hold good. For a parish vestry acts under the immediate laws and direction of that supreme power in which it is represented. But the colonies are not represented in that supreme power. As to the power and efficacy of royal charters, I hope it is sufficiently exposed in the beginning of this letter, and likewise concerning the charter of Massachusetts's Bay and Pennsylvania.

You say, page 19, to contend for the right of granting their own money is to acknowledge no sovereign—which inference supposes they mean to exclude the king from a third part in their legislative power, an insinuation no less false than [p. 22] it is cruel.

I shall therefore take my leave of you, reverend sir, with a word of application. Do you not think the ministers are prone enough to carry the flame of war into America, and to ruin the trade of this country, without your assistance or advice? You had done better to have aimed at making peace. You should have considered what a heavy offence it is to charge three millions of people with the crime of rebellion, if it is not true; and of this you ought to have been quite certain, before you took a part. For nothing, surely, is a greater offence both to God and man than to be a sower of strife, to endeavour at the establishment of tyranny, and to misrepresent the principles of the constitution to deceive the people.

I must add one more remark, that as to submit passively to every oppression is a mark not of humility but of cowardice and a base spirit, so to take up arms when there is no other hope of safety is not rebellion but the highest proof of courage and public virtue.

Source: published transcription; W. Denham, *A Second Answer to John Wesley; being a supplement to the Letter of Americanus* (London: Wallis & Stonehouse, 1775).

'Impartial' to the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*

[Salisbury?]

c. October 23, 1775

As Mr. Wesley's *Address* to the Americans, lately published, relates to a most important object, and has been much taken notice of, I beg leave to trouble you with one remark on that performance.

The Americans, in their addresses to the public, urge as a reason against parliamentary taxation the great disadvantages they incur by submitting to such numerous restrictions in trade, which they deem a burden equal to, if not greater than taxation. And they also estimate that that mode of contributing to the support of this nation is upon the whole more beneficial than if they were to share in paying equal taxes with the subjects of their mother country. But to be obliged to submit to those numerous restraints in trade, and at the same time to submit to a parliamentary taxation, they think the highest degree of oppression. The Irish submit to parliamentary restraints in trade, but then in return they are exempted from taxation. Why then should the Americans be burdened with both in similar circumstances?

This is the foundation of all their complaints, and however their manner of reasoning may vary, it all centers in this object. It therefore behoved Mr. Wesley to have obviated this capital article of the dispute, by showing that this double mode of taxation is no oppression. But as he has not taken the least notice of this fundamental point, all his other arguments fall to the ground. Because oppression under any form of government justifies resistance.

Your constant reader,

Impartial

Source: published transcription; *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* (Oct. 23, 1775), p. 1.

‘Rutilius’ to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*

c. October 23, 1775

Sir,

The Reverend Mr. John Wesley, not content with the office of administering spiritual things to his people, hath taken upon him to erect a standard of political faith, by which I suppose he means to combine them, as one united phalanx, in the support of ministerial doctrines.

His pamphlet indeed is entitled, ‘A calm Address to our American Colonies’. The assiduity with which it is dispersed here is not, however, the only clue by which we may discover that the influence he chiefly depends upon is with the inhabitants of this country. Mr. Wesley must very well know that whatever effect a little plausible argument, in conjunction with his own authority, might have amongst his followers. It is of too flimsy a texture to be admitted by the Americans, or by any man versed in the American controversy.

Gleanings of sophistry from Dr. Johnson’s *Taxation no Tyranny*, unsupported and unwarranted conjectures, and a strong predilection for the Tory doctrines of passive-obedience and non-resistance, form the outlines of his performance.

To the American plea that ‘it is of the essence of the English constitution that the subjects should not be taxed without their consent’, he replies that the argument will prove too much, because it will include every act of legislation. Abstractedly considered, perhaps it will be thus comprehensive. But why should Mr. Wesley push the conclusion further that the Americans themselves desire it should be carried? Speculative rights must sometimes be given up for practical convenience. Can it be any conclusion of logic that some laws manifestly tending to oppression shall gather irresistible strength from a previous submission to other laws manifestly tending to general advantage? Taxes in this country are gifts and grants of the subjects to the crown. Nor is there any other distinction between the regular supplies of a free government and the tributary exactions of arbitrary power.

Mr. Wesley insists upon it that the position that ‘every freeman is governed by laws to which he has assented’ is absolutely false. And he founds his assertion on these reasons: that in extensive dominions a small part of the people only are concerned in making laws; that the small part of the people to whom this charge is intrusted are chosen by a select number of electors only; that in such election, as in all other cases where sentiments are opposite, the minority are always bounds against their consent; and lastly, that laws made before a man was born cannot be said to be made with his consent. But has Mr. Wesley considered that some degree of the imperfection of human nature must be mixed with every human institution? And will it follow, does he think, that because a perfect unlimited state of freedom cannot be consistent with any civil establishments, we should not enjoy such a state as may be attained? Is it good doctrine, for instance, because a state of religious perfection is very difficult, if not impossible to reach, that we should not endeavour to make ourselves as perfect as we can? Or is it any just consequence that, because a man quietly submits to the government and the laws he is born under, he is precluded from opposing any oppressive innovation? Mr. Wesley’s reasoning, in fact, amounts to no more than this: The full approbation of the whole people, so as to include the assent of every individual to every measure is impossible to obtain, therefore the approbation of the people is not to be regarded at all.

This is strange logic. But he improves still more as he proceeds. In answer to the claim of the colonists that ‘by nature they are entitled to life, liberty and property; and that they have never ceded to any power the right of disposing of those privileges’; and to the subsequent one that ‘their ancestors at the time of settling the colonies were entitled to all the rights of Englishmen’; he replies that their ancestors ceded, before their emigration, to the king and parliament the power of disposing, without their consent, of their lives, liberties and properties. The inference which ensues is that by this cession their descendants are to this day bound. But can any sophistry be a greater violation of commonsense than this? Because my ancestors made a temporary cession, in trust, of their proportionable part of the right of making laws,

reserving to themselves the return of that right at the death of the trustees, or the dissolution of the trust, shall I be forever cut off from the exercise of the same right? The circumstances themselves, on the contrary, plainly prove it to be a right of inheritance, to which I have the same title that my ancestors had.

Emigration, Mr. Wesley allows, creates no forfeiture of rights, but renders, in his apprehension, the exercise of them impossible. But if, in the spirit of the British constitution, the power of taxation can only be supported by the rights of representation (and numberless instances might be brought to prove it), the impracticability of the right annihilates, in all fair reason and argument, the claim to the power. The emigrant, however, it seems, 'has reduced himself from a voter to one of the innumerable multitude who have no votes'. If he means to insinuate that the American colonies are in the same predicament with the multitude in this country who have no votes, the fallacy is glaring, and has so often been detected that it is a wonder any man of sense could repeat it. The inhabitants of Great Britain who have no votes are not, like the inhabitants of the colonies, taxed distinctly and separately. They have the solid security of those who have votes that the taxes shall not be enormous, nor disproportionate to their ability. A security of which the Americans are not only wholly destitute, but it is manifestly the interest of the party taxing to relieve themselves by throwing the burden on their shoulders; and the history of human nature evinces that the union of self-interest with power is the sure forerunner of tyranny. The question is not whether every individual in the colonies shall assent to laws of taxation, but whether a whole continent of vast extent, and containing three millions of people, shall be utterly precluded from every mode of concurrence or control over the disposal of their own property.

The Americans further lay claim to the privileges granted them by charters, or secured to them by their provincial laws. 'No', (says Mr. Wesley, the new disciple of Dr. Johnson) 'the first indeed I allow, but the latter I deny. No province can confer provincial privileges on itself. They have a right to all which the king has given them, but not to all which they have given themselves.' But surely Dr. Johnson had forgotten, and it was unlucky that Mr. Wesley did not remember, that every provincial law is ratified by the crown, or by its delegate, the governor.

Arguments drawn from the charters of the colonies will at least militate as strongly on the part of the American, as on that of their opposers. For if one charter admits the right of taxation, others contain express clauses of exemption.

Here ends Mr. Wesley's chapter of argument, and he proceeds to inform the colonies of his opinion respecting the source of 'all this hurry and tumult'. He has discovered, by a shrewdness of penetration I believe peculiar to himself, that there are a few men in this kingdom who are determined enemies to monarchy. They have let, it seems, very few into their design. But few as they are, they have wrought thousands of people to a pitch of madness, and have likewise inflamed America. Their design, he clearly perceives, is first to occasion the revolt of America, and then entirely to subvert the government. Who these few desperate men are, though he knows them so well, he has neglected to point out. I will however acquit him of having been engaged in this wicked conspiracy. It has a much stronger appearance of the revelation of an enthusiast than of a confederate, and will very properly be placed by the side of other curious stories of witchcraft and possessions to be found plentifully scattered throughout his *Journals*.

Mr. Wesley acknowledges the possibility (though he thinks it improbable it should be quite as much) of the colonies being taxed (in consequence of submitting to a precedent) equally with Scotland or Ireland. But Scotland and Ireland are taxed by representation. That is, they give and grant, or have a share in giving and granting their own money. This was an unfortunate idea to start, and he chooses not to dwell upon it. He immediately returns to his 'designing Ahithophels', and has recourse to a strong exorcism for laying those demons with which he is so terribly haunted.

It is indeed the misfortune of this writer, as of others who have written on the same side of this great question, that their principles operate with equal strength against the rights of the people of England as of America. A supreme uncontrollable power, say they all, must be lodged somewhere. The position

will apply as well to a contest between the estates of this realm as to the contest with America. And had these advocates for the supreme power lived during the controversies which have frequently occurred in our history between the king and the commons, they leave us no room to doubt where this power should in their opinion be placed. Thus are we hurried along by these writers, with a rapid pace, towards the quiet, pacific ocean of passive obedience, whose unruffled bed public liberty and private opinion are not suffered to disturb.

When Dr. Neale, Bishop of Durham, was asked by King James whether he might not take his subjects' money when he wanted it, without all this formality in parliament, 'God forbid, sir, but you should', replied the good bishop, 'you are the breath of our nostrils.' Hear how well the Reverend Mr. Wesley is qualified for a bishopric: 'You say no power on earth has a right to grant our property without our consent. Then you have no sovereign, for every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects; that is, to grant their property with or without their consent. Our sovereign has a right to tax me, and all other Englishmen, whether we have votes for parliament men or no.'

The last paragraph seems, however, to have been the rather too hasty effusion of his zeal. The times are not yet sufficiently ripe to receive such truths. On second thoughts it was judged best to add a salvo at the bottom of the age referring to the word 'sovereign' and adding in 'connection with the lords and commons'.¹

Mr. Wesley asks, 'Did the People, unless you mean the Norman army, give William the Conqueror his power? And to which of his successors did the people of England give the sovereign power?' Thus he supposes the power of kings of England to be founded on the right of conquest. 'I know but one instance in all history wherein the people gave the sovereign power to anyone. That was to Masaniello of Naples.' Who, I would ask him, expelled James II and seated his successor on the throne? Or who expelled the Stuarts to make room for the accession of the present royal family? Certainly the people—a collective term, which means not that every individual contributed his assistance, but implies the general bias of their sentiments.

Upon the whole, if Mr. Wesley be not qualified to be received into the bosom of the Church [of England], it may safely be pronounced that he is perfectly qualified for a reception into the bosom of a court. No matter however heterodox he may be in other respects, such tenets, like charity, will hide a multitude of sins.

Rutilius

Source: published transcription; *Public Advertiser* (Oct. 23, 1775), pp. 1–2.

¹The footnote added in revised version of *Calm Address* as published in London.

Anonymous Reader to the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*

c. October 24, 1775

The Reverend Mr. John Wesley has been so long a literary pilferer that, when prevailed with to become an adventurer in politics, he could not forsake his wonted practice. Yet few would think he could be so destitute of bashfulness as to put his name to an *Address*, not one word of which is his own, save the few striking strictures on Dr. Smith's sermon.¹ It is a barefaced plagiarism from Dr. Johnson's pamphlet, published not long ago, entitled, *Taxation no Tyranny*. And the Reverend Addresser has not only borrowed the Doctor's sentiments, but even clothed them in the Doctor's language.

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Oct. 24, 1775), p. 2.

¹Actually, only §§1–7 of JW's *Calm Address* are drawn from Johnson; §§8–14 are his own.

From 'Americus'

c. October 24, 1775

Sir,

I have read your *Address* to the Americans with much surprise and concern. That a man, after a long life devoted to the awful concerns of religion, and of a rigidity of morals strikingly contrasted to the times, should in his old age step forth a champion in political controversy is a paradox only to be solved by a reflection on the general motives of such compositions. They exhibit a proof, Mr. Wesley, that the most perfect of men have hopes upon earth as well as in the heavens—and indeed you have the moderation and the sincerity not to forbid us to believe so. When you deliver your opinion, you say you may be the better believed because unbiased, and then express yourself in this unguarded language: 'I gain nothing by the Americans, or by the government, and *probably never* shall.' This is not only an invitation to the minister to reward your pious labours, but a thorn in his foot if he overlooks them. Had you said 'and positively never will', I should then (as I always have) believed you to be an honest and a pious man, and should have fallen asleep over your *Calm Address*, till a fit of your enthusiasm had awaked me.

You are surely, sir, too well acquainted with the nature and workings of human passion to expect any good to arrive from a calm address to men (as you say the Americans are) under the dominion of enthusiasm. The experience of your whole life has been the influence of enthusiasm over the calm. But your success as a schismatic is a sufficient proof that, once aroused, neither reason or sober sense can control it.

I have seen, Mr. Wesley, near a hundred persons whose consciences or understandings were affected under your ministry fall into convulsions, see angels and demons by turns, converse alternately with God and the devil, your female devotees imagine themselves the carnal spouses of Christ, and have seen the most learned divines opposing their arguments to these deliriums with as little effect as Canute speaking to the ocean.¹

When a chimera, without a substantial basis or a visible object, can thus triumph over the reason and the will, and laugh argument to scorn, can it be hoped, Mr. Wesley, that men acting upon the known and established systems of human policy, irritated to enthusiasm in the contention for everything that is dear, will turn aside to listen to your *Address*? Can it be hoped that the twopenny pamphlet of a lay Methodist preacher will influence the camps of the Americans, or the congresses of new senators? You certainly have the enthusiasm to believe that the name of John Wesley is to operate as an exorcism! For how otherwise can you be useful? Every argument that the deepest knowledge of our laws and policy, prostituted to the arbitrary designs of g[overnmen]t, have already been [prepared?²] and exhibited against America. The crown, from the beginning of those disturbances, has employed to no purpose the ablest pens-men, practised in all the arts and sophistries of political logic. While you, Mr. Wesley, have been accustomed from your youth only to write and to speak on subjects that escape the control of the understanding; where faith and imagination are the guardians of the will, because the data of the propositions are beyond the evidence of the senses. This is very visible, sir, in the political specimen before me. It is plain that you have not lived amongst men, nor considered the principles of their laws and political constitution. You had been much better employed, could you have persevered in your heavenly course and not, like Lot's wife, have cast a look back upon Sodom.

¹An apocryphal story about Cnut the Great, King of Denmark in the eleventh century.

²Orig., 'praepalled'; changed in the *Edinburgh Magazine* to 'propalled'.

You begin your pamphlet with these words:

The grand question which is now debated (and with warmth enough on both sides) is this, Has the English parliament power to tax the American colonies?

In order to determine this, let us consider the nature of our colonies. An English colony is a number of persons to whom the king grants a charter, permitting them to settle in some far country as a corporation, enjoying such power as the charter grants, to be administered in such a manner as the charter prescribes.

This is as much as to assert that a set of men living peaceable in England had obtained a charter to settle for lucrative objects in America, and had migrated on the strength of that charter. But you cannot, sir, be so totally unacquainted with the history of our Church as to believe your definition to be descriptive of an American colony.

You must, you cannot but know sir, that the original settlers of these colonies fled from Great Britain to a barren wilderness to save themselves from religious and civil persecutions, under the odious reign of the Stuarts, or were ejected out of the mother country at the nod of tyrants.

You cannot be ignorant, sir, that policy and not friendship procured those charters, after industry and perseverance in the honourable exiles had made the desert look fair, desirable, and worthy of appropriation. It was not till then that the unnatural mother began to spread her wing over her banished offspring, and to cherish them with her protection. As the staple commodities of the western continent grew into serious objects of commerce, interest and selfishness carried on the work which religion and liberty had begun. New families migrated, commerce flourished, British manufactures improved, and cultivation not only extended itself further into the desert but lands were transferred by tenures, from one to another as in England, at high rates. This flourishing progress of empire was disturbed in the last war by European rivals. And indeed since men have overleaped the bounds set by Providence, and torn from the man of nature his humble possessions, they have ever been, and ever will continue to be, the bones of contention.

It was in the last war that Great Britain laid herself under the necessity of defending her wide, extended dominion, and of asserting her claim to be the first nation upon earth. The contest was bloody and expensive, but the end was glorious. The enemy prostrate and breathless, empire extended, honour maintained, peace established. And like the sun rising after a storm, a young and native monarch holding the sceptre and ascending the throne, amidst the acclamations of the freest and happiest people on the globe.

These acclamations are heard no more. They have given place to such murmurs and discontents as are beyond your eloquence to quell. A system of corruption established and digested early in this reign has pervaded every rank and order of men, till the spirit of the constitution has fled, and left only the *caput mortuum*³ behind. The forms of our free government have outlasted the ends for which they were instituted, and have become a mere mockery of the people for whose benefit they should operate. And in such deplorable eras an ultimate appeal rests in human nature, in human policy, and in human experience in the many whose advantages are the ultimate ends of all government. And although men have seldom virtue enough to new model a constitution on an equitable basis, they will always have spirit in the end to overturn a corrupt one. Nor is there that scene of misery which you prognosticate to be expected from even a total separation of America, or its formation into a republic, if this country forces it by injustice into measures not originally imagined or proposed. Human policy is now not only refined into a moderate and equitable science, but that daemon of dissension is buried deep in oblivion and contempt, which

³Literally, 'dead head'; more broadly 'worthless remains'.

under the banners of the cross and of the crescent disgraced for many ages the annals of Europe, and made the fields of cultivation more dreadful than the wilderness.

It is bigotry, it is religious enthusiasm, Mr. Wesley, which has alone and so often deluged the world in blood. It is when men fight for they know not what, when the object is hid in the clouds or evaporates in dreams, that they become savages and brutes. And it is when they expect to be fed with manna from heaven that they die of hunger in their camps and give up the enterprise.

But when men with a reasonable dependence on God, and in an honest cause, act upon human principles of justice and success, and in an enlightened age build a form of government on the experience of past ages, avoiding the bad and improving even on the best, the prospect is not so gloomy as you suggest. You are only a servant, not a prophet of God, and must therefore forgive my want of faith in your augers.

I will now discuss in a few words the doctrine of taxation, which you have misrepresented by the denial of an acknowledged maxim in our government—viz., ‘that every freeman is governed by laws to which he has consented’; which you assert to be false.

That great empires cannot make laws in collective bodies, and that many thousands in the freest nation have not the legislative rights of freemen, is true. And that men live in obedience to laws made before their birth is likewise true. But it does not follow from hence⁴ that the community is less free, if the spirit of its government continues and operates along with its form. Because it is impossible to frame a human society where some portion of natural liberty is not sacrificed for the quiet preservation of the rest. And these men who have not industry or capacity to arrive at the attributes of legislative freemen, have nevertheless all the immunities, privileges, and protection which the laws afford to the highest, and hold their lives and properties by the same tenures that the monarch holds his head or his throne—viz., the preservation of the political constitution. Whenever these rights are invaded the government is dissolved, and strength becomes the decider of right.

But upon what tenure do Americans hold their properties as freemen if—without the wholesome deliberations of their own delegates, who can be singly judges of American interests—they are to be bound by acts of parliament which mutilate and destroy property? Of what use are their assemblies, and their popular representatives, if they are only to be the instruments of outward oppression and not the protectors of inward strength and independence? Are not the people of Ireland, oppressed as they are, allowed at least to be the victims of their own corrupt parliament? And although the British acts where Ireland is specified reach there in abrogation of the common and statute law, yet do they reach to no new impositions of excise or customs, without the votes of the Irish senate.

Why then are the Americans to be less free than Ireland? The reason is plain. Because the crown hoped that the murmurs of oppression would die in their passage across the Atlantic; that the gorgon of corruption might be fed by American spoils with less clamour and less danger than at home; and that if, by a gentle exertion of authority, it could establish a prescriptive right of taxation, the veins of America might be opened at will, to confirm the influence of the throne over the liberties of the people.

The c[itize]n has been deceived. The Americans have discovered that the monarch and the legislature are become one. They have considered an act of the British parliament as only the inhalation of the royal breath, and an equal infringement on British and American rights, which from analogy must ever suffer together. They think they are defending both; and the event will in the end discover who have been the least wise, if not who have been the least just.

And now, Mr. Wesley, I take my leave of you. You have forgot the precept of your master, that God and mammon cannot be served together. You have one eye on a pension, and the other upon heaven; one hand stretched out to the king, and the other raised up to God. I pray that the first may reward you,

⁴*London Evening Post* substitutes ‘thence’ for ‘hence’.

and that the last may forgive you.

Americus

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (Oct. 24-26, 1775), pp. 3-4; *Gentleman's Magazine* 45 (Dec. 1775), pp. 561-64; *Edinburgh Magazine and Review* 4 (Jan 1776), pp. 753-57; *Walker's Hibernian Magazine* (Jan. 1776), pp. 5-7; *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 2.

From the Rev. James Murray¹

Newcastle
c. October 26, 1775²

[p. 1]

“The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart; his words were oil, yet were drawn swords.”³

Mr. Wesley's *Address* to the Americans has been an object of some speculation since last Saturday in this town. and though it deserves no attention on account of its truth or merit, yet as unwary persons may be misled by the small shadow of argument, or rather sophistry, he makes use of, I have condescended to offer a few remarks upon it.

But for once I would desire the reader to consider two things in Mr. Wesley's *Address* which will undoubtedly convince every sensible person, and friend of the Revolution, that he deserves no credit. He impudently asserts that ‘Every sovereign has a power to tax his subjects *with* or *without* their consent.’ This destroys all elections, all parliaments, and all rights to property and life. For if the sovereign can take my property without my consent, he may also take my life. But are there no laws in England? Are there no bounds set to the power of the sovereign? Englishmen will say, ‘Yes, there are laws. To these both prince and people must submit. And the laws are true and Mr. Wesley is a [liar].’

Reader, consider next that Mr. Wesley tells one of the most palpable falsehoods that has ever disgraced paper, or made the press groan. He says he ‘knows but one instance in history of the people giving the sovereignty to anyone, and that is in the case of Masaniello of Naples’. Is it not to be supposed that Mr. Wesley is so ignorant of the history of his own country as he is fold of telling a falsehood to serve a party and blacken the character of the Americans? The history of Edward the Second and James the Second may convince any persons that Mr. Wesley is wrong. Who deposed Edward the Second and set up his son? The people. Who set king William on the throne of Great Britain? The people. Was there ever a plainer compact between king and people than the petition of right? May we ask Mr. Wesley who is sovereign? If he means the legislature, then the people themselves are a part thereof, and his argument is frivolous. Kings, lords, and commons have the sovereignty, and may tax the subject, but then the people give their consent that this is to be done by choosing representatives for that purpose. But even the united power of the legislature, although it be *supreme*, is by no means *omnipotent*. But let us pursue Mr. Wesley through his *Address*.

Mr. Wesley states his question wrong in the very beginning. Has the English parliament *power* to tax the American colonies? Yes, if they are *stronger* than the colonies. But the question is concerning *right*, and not *power*. The answer to this question depends upon the nature of the charters of the colonists. Do the American charters make those estates freehold which the colonists have purchased of the government? If by those charters the lands purchased by the colonists are freeholds, then by the laws of the constitution of England the parliament cannot tax them without their consent. [p. 2]

¹James Murray (1732–82) was a Scottish-born Presbyterian minister who used his pulpit at High Bridge Chapel to advocate the Enlightenment principles of religious and civil liberty. Murray was a critic of the ‘enthusiasm’ he discerned in Methodism, as well as JW’s political stance in the *Calm Address to Our American Colonies*. Indeed, Murray was perhaps the most vocal and prominent supporter of the American colonists in Newcastle.

²The text of JW’s *Calm Address* was reprinted in the *Newcastle Courant* on Saturday, Oct. 21, 1775, p. 1; which is referred to in Murray’s opening sentence as ‘last Saturday’.

³Ps. 55:21.

Mr. Wesley very justly observes that, 'The supreme power of England has a legal right of laying any tax upon them for any end beneficial to the whole empire.' But pray, Mr. Wesley, who denies this? But this supreme legal power must act in America, and actually does so. Does not the king send his representatives to America? And have not the freeholders there *a legal right by charter* to vote their own taxes, at the desire of his majesty's ministry residing among them? The supreme legal authority must act according to the law in all places of the British empire, otherwise it becomes tyranny. British subjects know no supreme power except what is legal. If there are any such charters in America as make purchased possessions freeholds, then the possessors, according to the laws of England, cannot be taxed without their consent more than those at home. If there are express conditions in the American charters which give the possessors only a copyhold right, they are in that case legally excluded from the privilege of giving their consent to any tax, but not otherwise; thought even *this* is not reasonable in Britain. Mr. Wesley and I, perhaps, are in the situation just now mentioned, or have no property and therefore the law excludes us from this privilege. But this does not hold with respect to those that are legally qualified. I shall allow that the arguments commonly used by some declaimers prove to much, and grant to Mr. Wesley that the parliament has a power to tax those who have no legal right to give their vote, without their consent. But this incapacity in them arises from their *not* being legal freeman. And if Mr. Wesley can prove that the Americans are such, he has proved his point. But till he has done this, he has proved nothing. The colonists have always been allowed to tax themselves by their representatives in their houses of assembly. Is not this a part of their constitution by charter? Is not this their legal settlement of government? To encroach upon this is to destroy their constitution, and render their charters good for nothing.

The reverend old man, in his third particular, says 'I object to the very foundation of your plea, that every free man is governed by laws to which he has consented'; and so do I to Mr. Wesley. 'It is absolutely false.' But whose plea is this? Those who use it must answer for it. The whole amount of this matter is that Mr. Wesley has met with the same book where he found a weak argument, and give it as weak an answer. But after all the parade made concerning that pleas, it militates nothing against the Americans. These people on the other side [of] the Atlantic do not claim such extensive privileges as you say they do. They only want to enjoy what the constitutional laws of the British empire have secured to all subjects who are legally free—that all subjects who are legally free enjoy the same privileges which the laws have secured to them.

What Mr. Wesley observes concerning electors in his third particular is a thing too well known, and it could be wished it was otherwise; but as the laws of the constitution have made it so, we are content with the laws concerning it. The Americans know as well as Mr. Wesley that there are a number in all countries that have a legal right to certain privileges which others do not enjoy. But this is no good argument to prove that those who possess legal rights should be deprived of them, because others have them not. Whatever loose arguments may have slipped from the pens of some declaimers upon the American controversy, the cause is not to answer for them. And I insist that if freeholders in America have as legal a tenure of their possessions as the inhabitants of England, they cannot, according to the constitution of the British empire, be taxed without their consent. I do not mean to assume the vague arguments which Mr. Wesley has been combatting. For none who understand the controversy right will use them. I shall, therefore, suffer this old gentleman to answer all the nonsensical pamphlets in the kingdom, and proceed to the main point.

What was it that the government granted to the Americans? A charter. What were the privileges contained in that charter? To hold their lands of the crown of the empire, and to make such laws among themselves as were consistent with the constitution of England.

Do not the laws of England allow all legal corporated bodies of men who hold of the crown by charter to vote for members of the parliament? Do not the colonies hold their possessions and privileges by the same tenure? It must then be undoubtedly their legal privilege to have a representation in that

assembly where they are taxed. Seeing it is impossible that they can be represented in England, have not their charters provided against this inconveniency by granting them a representation in America? Is not his Majesty present in these parliaments by his viceroys or governors? And are they not legal legislative bodies, when jointly assembled? An while they do nothing contrary to the constitution of Britain, have not their decrees the force of laws? The British parliaments in America may and can impose taxes upon the subjects there, because all legal freemen there are legally represented in those assemblies; and they in this case tax themselves as we do at home. But it is as much contrary to the nature of legal freedom for the British parliament to tax the subjects in America as it would be for the Americans to pretend to tax us at home. If the colonists are not legal freemen of the British empire; if their charters are either expired or are not charters giving a legal tenure to them to hold their possessions as all other free subjects o; if they have transgressed the laws of the empire so as to forfeit their rights; then Mr. Wesley's arguments will hold. But this is not pretended. Therefore all his reasoning is inconclusive. All his reasoning upon this point appears to be nothing but malicious sophistry to blacken the character of a people he does not love, or to gain favour with those that hate them.

Mr. Wesley asks a very foolish question: 'How has any man consented to those laws that were made before he was born?' He says 'they do it passively'. Perhaps they do, for I confess I do not understand the meaning of a *passive* consent. Consent implies some act of the mind, and supposes an agent; this is all that I know concerning it. It is well known to others, as well as this casuist, that our situation in society obliges us to obey laws which we never gave our consent to. But this is no argument to prove that we ought to obey the laws that ought not to be made without our consent—which is the plea of the Americans. The Americans, as well as all men, are bound to obey laws that were [p. 3] made before they were born, because the nature of society requires this. But this will never prove that they are bound to obey laws which taken away their legal rights and privileges, which they have in common with all other legal freemen of the British empire.

Our author, in his fourth particular, combats some unguarded words of some writer which I am not acquainted with, and is obliged to the *pious, loyal* Dr. [Samuel] Johnson for the whole of the sophistry in that paragraph.

The colonists do not deny that they are bound to obey English laws, for all the laws in America are English laws. But they refuse to obey laws that are contrary to the whole genius of the English constitution. They acknowledge themselves British subjects, and Englishmen in America; freeholders of legal possessions, which they hold by the tenure of a charter as other freemen do; and have the same rights with other freemen of the empire to give their consent to laws that so nearly affect them. They want no dispensation from obedience to the laws, nor do they claim any more independency that their charters have given them. This is a unjust reproach which Mr. Wesley casts upon them.

Mr. Wesley affirms when a man goes to American he loses what he had in Europe. This may be true, provided he goes to a French or Spanish colony, or has no law to secure his privileges as a legal freeman. But if he goes to America with a legal charter in his pocket, or is a legal freeman before he goes, he loses none of his rights. If he pleases to come over the distance, he is a freeman at home; and if he chooses to stay, he is by charter free in America. The laws that make a man free at home will make him free in a state of colonization.

Mr. Wesley affirms that the Americans 'are the descendants of me who either had no votes, or resigned them by emigration, and therefore by removing, they have no vote in making laws or choosing legislators'. The colonists do not pretend they have any right of making laws or choosing legislators in England. But they still have a right to the privileges with the legislature has given them, upon the principles of the English constitution. I suppose the Americans do not claim any right to vote for members of parliament where they have no freehold. But where they have them, according to their charters, they have a right to vote. If they were legally free in England, their distance would not disqualify them when they were pleased to come over to it. For I have head of persons brought from the West India

islands to vote at an election in England.⁴ The colonists who are legal freemen have a right to vote in America for legislators as well as those in England, provided they do not forfeit their right. This I do not say proceeds from nature, but from our laws which give freemen this privilege. The principles of nature would carry us a great way further, and would teach us such doctrines as societies accustomed to live in luxury would not endure. Mr. Wesley accounts it a great happiness to be protected by laws, and so do I—and all who are sensible of their protection. But if a man has both a right to protection and a share in legislature, it would be no happiness to take away his right to the one because he enjoys the other.

Can. Mr. Wesley tell, upon any good ground, why legal freemen in one part of the British empire have not a right for legislators, as well as those of another part thereof? Are there any express limitations in the charters of the colonists which restrain their rights of legislation any further than that they are to keep the constitutional laws of England in their view? I wish he would be so good as to point them out. Thought the people who first fled to America on account of persecution had been all originally slaves, yet when they received a charter of privileges like other Englishmen they were then free. I suppose that difference of climate does not alter right, and that if the legislature of Britain gives right to a freehold beyond the Atlantic, that it has the same force as on this side, unless it be limited by conditions. I want to know the conditions which restrain the colonists from having a right to vote for legislators. They must either be such as flow from a voluntary surrender, or from an antecedent right which Great Britain had to take away those legal rights, and to allow them none without the island. Allow that Britain had such a right, yet by giving the Americans charters she gave it up. And they now have as legal a right to vote for legislators, and to their possessions, as any subjects of the empire.

Let us now consider Mr. Wesley's reasoning to the seventh objection he attempts to answer. He says that the Americans have a right to all the king has given them, but not to all they have given themselves. Pray, what had they taken to themselves, before the late dispute, which their charters had not given them? Mr. Wesley should have pointed this out. He allows that they have a right to all that their charters have given them, and they as no more. What would this casuist be at? The question returns again, what has their charter given them? Are they not freeholders by charter? Or are they not free burgesses in corporations by charter? Let us taken Mr. Wesley's own similitude of a corporation and a vestry. A corporation that has a free charter has a right by the constitution to vote for members of parliament; and though they are bound by other laws to other duties, yet these laws do not infringe this privilege which this corporation has by charter. The Americans may be such a corporation, and if so they must have the same privileges. In this case, they have a vote for their own legislators by charter. Mr. Wesley must know that no vestry has power to lay on cess without a law or a legal right to do so; this he allows. The vestry therefore only executes the law, because the levying the tax is left to their discretion. But the colonists differ from the vestry, because there is no law that says that legal freemen have no right to vote for their legislators, and to tax themselves.

Mr. Wesley says there is a clause in the charter of Pennsylvania which expressly admits taxation by parliament, and that such a clause must be implied in all the rest because all countries that are subject to laws are liable to taxation. This good man has not mentioned that clause, which leaves the matter a little suspicious. If the Pennsylvanians have accepted of such a charter, then let them be slaves and be taxed at the pleasure of parliament—for in this case they are not freemen. But those who have free charters have no reason to given up because others have been in error. Mr. Wesley proceeds all along upon a false principle, that the Americans refuse to pay taxes. But this is false. They only affirm that the British parliament have [p. 4] no right to tax them, because they have free assemblies of their own who are ready to listen to the calls of government and to tax themselves for the support thereof. It is strange reasoning of Mr. Wesley to determine, because the settlers in Massachusetts Bay were promised an

⁴Footnote in original: 'For instance, at the Newcastle election in 1741.'

exemption from taxes seven years, that therefore the British parliament was to tax them after, when there is no such word in all the charter. The governors were to require no taxes for seven years, and to make no demands upon the house of representatives, so they were not to be called to tax themselves during that time. But there is not a word of the parliament having such a power. The executive part of the British legislature has a right to demand supplies through the whole empire to support the various departments of government, but one house of parliament has no right to prescribe for another. If his Majesty, by his governors, demand supplies for the execution of government, the American assemblies are bound to vote as much as they are able to answer the purpose. But the parliament of Britain must mind their own district, and proceed no further than they have a right. It is no inconsistent thing for one king to have several parliaments, when the situation of his dominions require it. The people in Ireland have their own parliament, and tax themselves; and why may not the colonists, and yet be good and faithful subjects of his Majesty? It is an easy matter to [charge?] 'rebellion', but not so easy to prove that men are rebels when they plead for nothing but what the laws have given them. All who consider the above observations will easily perceive that this is nothing but sophistry in Mr. Wesley's argument, that the whole is an attempt to slander a people who never meant any of those things he has imputed to them. Mr. Wesley upbraids the Americans for asking assistance from the mother country during the last war, and refusing to reimburse her for the expenses she had been at in defending the colonies. But he totally forgets to mention the advantages which the mother country enjoy from the extensive trade with the Americans. All the money that was expended during the war will not amount to half the sum that Britain has received by her trade with the colonies for twenty years past.

The sum of the whole argument is this, that if the colonists are by their charters freemen of the British empire, and have legal tenures holding of the crown, they cannot be taxed without their consent, [any] more than persons having legal tenures in England can be taxed without their representatives. As for the great numbers of those who have no representation and yet are taxed, this they must submit to because the law of the land has made no provision for them unless they become legally free. But the argument is that all whom the laws declare to be legal freemen, holding of the crown, have a right to be represented. If the Americans are not so, the argument has force. But Mr. Wesley has not made this out.

With regard to Mr. Wesley's advice to the colonists, it is cant that he is *much master of*, and deserves no regard. But his reproach cast upon some persons in England is malicious and unjust, and has no foundation. Who these are that hate the king he has not told us. But there are some friends to monarchy who have given ground for suspicions of their being *greater enemies* to the Hanoverian succession than any of those whom Mr. Wesley has his eye upon. He has taken for granted that the Americans want to set up republics, to which he has a great aversion. But this is all uncharitable surmise, proceeding from a deceitful heart. These colonists have given no hint of such an intention. And why should they be reproached for what they have not signified? I heartily wish for a *speedy* reconciliation between the mother country and her colonies, and earnestly desire that a stop may be put to the shedding of innocent blood—of which Mr. Wesley appears not to be tender, otherwise he would not have dressed up the Americans in the colours he has done. But what Mr. Sandeman observed concerning another penny pamphlet which Mr. Wesley once published several years ago may be said of this which he has now published against the Americans: '*One cannot decently be angry with him, seeing he has used the Americans no worse than he has used the God whom the apostles worshipped.*'⁵

Source: [James Murray,] *A Grave Answer to Mr. Wesley's 'Calm Address to Our American Colonies'*, by a Gentleman of Northumberland ([Newcastle: s.n.,] 1775).

⁵Cf. Robert Sandeman, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio* (Edinburgh: Sands, et al., 1759), 514.

'Philo Veritas' to the Printer of *St. James's Chronicle*

Munday's Coffee-House, Maiden-Lane [London]
October 26, 1775

Sir,

Your excellent paper, which I always when in this town read at this coffee-house, always gives me great satisfaction. But I have not seen any that has pleased me more than that of this evening, in which the letters signed 'Humanitas', 'A Friend to Freedom', etc., etc. appear, and ought, I think, to be particularly noticed.¹ I entirely agree with the worthy writer of the letters, and think with him that the contempt and detestation of an indignant public, should fall on all such worthies as the reverend gentleman he addresses his letter to, and all other reverends who neglect their duty of preaching the gospel to write about politics. All the world knows that 'priests of all religions are the same'. That we are warned to be aware of a woman *before* and a horse *behind*, but of a monk or priest of *all sides*; for however the latter may profess or preach, they are not always consistent or what they would seem.

For example, who would think that the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, who lately preached the gospel in the Methodistical way, should turn politician and write in another way *A Calm Address to our American Colonies*; and declared the Reverend Dr. Smith, in his 'much admired sermon preached at Philadelphia' proceeding all along upon wrong suppositions—which the reverend and modest Methodist assures the public he has 'confuted in a preceding tract'; when it appears that in a preceding tract, entitled *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*, published in 1770, he declares himself 'no politician',² that 'politics lies quite out of his province',³ that 'he does not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America, and doubts whether any man can defend them either on the foot of law, equity or prudence'.⁴

Pray, Mr. Baldwin, insert this, that your correspondent 'A Friend to Freedom' above mentioned may see there are more priests who wear *cloven feet*, and like the satyr in the fable *blow hot and cold*, or become *Vicar of Bray*,⁵ or all things to all men, just as their interests serve, besides the reverend gentleman he has addressed his letter to and so well dressed.

For the truth of this fact I refer to the advertisement prefixed to a letter signed 'Americanus', just published, addressed to the said reverend Methodist, in which the writer, who is said to be also a reverend divine, enquires how the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, who was then no politician, comes to commence one now? And how he comes now to appear a defender of such measures as he before admitted to be indefensible?

Your humble servant,

Philo Veritas ['Lover of the truth']

Source: published transcription; *St. James's Chronicle* (Nov. 2–4, 1775), p. 2.

¹These letters in *St. James's Chronicle* (Oct. 24–26, 1775) dealt with the American situation, but not with JW specifically. The letter of 'A Friend to Freedom' was addressed to Rev. Mr. Hastings.

²*Free Thoughts*, I.1.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, III.9.

⁵A satirical song about a priest undergoing several contortions of principle in order to retain office despite changes in the Established Church through the course of several English monarchs.

From Peter Shiras¹

Mount Holly, New Jersey, Burlington County
October 29, 1775

Honoured and Reverend Sir,

Permit and excuse the freedom a stranger to your person takes in addressing you at such distance. The melancholy situation of England and its colonies will plead my excuse with you, when as a friend and Christian I entreat you to use your every endeavour and interest to bring about a reconciliation between England and its colonies. I have reason to think that you and Mr. [John] Fletcher, with many others, have prejudiced accounts from us. For which I make allowances because I had many myself when I came first in this country. But after a residence of 13 years, I may be allowed to know something of the minds of the people here. And what I would say of them is this.

First, in general they are fond of their king and his family, also of everything that is English. They know not in reality any distinction between England and themselves but the distance of space that lies between them (jealous of late years of their liberties), but firmly united with what is called the honour of the empire. What England dislikes, they do. What she admires, so do we. But the difference here from you is such that a stranger is disgusted at his first residence because of the seeming equality of all ranks of people.

To be short, the minds of the people now begin to be soured. And I venture to predict if some way is not opened this winter for a reconciliation, if at all afterwards it will not be of long duration. If the same plan was literally followed that the children of Israel did with their brethren on the other side Jordan, it would have an undoubted success—a plan that would be worthy the pursuit of Lord Dartmouth, and would certainly be a lasting monument of his Christian love for mankind, and make him noble indeed. I positively believe that Lord Dartmouth and a few noblemen fearing God, whom the people here are not prejudiced against, coming to Philadelphia or other place the king would be pleased to appoint; they having full powers to treat with the people by their representations; the effect of such treaty would be to the lasting advantage of both countries, and more would be done by the people here in that way than in any other. Love begets love. For we are all in general for giving to the support of the nation, but the method we differ in. If this point was settled the dispute would be at an end.

I am grieved, and many more besides me, for Lord Dartmouth continuing in office, because we look on him as a Christian, and so rare to be found among the great that it enhances him the more in our esteem. But the thought is melancholy, while he is one wheel in that engine that sends bloodshed and all the horrors of war in our bosom. If I were sure of your being in London at the arrival of the bearer, Miss Watson, a very intelligent young lady, a native of Edinburgh, I would refer you to her. My mind has laboured under great uneasiness on account of this unnatural contest. Many in the societies are under arms, and some of them that I look on to be as great Christians as any others I know; but I am sure it is in general of hurt to their growth in grace, as well as a hurt to the propagation of the gospel in general.

You will please to look upon what I have wrote as addressed to Mr. Fletcher and yourself, two men that on earth none has so much of my esteem. And but two years ago the one I knew nothing of, and yourself I thought a Pharisee, but knew little of your writings or private character. But on hearing Mr.

¹Peter Shiras (1734–1825), born in Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, left Scotland with his older brother Alexander and sailed to America in the early 1760s. They settled first in Philadelphia, but later moved to Mount Holly, NJ, where they purchased property and became men of prominence. Peter remained a member of the Episcopal Church after the American Revolution.

Shadford² [I] was reconciled to the Methodists. But being a great admirer of Mr. [James] Hervey, [I] could not receive the whole doctrine till Mr. King³ lent me Mr. Fletcher's *Checks* in vindication of the [1770] *Minutes*; and I thought him, after reading 20 pages, a deep Jesuit that could make black white. I mention this only to show what characters prejudice draws, though I thought I had none. Yet before I had read the first volume, I was convinced that the *Minutes* was well grounded. I saw the difference between the ingenious Hervey and the more ingenious Fletcher. And this is my private opinion of them both: Mr. Hervey strikes the nail with something between, and Fletcher strikes it bare.

Source: holograph; National Archives, CO 5/134, f. 154; *Calendar of Home Office Papers of the reign of George III, 1773–75* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1899), 452–54.

²George Shadford (1739–1816) was admitted 'on trial' as a travelling preacher in 1768. After serving in England faithfully, he joined Thomas Rankin in 1773 in volunteering for North America, where he served for five years. Returning to England, he served until his retirement from active itinerancy in 1791. See Jackson, *EMP*, 6:137–81; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 313–14.

³John King (1746–95) first appears in the *Minutes* in 1770 (*Works*, 10:383), as one of JW's preachers in North America. He had been converted under JW's preaching the previous year and set out for America almost immediately as a volunteer. Like Asbury, King took the side of the colonists and remained in North Carolina after the split from England. See Edward Hill Davis, 'John King: Pioneer, Physician, Preacher, Patriot', *Methodist Quarterly Review* 77 (1928), 435–48.

From Anonymous

c. October 30, 1775¹

'*Talibus infidiis ... credita res!*' Virgil²

'No man, or society of men, have power to deliver up their preservation, or the means of it, to the absolute will of any man; and what they have not power to part with, they will always have a right to preserve.' Lord Somers

'The government of every colony, like that of the colonies of old Rome, may be considered as the *effigies parva* of the mother state.'
Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts Bay*

[p. 2]

Since the following *Answer* was sent to the press there has been an opportunity of consulting the Massachusetts charter, in which there is no premise of exemption from taxes for seven years, nor the least expression that could countenance Mr. Wesley in making so bold an assertion.

There is however the following clause, which sufficiently demonstrates how contrary the charters are, in expression as well as spirit, to the idea of parliamentary taxation:

And we do give and grant that the said General Court or Assembly shall have full power and authority to name and settle annually all civil officers within the said province, and also to impose fines. ... And to impose and levy proportionable and reasonable assessments, rates, and taxes upon the estates and persons of all and every the proprietors or inhabitants of our said province ... for the necessary defence and support of our government of our said province or territory, and also for the protection and preservation of the inhabitants there, according to such acts as are or shall be in force within our said province, and with a view that our subjects may be religiously, peaceably, and civilly governed.

[p. 3]

Sir,

A pamphlet to which you have affixed your name has been lately distributed with uncommon diligence. You call it *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies*. This title is a deception. You know that the colonies are determined. Your design is to deceive undetermined *Englishmen* into approbation of the measures of administration.

You present your book to the world as your own, but the greatest part of it is taken verbatim from *Taxation No Tyranny*, written by the pensioned Dr. Johnson, a declared enemy of civil and religious liberty! This is another deception, equally mean and obvious. [p. 4]

Your first section contains Johnson's definition of an English colony. It gives the idea of 'a number of persons who, by the king's permission, emigrated in search of supposed advantages, which, if obtained, were to be secured to them by charters.'

¹The tract was first advertised as published on Nov. 2, 1775 in the *London Evening Post*.

²Virgil, *Aeneids*, ii.195–96; 'through these tricks ... the things were credited'.

But the colonists were a number of persons who fled from tyranny at home, to conquer and cultivate new countries at their own expense. From the parent state, for above a century, they received little or no assistance. Their monopolized commerce was, at last, thought worth protection; their increased property is now thought worth taxation.

You say, 'Considering English colonies are a kind of corporation subsisting by charters, nothing can be more plain than that the supreme power in England has a right to tax them. Do you mean by the supreme power the collective body of king, lords, and commons? If you do, you must be ignorant that *the commons only* have the power of taxing the people; that money is not *taken*, but *given*; that the concurrence of the lords in money bills is only to tax themselves; and that the concurrence of the king in such bills is only to give them the force of law.

You say that 'the English government has made laws for the colonies, which laws they have received and obeyed. Therefore, the English government has a right to tax them. The reception of any law draws after it, by a chain which cannot be broken, the necessity of admitting taxation.' This is false. The acts of legislation and taxation are *distinct* operations. The first is exercised by the three [p. 5] estates of king, lords, and commons; the last by the commons *only*. If the reception of a law is an acknowledgment of sovereignty, it is not an acknowledgment that such sovereignty may be maintained in an unconstitutional manner. Penal and economical laws are received and obeyed in England. The reception of them may be deemed an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of government, but does not prove that government has a right to abrogate *Magna Charta*, abolish trial by jury, or vest in the king an arbitrary power of levying money on the subject. Such acts, though sanctioned by consent of the three estates, would be violations of the *Constitution*, and consequently void in themselves and 'to be *holden for nought*'. 42 Ed. III, Lord Coke, Lord Somers, etc.

You next attempt to prove that the colonies are as much represented in the English parliament as the majority of the people of England: 'All public business', you say, 'must be done by delegation. The delegates are chosen by a select number, and those who are not electors, who are by far the greater part, stand by idle and helpless spectators.' That most public business must be done by legislation is true. But the choice of delegates or representatives in England was originally in the people at large; the vesting it afterwards in a select number was a variation made by consent of the people for the sake of convenience. The non-electors and electors of England are so blended together that the former must often influence the conduct of the latter; and having, thereby, a share in the [p. 6] power of election, cannot be said 'to stand idle and helpless spectators'.

'The case of electors', you say, 'is little better. When they are near equally divided, almost half of them must be governed not only with[out] but against their consent.'

This is a fallacy. The minority of electors cannot be said to be governed without their consent. They, in common with others, have previously consented that it should be law to issue the dispute by the voice of the majority. They have, therefore, consented to be governed by him on whom the choice of that majority shall fall.

You endeavour, by general positions boldly asserted, to represent government and slavery as inseparable. 'How has any man', you say, 'consented to those laws which were made before he was born? Our consent to these, nay and to the laws now made in England, is purely passive. In every place, as all men are born the subjects of some state or other, so they are born, passively as it were, consenting to the laws of that state. Any other than this kind of consent, the condition of civil life does not allow.' This is false. The English constitution has better provided for the preservation of liberty. Our consent to the laws by which we are ruled is so far active that we may in a manner be said to make them. 'The *commons* may be said to *make law*', says Johnson himself, in his *False Alarm*. It then suited his purpose to say so. The *people* at large may, indeed, be said to make law. They desire to have some penal or economical law for general benefit. They instruct their delegates. A bill is brought into the House of Commons. [p. 7] The king may refuse the royal assent, but then the House may refuse supplies. Suppose the opinions of the

constituents and the delegates are opposite. The latter reject the bill. Their office is not perpetual, nor irresponsible; at seven years end they may be discarded and their places filled with more compliant or more faithful successors. Vice versa, suppose a law proposed by any of the three estates of government is thought oppressive, or otherwise offensive, by the *people*. The measure is talked of. They petition, they remonstrate. Perhaps they succeed, perhaps they do not. In the latter case the grievance is not eternal. A new parliament may repeal what the old one enacted. If the measure be not a favourite court measure, and the royal assent as before be denied, then supplies as before may be withholden till that assent is granted. If the *people* have less influence over the second estate, the House of Lords, still that house may be supposed to consist of men guided by reason, and wishing to act in consonance with the rest of their countrymen.

Such are the advantages of our *excellent constitution*! Blush if ye can, ye Johnsons and ye Wesleys, who are endeavouring to destroy the idea of them in the minds of unwary readers; endeavouring to persuade men that they are inevitably born *slaves*! If Englishmen are slaves, whose consent to the laws they are ruled by is merely passive, it is not the fault of their political system but of their own corruption of morals and supineness of spirit.

It is the usual art of the court writers of the day to aim at sinking all ideas of natural equity, and of general popular franchises founded thereon, [p. 8] in the idea of absolute unconditional government, pretending such government indispensable to the subsistence of civil society.

You say, 'If the ancestors of the colonists were subjects, they acknowledged a sovereign. If they had a right to English privileges, they were accountable to English laws, and had ceded to the king and parliament the power of disposing, *without their consent*, of their lives, liberties, and properties.' This is both false and absurd. No Englishman ever ceded to any king *absolute power* over his life or liberty. That precious remain of ancient freedom, *trial by jury*, ever stood and now stands an insuperable bar against the power of sovereign over subject.

'No freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned, nor disseized, nor outlawed, nor exiled, nor destroyed in any manner; nor will we pass upon him, nor condemn him, but by the lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.' Magna Charta, §43.

No Englishman ever ceded to any king *any power* over his property. The right of taxation, as has been shown, is exclusively vested in *the people*. No Englishman ever ceded to the parliament a power over his life, liberty, and property. He could not cede it to the lords, for the lords without the commons cannot make law. He could not cede it to the commons, for ceding it to the commons would, properly speaking, be ceding it to himself. The force of truth is often too strong for every effort that can be made to conceal it. You talk of 'the people *ceding* power to the king and parliament'. If they *ceded* power, they must have *possessed* it. *Nemo dat quod non habet*; what a man *has not*, he [p. 9] *cannot give* to another. What is *given*, if abused, may surely be *resumed*. If the doctrine of resumable power is not admitted, the doctrine of *divine hereditary right* must be maintained. The first king of every country must have resigned by divine appointment. And all his successors, be their conduct what it will, must reign by the same title. Their subjects must be hereditary slaves, whose lives and properties may be sported with, as men shoot birds and catch fish for diversion. Englishmen, beware of these insidious reasoners! These Johnsons and Wesleys, who would persuade you that ye are born *slaves*!

You admit (as above) that there are original rights of humanity. You tell us that when the colonists say they are entitled by nature to life, liberty, and property, they *speak true*. That when they claim a title to the rights of natural born subjects within the realm of England, they *speak true also*. But you assert, that 'they must resign either one or the other'. This is no consequence.

The rights of nature and of civil society are not incompatible. The former are most guaranteed by the latter. A man has a natural right to the possessions of his parents, or to those which he has obtained by

his own labour. And the laws of society which prohibit fraud and rapine, instead of destroying that right, contribute to secure it. A man has a natural right to life and liberty. On entering civil society he does not cede this right, only in certain stipulated circumstances, for the good of that whole whereof he becomes a part. While he is innocent, he is safe and free. [p. 10]

A man has a natural right to his own property. This, on entering civil society, he does not cede at all. He indeed, by a kind of tacit compact, agrees to subscribe his share to the expense of public security and public economy, as the necessity of times may require. But as no rational being would lavish his wealth without equivalent, he has reserved to himself the sole determination of the existence or degree of that necessity.³

If he does not properly regard the public welfare, it is at his own risk. He is more or less a gainer, as it is more or less consulted. Of this general principle an English House of Commons, in its primarily intended incorrupt state, is a visible modification. Money there is *granted*, not *taken*. *Granting*, not *taking*, is the language of *the constitution* in all ages.

Such are the simple principles of *free government*, in contradistinction to *tyranny*! Principles, alas, too little known, too much obscured by the glare of adventitious pomp and purchased power!

You say, that 'the colonists, by emigration, did not forfeit the rights of voting *for representatives* in the English parliament, but lost it by natural effects'. But the privilege of voting for or choosing a deputy or proxy, to execute the office of a taxer, can be considered as a personal advantage only in counterpoise to the personal burden of taxation. Now, if the good be lost by natural effects, the evil should not be retained by unnatural political ones. There [p. 11] are things called right reason, equity, and justice, though they may not happen to exist in the ideas of Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wesley.

When a man removes to a distance from the part of civil society with which he was connected, he can no longer enjoy the benefits of its political system, and therefore cannot justly be attested to its maintenance.

If the colonists have hitherto supported the administration of justice and other branches of internal polity among themselves, what rational plea can be made for requiring them to support them among us? Can a person be expected to pay for the same thing in two places?

You say, 'He who had a vote for a knight or burgess did not forfeit that right by crossing the sea, but made the exercise of it no longer possible. He reduced himself from a voter to one of the innumerable multitude that have no votes.' But if such a man was still liable to be taxed by the English parliament, he reduced himself to a much worse condition.

Non-electors (as has been hinted) have in England much influence in elections. Persuasion and information have their weight. The man of superior opulence or knowledge, without a vote himself, can direct the voices of a number.

But an American can have no possible influence in the choice of an English senator. And an English senator, when he taxes an American, *cannot tax himself also*, because he has no property in America to be taxed. Yet *self-taxation* is the sole pledge of the taxer, for security of the taxed. He who does not tax himself, taxes others without feeling. He may, therefore, tax without propriety, and without measure, may [p. 12] take not only a fifth or a fourth but the half, or even the whole, of property; and make the wealthy subject an impoverished slave. The wisest forms of government, advertent to the imperfection of human nature, have as much as possible avoided leaving one man at the mercy of another. They have ever contrived some rational restraint on action, some bound of reciprocal safety.

You allow, that 'the colonists inherit all the privileges of Englishmen, all the privileges that their ancestors had'. They then inherit the grand privilege of Englishmen, *free government*. But this privilege

³Note in original: *Iniquum est, ingenuis hoinibus non esse liberam rerum [...]. Co. Lit. 222.* 'It is iniquitous, that freemen should not have the free disposal of their own effects.'

they do not enjoy, if they are taxed without being represented. It is an axiom which cannot be too forcibly impressed on the mind: 'Government cannot be free, where property is *taken not given*.'

You say, 'what the ancestors of the colonists did not bring with them, neither they nor their descendants have acquired. They have not, by abandoning their right in one legislation, acquired a right to constitute another; any more than the multitudes in England who have no vote, have a right to erect a parliament for themselves.' You before said, 'They had lost their right in the English legislature, by natural effects.' There is difference between abandoning, and losing by natural effects. One is a voluntary, one an involuntary matter. You have not proved that they either abandoned this right or lost it. If they have abandoned or lost it, and have no right to constitute another system, they must be slaves or revert to a state of anarchy. Were the body of electors in England to become so corrupt or [p. 13] servile as constantly to rechoose men who had betrayed the cause of liberty, and were such men to subvert the *constitution*, would not the non-electors have a right to choose a number of honest delegates, to restore their abolished freedom, to save their *country*?

You say, 'the colonies have a right to all the privileges granted them by regal charters, to all which the king has given them, but not to all which they have given themselves'. The first part of your assertion is undoubtedly true. But it is couched in terms that might better become the despot of some barbarous region, whose ignorant natives had imbibed

The enormous faith of many made for one⁴

than the advocate of a government that calls itself *free*. What right has any king to anything (saving his own private property) which is not given him by the *people*? If the king is the fountain of honours and riches, whence is that fountain supplied? Whence does he derive the prerogative of conferring honours, the ability of bestowing, but from the *people*?

If the colonists are the naked sons of nature, they have a right to independence and the enactment of their own laws. If they are subjects of the free English state, they have a right to the grand privilege of other Englishmen, a privilege which no king could confer—legislation and taxation by representation only. The assertion, that 'they are virtually represented' has been proved an absurdity; a sophism, which even you could scarcely repeat with a serious countenance. [p. 14]

Your comparison of 'a colonial legislature to the vestry of an English parish' proves nothing to the great point in question, the legality of taxation without representation. The parish assesses itself—in its parochial capacity, for local private use; in its national capacity, by its representatives, for general public ones. The colonies have no representatives; therefore, cannot be liable to parliamentary taxation.

You say, 'the charter of Pennsylvania has a clause admitting, in express terms, taxation by parliament'. Why did you not then produce this clause, that your readers might have judged of its meaning and import for themselves? You do not even tell us the nature of the taxation; whether it was internal or external, whether levied by themselves or by others. You add, 'the first settlers in Massachusetts were promised an exemption from taxes for seven years'. But promised by whom? If the charter contains such a promise, it must be made by the king who granted the charter. But the king could not legally promise an exemption from that which he had not legally a right to impose. I have not time nor opportunity to examine fully the truth of your assertions. But though I give you credit for them so far as to admit that there are some such clauses as you mention, yet your disingenuous conduct in retailing Johnson's book without acknowledgment makes me justly doubt the truth of your representations. Those clauses could relate not to taxation but to requisition only. The right of taxation did not subsist with the king. It did not subsist with the parliament. [p. 15] It subsisted solely and exclusively with the

⁴Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*, iii.242.

representatives of the Massachusetts people. And all the exemption promised that people could amount to no more than this, that the king would not require any subsidies from them for seven years.

To serve your own purpose, you say indeed afterwards that 'the seven years exemption granted to the Massachusetts settlers was from paying taxes to the king'. Then it may be justly inferred that they were subsidies demanded by the king in way of requisition, not taxes imposed by parliament. Had the case been otherwise, it would have been produced before now as a precedent for external taxation. What opinion the provincials had of external taxation above a hundred years ago appears from an article in the agreement made by the Virginians with the Commonwealth of England, before they would permit a governor sent by that Commonwealth to land in their province: 'Virginia shall be free from all taxes, customs, and impositions whatsoever; and none shall be imposed upon them, without consent of the General Assembly.'⁵

'All countries', you say, 'which are subject to laws, are liable to taxes.' Perhaps so; but perhaps they are only liable to taxes raised in a constitutional manner. Perhaps it has not been usual for the government of one country to tax the inhabitants of another, many thousands miles distant. If such taxation were founded on reason, might not the German princes [p. 16] think of taxing the German settled in Pennsylvania and New-York? If the tie of birth between sovereign and subject is indissoluble by distance and time, they have a pretence for doing it.

You say, 'If there is no clause in the charters of the colonies exempting them from taxes, the English parliament has the same right to tax them as to tax any other English subject.' Your argument here has been answered. I only quote it to demur once more to your mode of expression. The parliament, collectively considered, has no right to tax any Englishman. It is the commons, and the commons only, who possess the peculiar incommunicable power of *granting* taxes for the people. This is not quibbling about mere insignificant expressions: *taking* and *giving* (I repeat it) are terms affixed to ideas which constitute the important difference between *tyranny* and *freedom*.

I have now gone through the sum total of your arguments, which are every one, without exception, borrowed from Johnson. The remainder of your book is assertion and declamation; it merits little notice.

An argument which operates more in favour of the colonists than any that Johnson has advanced operates against them is this: That the English government, under the wisest administrations, and in the most necessitous circumstances, never till lately attempted to tax them. If government had that right of taxation, why did they not exert it? Perhaps, we are wiser than our fathers; wiser than those great [p. 17] statesmen who planned and perfected the Glorious Revolution, and *gave* the crown to the Brunswick family? — Our fathers made England the dread of Europe. Heaven grant their sons may not make it the contempt of its meanest enemy! If we are wiser than our fathers, I wish we were honest. Our fathers did not plunder the East. We have plundered the East, let us not attempt to plunder *the West also!* Let not the Englishman be a word of disgrace among all nations, a word synonymous with robber!

It has been said, 'The longer the colonists have been spared paying taxes, the better able they are, and the greater reason they have to pay.' Till the justice of taxing them at all is clearly demonstrated, this argument is futile. It is the morality of those who deem it less criminal to plunder him who has not been plundered before, than to plunder again him who has suffered previous depredation. It were to be wished that we were less interested; at least, that we did not suffer our interest to outrun our virtue.

'If America is taxed', it is said, 'England will be eased of taxes.' Ease from taxes is an alluring object to an Englishman. But during a thirteen years profound peace what ease from taxes have Englishmen experienced? What we have not had in the past, can we have reason to expect in the future?

⁵Note in original: 'See *An Appeal to the Justice and the Interests of the People of Great Britain*. p. 29.

We have not been eased in peace, but we are to be eased in war; eased by the taxes of a conquered country which, in the act of conquering, we have laid desolate! Can we be the dupes of such self-contradictory pretences? Supposing it possible we could obtain by conquest a small accession to our property, could [p. 18] we enjoy it with the reflection that it was obtained by the injury of our own species? Could we revel in luxuries bought with the price of *blood*, the blood of our *countrymen*?

It is said, 'We have protected the colonists, and that they ought to pay for our protection.' Have they not paid for it by the benefits of their commerce? Have not *two* of our own parliaments acknowledged that they paid more than their quota of the expense of last war? A war not commenced, as has been pretended, out of disinterested regard for them, but to secure the profits of their trade—a trade which, had they become subjects to France, must have been lost to England—to secure the balance of European power, to prevent the aggrandizement of our natural enemies.

On page 12 you have stated the case, perhaps you think fairly. Give me leave to draw a parallel. Parallels have probably been often of use to you at the Foundery. We feel best for another when we put ourselves in his place; the transposition is *argumentum ad hominem*.

Suppose *popery* established in England. Popery, you know, is intolerant—burn or conform are its alternatives. You and your disciples profess to approve of neither. A certain number of you embark for the coast of New Zealand. You find part of the country uninhabited. Your firearms give you advantage over the savages of the rest. You form a settlement. You cultivate the ground, establish manufactures, and grow rich. You might export some of your commodities to Batavia on very advantageous terms. Captain Cook, in the course of his voyage, [p. 19] happens to touch on this same coast of New Zealand. The English government, and indeed every Englishman (who had heard that there was such a place), take it therefore into their heads to think it their own. They send a ship to inform you that they think so, and to tell you that you must not traffic with Batavia, but only with them. And that they will accept the profits of the trade, as a ground rent, an acknow[ledge]ment of their sovereignty. The Dutch grow jealous of your rising state. They send a fleet and army, to attack and dispossess you. War is maintained with various success. You apply to England for assistance. England assists you. You not only continue your exclusive commerce with her, but contribute to the expense she has sustained by assisting you. After all, when you expect no such matter, comes a peremptory mandate from England: '*We have protected you, we will be paid for our protection. We will have half the fruits of your labour, half the income of your lands, and manufactures, for ever.*'

Lay your hand upon your heart, Mr. Wesley, and say, would you then defend the measures of *government* as lenient and equitable? Or would you hesitate (if able) to act the *modern American*?

You assert that 'There are men in England, determined enemies to monarchy, who wish to change the government into a republic.' I cannot think that you believe your own assertion. It is well known that the republican form does not suit the genius of the nation. Still less would it suit the character of the age. Commonwealths are not prolific in honours [p. 20] and emoluments, nor propitious to grandeur and profusion. Commonwealths must be founded by men of severe virtue, and strict self-denial. A much more probable supposition is that some of the opponents of administration wish only to fill the seats of those whom they oppose. But the number, even of these, it is to be hoped is but small.

I know of no Englishman who hates either the kingly office, or the prince by whom it is now exercised. I believed there are some millions of honest Englishmen who perceive, with inexpressible grief and terror, our *excellent constitution*, planned by the best and wisest of our ancestors and maintained with their blood, gradually deviating from its primitive purity. They see the regal estate, like Aaron's serpent, swallowing up the democatrical. They see the influence of the crown over the commons becoming so unlimited that the dictates of the human will are not more implicitly obeyed by the members of the human

body than the former is by the latter. They see part of the elective body become so corrupt that the intent of one principal security of English liberty, the circumstance of a senator vacating his seat on acceptance of a place, is now entirely frustrated. They see this corruption is an evil which nothing can prevent the effects of but such an absolute incapacitation of placemen that they cannot be re-chosen. But those who perceive these, and many other flagrant perversions of our glorious constitution, far from wishing to subvert that constitution, wish only to restore it to its pristine integrity.

There are also, I believe, many thousand of honest Englishmen who wish well to their [p. 21] country and its liberties, but are ignorant what its constitution is, and consequently cannot know when it is violated. These are the men who cannot fear danger, till they feel evil. These are the men whom the Johnsons and the Wesleys seek to deceive out of their birthright, and persuade them they are slaves.

You boast of our present liberty, civil and religious: 'Every man', you say, 'sits under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree.' It is not my business, nor desire, to point out every minute step by which I think liberty is losing ground. Nobody denies that we do enjoy a reasonable share of liberty at present. But is no regard due to the future? There is, surely, some difference in the tenure by which we hold a possession—the lessee *in perpetuum* is surely in a better institution than the tenant at will.

Some have said arbitrary government, well administered, is the best mode of government; but how many chances are there against its good administration?

We have now a good prince on the throne. But who can ensure the character of his successors? Should the crown obtain plenary possession of the parliament, leaving it only a form without a spirit, where will be the difference between the inhabitants of France and Spain and our Posterity? Where will be the difference between those who are ruled by the command of *one man*, issued immediately from his *own mouth*, issued mediately *through the mouths of many*?

I shall now, sir, take my leave of you and your performance. I have no attachment to, [p. 22] or connection of any kind with, the colonists. I have no concern in the matter. I may say, as you say, and perhaps with more sincerity, 'I shall get nothing by either party.' But I am a friend, on principle, to the *original universal rights of man*.

As I have formerly seen you with pleasure in the character of a Christian minister, doing some good in the moral world, so it is with regret I now see you in the character of a court sycophant, doing much more mischief in the political world; injuring, perhaps irreparably injuring, your *country*.

Postscript

You ask, 'Did the People give William the Conqueror the power?'

An able writer and eminent statesman (Lord Somers) positively asserts that the people did give William the power: 'William the first (who is unjustly styled the Conqueror, having subdued none but Harold and those who abetted him) did obtain the crown by a free choice and submission of the peers, and body of the people. And before his coronation he was *made* to swear that he would govern the people justly, and keep and observe to them [p. 23] their old laws.' This is a striking instance of the high sense the people of England once had of their own importance.

You assert that 'the people never gave the supreme power to any but Masaniello of Naples.' If you mean the supreme executive power, the English history repeatedly contradicts your assertion. Give me leave to ask you, Who gave that power to Charles II at the Restoration? To William III at the Revolution? And afterwards, to the *house of Hanover*?

Source: published transcription; *A Constitutional Answer to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's 'Calm Address to the American Colonies.* London: E. and C. Dilly, 1775.

Unnamed Reviewer of *Calm Address*

c. October 30, 1775

This *calm address* was printed to *inflamm*e the breasts of the English against their American brethren. The assertions in it are an insult on truth and commonsense. And what arguments it contains are *taken verbatim* from pensioner Johnson's *Taxation No Tyranny*, without the least acknowledgement. To call quit-rents 'taxes'; to represent the friends of the Americans as 'king haters'; and boldly to defy any man living to produce an instance in the history of all nations of the people giving the sovereign power to anyone besides Masaniello of Naples; are arts worthy of the *plagiarist*, who hath styled himself in print 'the greatest minister in the world'—but such arts as must expose his boasted knowledge, independency, and sanctity to contempt.

Source: published review; *London Magazine* (Oct. 1775), 536–37

Unnamed Reviewer of Evans's *Letter*

c. October 30, 1775

An excellent pamphlet, containing a full confutation of the preceding article. Mr. Wesley is here reminded of what he said in a former publication, 'I am no politician; politics lie quite out of my province'—and the following quotation will further point out his [lack of] consistency and integrity. [The remainder of the review is an extended quotation from Evan's pp. 22–24].

Source: published review; *London Magazine* (Oct. 1775), 537.

Unnamed Reviewer of *Calm Address*

c. October 30, 1775¹

When we saw the venerable father of a religious sect stepping out of his apostolic chair, to enter into the fields of political disputation, we naturally expected to find that he had some new observations to suggest, or some healing measures to propose, worthy of the wisdom of age and the sanctity of the clerical character. How far we have been disappointed in our expectations, our readers may judge from the following summary of his arguments.

If the supreme power cannot tax the colonies, it can make no laws to bind them, nor inflict punishment in any criminal cases. It is not true that every freeman is governed by laws to which he has assented. The minority is always governed not only without, but against their consent. It is the majority alone who are governed as they choose. The ancestors of the colonists, as English subjects, had ceded to the king and parliament the power of disposing, without their consent, of their lives, liberties and properties; and though they did not, by emigration, *forfeit* any of the privileges of Englishmen, they voluntarily *resigned* the right of voting for representatives. Their descendants therefore cannot claim this right, any more than those who have no votes in England could erect a separate parliament of their own. The provinces can have no privileges but such as are given them by charter. Now the charter of Pennsylvania has a clause admitting taxation by the British parliament in express terms, and the people of Massachusetts were promised exemption from taxes for seven years, which implied a right of demanding them afterwards. The true cause of the opposition to the exercise of the clear right of taxation has been that a few determined enemies to monarchy, having resolved to undermine the present government and establish a commonwealth on its ruins, have fomented divisions at home and abroad, and made many well meaning persons their dupes. The people do not give the sovereign power. The grant to Maseniello in Naples is the only instance of this kind in all history.

In writing this *Address* Mr. Wesley hath revived some of the arguments urged by Dr. Johnson in his celebrated pamphlet on taxation, and which were sufficiently noticed in our *Review* for March last.

Source: published review; *Monthly Review* (Oct. 1775), 349–50.

¹This issue of *Monthly Review* as published on Nov. 2 (see *Public Advertiser*, Nov. 2, 1775), p. 1.

Unnamed Reviewer of Evans's *Letter*

c. October 30, 1775

The substance of this reply is as follows: Every man who is taxed without his own consent is a slave. Montesquieu and Locke assert this. To grant our own property is an essential part of British liberty. The commons alone, properly speaking, tax the people; all money bills originating with them, and passing without alteration by the other branches of legislature. Lord Camden and Lord Chatham assert taxation to be inseparable from representation. It is ordained by several statutes that the king shall have no aid without consent of parliament. When the parliament taxed the Palatinate of Chester they refused to comply, pleading that they had a parliament of their own. Their plea was allowed, and they taxed themselves. Those who have no vote in the election of representatives, being generally able to procure one, by declining to do this, tacitly assent to the choice which is made. The determination of the majority is by implicit consent that of the whole body. In any great revolution the generality, by not opposing those who are active in bringing it about, give a tacit consent to it; without which no power could be preserved. All power then is from the people. The English people have never resigned their power of disposing of their own money. The Americans are in a situation entirely different from that of their brethren in England who have no votes, because it is not in their power to acquire the right of voting. It cannot be supposed that when the American colonists left their country they meant to give up their right of disposing of their own property. This right has been acknowledged by the establishment of assemblies, in which they have actually enjoyed it. They are in the same situation with the people of Ireland, and like them have been taxed by their own representatives from their first settlement. The temporary exemption from taxes in Massachusetts Bay refers to the quit rents for lands. The clause with respect to Pennsylvania regards not internal taxation but duties for the regulation of trade. If the British parliament always possessed the right of taxing America, why have they suffered them to tax themselves in their assemblies for perhaps 150 years?

After these replies, nothing material occurs in this *Letter* except a censure of Mr. Wesley's inconsistency in writing such an *Address* after having, in the year 1770, declared that he doubted whether the measures pursued respecting America could be defended on any principles of law, equity, or prudence. But the consistency or steadiness of Mr. Wesley's opinion do not concern the present question, and respecting this we have already sufficiently expressed our sentiments.

Source: published review; *Monthly Review* (Oct. 1775), 350.

From 'Casca'¹ [William Moore]

November 4, 1775

[p. 275]

*** The authors of *The Crisis* propose in their next number to *dissect* the last *bloody* speech of the present pious, hypocritical sovereign; the operation would have been performed this week, but the *Calm Address* of the canting jesuitical Wesley, agreeable to the order of time, claimed our attention first.

Whilst servile Wesley's pen with Johnson's vies,
Enforcing all his sophistry and lies;
Enlisted in the service of the *press*,
His *passive* Soul breaths forth a *Calm Address*.
This *saint* from the holy toils how *mammon* draws!
Truth his pretence, but *gain* the latent cause.
A *mitre* tempts; and North, not slow to thank,
Returns the *priest* his compliments in *bank*.
North knows saints fight, but never think nor yield;
And thus secures the myriads of Moorfield.
Mad hosts, who drown with hymns the trumpet's sound,
And purchase heav'n by dunging hostile ground!

Anonymous

The trumpet founds in Zion. The sons of Whitefield are alarmed, and John Wesley himself hath taken up the arms of the spirit.

How wretched a cause have [Lord] Bute and [Lord] Mansfield,² when the very tabernacles must be ransacked for advocates, and field-preachers are enlisted in the service of a ministerial *press*? General Gate complains (I think in his proclamation for enforcing military law in America) that the *presses* there teemed with sedition, and that the very *pulpits* were prostituted to that service. Is not every imposition, every means of blinding and deceiving the good people of England practised in our metropolis both by clergy and laity, in the pulpits, in the public papers, in lying pamphlets, in public coffee houses; nay, in private families, as often as ministerial hirelings can gain admittance? Do not the corrupt lackies of a corrupt *administration*, insinuate themselves, like evil genii, into every company, in all shapes, and characters, labouring to taint the principles of every honest *revolutionist*? Are [p. 276] not the pastors of every *sect* pressed into the trammels of *government* to aid, defend, or palliate the pernicious schemes of Bute and Mansfield, those Empsons and Dudleys of the nation? The very enthusiasts of Moorfields are now wrapped in political reveries, their tabernacles resound with *anti-revolution* doctrines, whilst their holy pastors are drawn aside by the *mammon* of unrighteousness. Peradventure a pair of *lawn sleeves*³ is promised (and only promised) to John Wesley, if he will work up his *thousand and ten thousands* to roar like bulls of Bashan in the cause of *falsehood, corruption, tyranny, and blood*.

By the acquisition of this leader of the *elect* how are the secular arms of [Samuel] Johnson and scribbling garreteers strengthened and enforced? How is the *ministerial* cause supported? With what

¹A pseudonym of an anti-government publisher William Moore, who edited *The Crisis* as well as *The Whisperer*.

²John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute; and William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield.

³Part of the apparel of a bishop.

awful pomp will the *royal standard* be hoisted when the *maddening zealots*, with John Wesley at their head, shall dance before it and all the furious hosts of *hot-heads* shall shout 'Amen' to the bloody purposes of a pusillanimous drivelling king, clothed in *purple and fine linen*!

However this new captain of our *political salvation* may have escaped unanswered from his tabernacles, he must, in this worldly warfare of the *press*, submit not only to a reply but perhaps to some rebuke. When he takes up the pen, he must remember that he wields a weapon of the *flesh*, and must sometimes stoop to kiss the rod.

In this late *Calm Address* to our American colonies I find but little to applaud, though much to reprehend. This preacher treads in Johnson's steps, but without the least abilities or knowledge, as a *hackney writer*. He is a mimic of his master. He apes his *sophistry*, and almost equals his *audacity*. He sets out by likening a body of *colonists*, settling under the royal charter, to a trading *corporation* or the *vestry of a parish*. Proceeding upon this infectious mistake (among others which he has copied from his master Johnson) all he advances must be wrong. He will pardon me if I submit to him my notion of a *chartered colony*, by observing that emigrants from civilised states who have the settlement of a *colony* in view, though they leave their native country, do not mean to abandon their natural allegiance. They change their place without a change either of their national or social principles and attachments. In consequence of these sentiments and affections, the first act of notoriety where they fix their settlement is generally to hoist the colours of the state from whence they come, claiming by proclamation the vacant territory for their lawful sovereign, whose charter they receive, of course, as an assurance of his protection, in return to their loyal declaration of allegiance. Thus foreign territories, discovered by Englishmen (and the same rule holds among all civilized nations) belong to the crown of England. I say to the crown of England, to the sovereign only, and not to king, lords, and commons. It is the undoubted prerogative of the sovereign to grant a *charter*, which may, if the king thinks fit, be charter of *incorporation* of his *colony*. By the word 'colony' I understand a body of emigrants who separate from one *community* to form *another distinct one* where they please, still professing allegiance to, and in return receiving protection from, their natural or lawful sovereign, by virtue of his royal charter. Now where is the least similitude between such an emigrant body, though *incorporated* (as some have actually been) for the purpose of settling a *colony*, and a trading *corporation*; except that both have received the royal charter? At the same time, it must be observed that it is not in the *king's* power, whatever he may intend, to *abridge* the rights and liberties of his subjects by any restrictions in such charter. Though the chartered body thereby acquires a new *politic* capacity, yet it still retains, in all its *individual* members, its *natural* capacity. A mere *fiction* of law cannot extinguish the rights of a subject. To such a *fiction* every corporate body owes its *politic* existence. Taken *collectively* it is the creature of the *king*, and its rights are circumscribed (as the ministerial scribblers insist) by *charter*. But taken *individually*, they are so many members or (permit me to say) *heirs* of the British constitution, whose rights were clearly settled at the revolution, as far as that settlement extends. For it is not perfect; it is confessed on all hands [p. 277] (not inimical to the constitution) that some necessary stipulations are omitted. Be that as it may, the rights of all *corporate* bodies, acting in their *natural* capacities, can be limited only (as the constitution stands at present) by the compact between sovereign and subject at the *revolution*. We do not find *there* that subjects can be *taxed* without their *consent*, as parson Wesley asserts. We do not find there that the *king* can annex his *colony* (his own *demesnes*) to the realm of England by other means than the policy of the English law allows; that is, by act of parliament. For to such acts as concern the whole realm, the whole realm, all its *three* estates, king, lords, and commons, must be parties. By these, and these means only, can a colony *out of the realm* be *taxed* constitutionally by our parliament. The colony cannot otherwise be either *virtually*, or *actually* represented. And therefore all the flimsy Tory arguments respecting *virtual* representation must fall to the ground. And the mercenary troops of ministerial *pen-men* are laid on their backs, as it is devoutly wished their *swordsmen* may be on the plains of distressed, insulted, and dragooned America.

If the pockets of America, like those of Great Britain, must be picked for the worst of purposes, that of undermining the constitution, let them be picked *in due form* and with some show and colour of decency. Let them be picked according to the established precedent for annexing the sole property of the crown in *foreign territories* to the realm of England. They will still be picked no less by *act of parliament*, without letting loose *famine, fire, massacre*, and all the miseries or war upon subjects whom neither *king* nor *parliament* have a right to *pillage* but in a *legal way*.

Let me pursue this disquisition a little further. In that community which English colonists have left, they were either *actually or virtually* represented, or they could not have been bound by any law of the legislature which they left behind them. In the new community also of which they are now become a part, they must be represented likewise, either actually or virtually, before they can be bound. But in the legislature of that community which they have left they cannot be bound (in respect to pecuniary taxation) because they are now no longer, either actually or virtually, represented there. How can the commons of England give and grant the money of a distinct community of another realm or territory, not yet annexed to the realm of England? In a territory which is the *sovereign's demesne*, for whatever some hireling scribblers have asserted to the contrary. Yet all territories newly discovered still belong (as they did at the time the several settlements were made and granted on the American continent) to the crown. They who deny this know, or ought to know, that in order to avoid an unanswerable difficulty, they have the impudence to deny an undoubted truth.

As the king's prerogative stands at present (for it still stands as it did in the reigns of our worst kings, the Stuarts) all new colonies must hold their lands (as the old ones originally did) of the king, as tenants in *capite*. It is indeed in the sovereign's power, if he pleases, to grant these *demesnes* of his in *capite* to be held of him for the future as *free socage*. In such case the kings of England have ever received some valuable consideration for such grant. King Charles the second received a subsidy of four and a half per cent on the sugars of that island from the colonists of Barbados on this consideration. There are other instances of this in the other Caribbean islands. Now who were parties to this grant? The parliament of England did not, nor could, interfere with the least propriety (though jealous of prerogative at that time a-day) in a matter which concerned the king and his property alone. Who granted this revenue to the king, this *internal tax* (for so it was), the parliament of England or the legislature of Barbados? It was the latter, who thought then, as America thinks now (and rightly thinks), that they had an exclusive and peculiar right to give and grant the monies which they earned by the sweat of their own brows in community distinct from that of England. This *tax* was, in the strictest sense, *internal* for it was to be paid before [p. 278] their own sugars could be permitted to be shipped from their island to their mother-country. Though King Charles the second (who by turns duped and was again himself the dupe of parliament) in his charters to Connecticut and Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania, though William and Mary in their grant of Maryland to Lord Baltimore, expressly reserve to the parliament of England (merely out of complaisance) their full power of taxation, etc. over those colonies, yet that reservation can confer no new powers on the parliament. Much less can it enable them to tax unconstitutionally, and without either actual or virtual representation, persons who had quitted their territory for a distinct community, and who had acquired in that new community a new property of their own, of which they cannot legally be stripped but in due and legal form, either by the law of nature, the law of nations, or the common law of England, which every emigrant to an English colony takes with him, though he leaves his former legislature together with the local privileges and benefits of England behind him.

Now tell me, thou *calm addresser*, thou echo of thy master Johnson, in what respect is such a chartered body of emigrants like a trading *corporation*, or like the *vestry of a parish*, neither of which bodies are (like foreign colonies) out the realm, or unrepresented either actually or virtually in our parliament? No argument can be fairly formed, no just and true conclusions can be drawn between cases which are totally dissimilar. Though this corporation of colonists may subsist (as Mr. Wesley says) by a grant from *higher authority*, yet that *high authority* to which he says they still continue subject cannot *tax*

(and most of our royal charters declare that the King will not *tax* them himself). Nor can the king give the parliament of England a power of taxing them. And therefore the reservations of such a power in the royal charters to our parliament is vain and nugatory, mere courtly froth, as I said before.

Having thus, with more attention than Mr. Wesley's whole performance deserves, overturned his corner stone, I leave all his first eight plain inferences, as so many baseless superstructures, to fall to the ground. Whatever his designs may be, he is no less a *visionary* in politics than in religion. His first eight paragraphs are a mere abridgement of the futile arguments which have been retailed by all the ministerial scribblers from their captain, Doctor Johnson, down to himself, and have been confuted again and again.

I come now to his ninth paragraph, where he declares his opinion freely, upon his own *virre dire*, assuring his readers that he is quite unbiased, and that he was nothing to hope or fear on either side. I congratulate him upon this Christian spirit of self-denial, so highly becoming a man of his sacred function. Should he hope for a *bishopric*, or even for a *deanery*, he must know that no confidence can be put in princes, nor in the sons of men, for they will deceive him. Should he fear that his numerous flocks (from whence alone, perhaps, his hope cometh) should return to their sober senses, awakened as from a dream by the tyranny of their rulers, his fears are groundless; such holy poisons as priestcraft can still prevent all recovery.

But let us hear him. He says there are a few men who are declared enemies to *monarchy*. —True, all *revolutionists* are enemies to every monarchy which is *unlimited*. Now if the *king*, lords, and commons were to form a mere *cabal*, a *junto*, a *combination and confederacy*; if the *king* had a venal *majority* of his own in the two houses, he would then be to all intents and purposes a monarch *unlimited*. Such a *monarch*, and such *monarchy* a Briton will always hate.

As to *personal* hatred, we see it sometimes even in the animal creation. Why does the generous horse hate the *ass*, as much as a wise man hates a *fool*?

As to the kingly *office*, it will ever be revered in England while exercised upon *revolution principles*, and forever opposed (perhaps to its destruction) when it proceeds upon principles of *usurpation, tyranny, and blood*. Every *kingly* act which exceeds the limits of *humanity* degrades the *kingly office* beneath the office of [p. 279] the *common handman*.

As to a *commonwealth*, which Mr. Wesley dreams of, I believe it is no wise man's thought, much less his *idol*. Yet Mr. Wesley seems as if he was deep in this secret. He has discovered these Guy Fawkes⁴ with their dark lanterns. This good man certainly pictures out (like his predecessor John Bunyan) what he has seen in some spiritual trance. Let him enjoy his vision, and penetrate, if he can, to the very bottom of a design which seems to be secret to all beside himself.

As to *foreign assistance*, England has good reason *of late* to be sick of it. And America can have no occasion to call it in; she is a nation of warriors, and is fully able (to the sorrow of our Machiavels) to effect her virtuous purposes by her own intrinsic strength.

Mr. Wesley's tenth paragraph contains the gentle, comfortable, sage, emollient admonitions of—an old woman.

His eleventh paragraph is altogether dehortatory. It is a masterpiece of rhetoric in that style. Dissuading America from a final breach and disunion with Great Britain, he apprize her that the 'remedy will be worse than the disease'. That is to say, that *truly patriotic revolutionary resistance* will, in its effects, be more pernicious to brave and virtuous subjects than the worst of miseries which war can enforce or tyrants can invent. For O! says the preacher, what convulsions must poor America feel before any government is settled? —'Poor America', Mr. Wesley? What, do you pity her? It is all over with you then. Take my word for it, you will never be a *bishop*. But to be serious. Why must America be so horribly convulsed before a government is settled there? What settled government upon earth ever

⁴An infamous participant in the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605.

proceeded upon sounder policy, greater deliberation, wisdom, fortitude, and good conduct (I hope shortly to be able to add *success*) than the several American states. If to see a virtuous individual struggling with afflictions is a spectacle worthy of the gods, as the divine Socrates declared, with what adoration would that greatest of all heathen philosophers have looked upon such a nation as America, united to a man in the noblest cause that ever justified *resistance*? *What yoke* can such a nation of heroes fear but that which already galls them; that which they are wisely and bravely resolved to shake off, casting the cords of England from them? Should this resolve be crowned with the success it merits, our *spiritual pastor's* fears for the 'poor Americans' will be eased.

The man of God in his twelfth paragraph discovers, that his American brethren are dupes and tools to the designs of certain Achitophels, who are in league to overturn the 'English government in America'. I suspect a most unpardonable *erratum* of the printer here. I am pretty confident (if Mr. *Wesley* is an honest man, for he does not want understanding) that instead of the words 'English government', we ought to read 'English usurpation'. Let the true reading of this passage be restored and these Achitophels will be Absaloms, these designing incendiaries will become saviours of the constitution.

I am now arrived at the spiritual exhortation to peace and *passive obedience* with which this holy advocate for regal tyranny concludes his *Calm Address*. I shall dismiss it with this short observation, that if the city of London would but take their cue from this preacher-up of *non-resistance*, this divine joiner of borrowed arguments for *slavery*, their next address would be music to the *sovereign*. But, be the success of Mr. Wesley's little labours what they may, as he professes to write from the *heart*, a priest of *such principles* most certainly deserves a *mitre*.

I cannot, however, pass over his appendix to this *pastoral catch-penny*, wherein he passes many strictures upon Dr. Smith's sermon at Philadelphia. Mr. Wesley, like all other enthusiasts, is a very bold asserter, but a very weak opponent. What he endeavours to show in his appendix is that the American complaints of unconstitutional taxes, violated rights, and infringed (or as he calls them, *mutilated*) charters, are vain and groundless. But hear, ye sheepish volunteers for whom this preacher is beating up, how little this holy man knows of the English constitution as it stands since the *revolution*. Dr. Smith has asserted, and most truly, that no power on earth has a right to *give and grant* away American property without American consent. Then, says Mr. Wesley, you have no *sovereign*, because every *sovereign* under heaven has a right to *tax* his subjects; that is, to grant [p. 280] their property either *with* or *without* their consent. So peremptory, so audacious, so ensnaring an assertion should have dropped from him only in the *pulpit*, where he could neither have been confronted, contradicted, or exposed. This assertion in a *general* sense is false; in a *confined* one, as relative only to an English sovereign, not only false but *treacherous*, nay *traitorous*. It is a capital treason against the sacred compact between king and people at the blessed *revolution*. It is poisoning the ductile minds of his implicit believers with that exploded doctrine which cost Charles the first his head.

Hail Wesley, hail! Thy *brass* the prize secures:
Ev'n Johnson's front's a bashful front to yours.

But this *ecclesiastic tool* does not blush even to repeat his monstrous assertion. 'Am I, or two millions of Englishmen, made *slaves*', says he, 'because we are taxed without our own consent?' Tell me, then, thou shepherd of the *elect*, thou inspired teacher of that faithful remnant which shall be saved, thou great surviving luminary of the *tabernacle*, if this is not *slavery*, what is the difference between *slavery* and *freedom*? — I pause for a reply. — Take your time for it, even till the last trump shall found. In the interim, let us hear this reverend deceiver again, this *unbiassed* imposter, who has nothing to hope or fear from siding with an anti-revolution ministry, and thus basely offering up the grateful incense of a court-sycophant to the weakest, if not the wickedest of men. This *divine* observes that one of the American charters exempts the colony from the payment of taxes for *seven years*. This implies, says he, that taxes

are to paid after the expiration of that term. And remember too, says he, that the Pennsylvania charter says, in express terms, that you are liable to taxation. These are the reasonings, observations, and opinions of all our tyrants and their scribblers in respect to all the colonies, whether the royal charters speak or imply anything upon this head or not. But neither the royal charters themselves, nor those sycophants who are paid for their misinterpretation of them, can annul *right*, or sanctify and establish *wrong*. The nature of these two contrarieties will continue the same eternally, let a venal majority confound them as they will. It is well known that no colony ever was taxed *internally but* by their own assemblies, till the ingenious Mr. Grenville suggested that happy mode, which was soon dropped by our parliament in a *panic*, but afterwards resumed, and is now to be maintained and enforced by every pitiful ministerial stratagem at home, and by famine, sword, fire, and all the plagues, calamities, and devastations of a most inhuman war abroad.

This righteous scribbler runs back, even to the early days of William the Conqueror, another confessed tyrant, for arguments to support the despotic measures of a slavish, arbitrary majority of parliament in the pious reign of George the Third. But to say the truth, our pamphleteer seems at all neither to understand himself, nor to convey his meaning clearly to the reader. I will therefore only remind him that all earthly power, if communicated to a sovereign, must necessarily be communicated by the people, and by the people only, in whom alone it can reside.

Why should this *calm addresser* fly, in his concluding word, from the exhortatory to the accusatory style? Why should he leave his American sheep in a fume? Why should he so uncharitably, and so groundlessly, condemn them as so many wicked confederates against their rightful *sovereign* and the *fundamental* laws of their country? Is every rightful sovereign so divine a being that he cannot commence a *tyrant*? And are the laws relating to American taxation the fundamental laws of England? The truth is that this clerical plagiary, for his arguments are all pilfered, is either totally ignorant of the English constitution or else he prostitutes a good understanding, and a sacred character, with selfish or worse than selfish views, to serve the worst purpose of the worst administration that ever ruined a weak and deluded prince, or disgraced the annals of a free country.

Casca

Source: published transcription; 'On the *Calm Address*', *The Crisis*, No. 42 (Nov. 4, 1775), 275–80.

From 'Omega'

Monday Morning, November 6, 1775

To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley

You last night asserted at the meeting of your society that the Americans had been taxed again and again under the reigns of Charles the Second, King William, and Queen Anne, and two or three times in the reign of George the Second. But this was only an assertion without giving us one instance. This therefore is to request of you to mention a few instances, as I am inclined to believe it would throw more light upon the subject than any thing that has been said hitherto. Because if the Americans have paid taxes, as you assert, a hundred years past, why all this clamour now? If they think they have a right now to refuse the payment of taxes, they had equally as much right then, and it seems odd they did not make this stir sooner. Your compliance with the above will oblige

Yours, etc.,

Omega

Source: published transcription; Middlesex Journal and Evening Advertiser (Nov. 9–11, 1775), p. 1; Public Advertiser (Nov. 10, 1775), p. 2.

From the Rev. James Rouquet

Bristol
November 6, 1775

Dear Sir,

In your preface to the new edition of the *Calm Address* I meet with the following paragraph. 'The book which this writer says I so strongly recommended, *I never yet saw with my eyes*. The words he says I spoke, *never came out of my lips*. But I really believe he was told so.'¹

I am really concerned at being reduced to the painful necessity of reminding you that, upon *your* recommendation of it, I purchased that book entitled *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves*. That at my house you very strongly recommended it to your brother, and urged him to read it as a treatise which had given *you* the fullest satisfaction upon the point, and would unquestionably convince *him* also that the Americans were oppressed, injured people, and that Great Britain had no right whatever to tax them. That at my house you advised me to lend it to him for that purpose, which I accordingly did upon the spot.

Hence it should appear that somehow or other you must have fallen into a great mistake. As also your Bristol correspondent has done, if by the *assisting* gentleman he means *me*.² For in truth I knew not even of Mr. Evans's intention to answer you till his answer was fully written. However, thus much I must acknowledge, that the words which he says you spoke were indeed spoke by you to *me*, and to many others, who are ready, when called upon, to give the amplest proof of it.

At the time you so expressed yourself concerning the Americans, and the book in question, I everywhere reported your words, and upon *your* authority recommended that book. Supposing all the while that I acted herein quite agreeably to your own wishes. These reports passed current at that time from me and many more (Mr. Evans himself among others) who rejoiced to find you in these sentiments. Since that time indeed I have said the same things, and much lamented that the alteration in your ideas upon the subject should have been so sudden, and so great.

Mr. Evans therefore was undoubtedly told those things at the time the words were spoken, and not unfrequently of late, both by me and others, upon the most indisputable evidence and the fullest conviction that you had really spoken them. Therefore your correspondent might have given information not of *two* persons, but of two and twenty concerned (if he had so pleased) in aiding and assisting the writer of that letter. But I again repeat it, I knew not of it till it was written.

Now dear sir, let me beseech you seriously to consider what can be done. Your reputation is concerned. So is the reputation of the gentleman and tradesman of the Church of England. For you seem to acquit Mr. Evans of the falsehood, and to charge it upon those two. Mr. Evans is called upon to produce his authority. Amongst others, the gentleman and tradesman marked out by your correspondent, (that is, I take for granted, Mr. Pine and myself) must undoubtedly do justice to themselves, and declare the truth. I am very sure, sir, we should both of us be very sorry to find ourselves under the necessity of doing so. And if you either forgot yourself at the time you wrote, or mistook the treatise which Mr. Evans refers to, I beg leave to submit it to your own judgment whether it will not be better to write another

¹These sentences appear in the first two printings of JW's 'New, Corrected, and Enlarged' (or '4th') edition, which was published in early November 1775. JW's response to this letter from Rouquet, on Nov. 12, 1775, acceded to his memory.

²In a footnote to the introductory 'To the Reader' that JW added to the '4th' edn. he said 'I am informed by a correspondent in Bristol that this letter was wrote by two Anabaptist ministers, assisted by a gentleman and a tradesman of the Church of England'.

preface to the *Address*, in which the mistake shall be acknowledged and corrected.³ And at the same time authorize Mr. Evans, in your name, to publish the same acknowledge and correction in his preface to a new edition of his *Letter*.

I beg, dear sir, you will take this in as good part as it is really meant, that you will favour me with a *satisfactory* reply to this, and believe me to be

Your very obedient servant,

James Rouquet

Source: published transcription; Evans, *Reply*, 6–9.

³Instead, JW simply dropped the sentences Rouquet was protesting from the last printing (R) of his '4th' edition.

From Caleb Evans

Bristol
November 7, 1775

[p. i]

To the Reader¹

[1.] The Rev. Mr. Wesley having prefixed to a new edition of his *Calm Address to the Colonies*, some strictures on my letter to him upon that subject, I am obliged to trespass upon your patience, whilst I lay before you a few observations upon this new part of his performance.

[2.] Having been publically accused of the grossest inconsistency in publishing sentiments upon America affairs diametrically opposite to those he had before openly avowed; and being convicted of the most palpable forgery in offering to the world under his own name, and without the slightest acknowledgment, the work of Dr. Johnson; he at length owns that he did once think differently upon the subject, but that a tract entitled *Taxation no Tyranny* gave him new light, and that in order to impart this new light to others, he 'extracted the chief arguments from that treatise and added an application to those whom it most concerns'. But how this *forced confession* acquits Mr. Wesley of the most flagrant want of *candour*, to say the least, in not telling the world when he *first* published his *Address* that he was [p. ii] once of different sentiments, and giving them the reasons of the *surprising change* that had been wrought in him, I leave you to judge; as also of his *honesty*, in publishing as *his* own what he had pilfered from another, without the slightest apology, till his plagiarism was exposed in the public newspapers.

[3.] He tells you my letter to him is wrote in just such a spirit as he expected. I have heard it found fault with as being much *too mild*, considering the duplicity of the person to whom it was addressed. And I really think a greater degree of poignancy than I have made use of would have been highly justifiable. Mr. Wesley however was not disappointed; and as to my other readers, they will, I hope, forgive me this wrong.

[4.] He next exhibits to his readers the 'flowers' strewed in my tract, such as 'contemptible sophistry!' 'Fallacious to the last degree!' 'Childish quirks!' 'Pitiful sophisms!' – but has very prudently declined referring his readers to the pages these flowers adorn, because they would then instantly see that they were flowers of Mr. Wesley's own cultivation, and only *presented* to him by 'Americanus' as his undoubted property. Consult the letter, gentle reader, page 7 and 8, and then say whether I have offered the gentleman any flowers that do not belong to him.

[5.] He further tells you my tract is also strewed with 'strong assertions' and 'florid quotations', but that all the 'arguments' produced in it may be contained in a *nutshell*. Mr. Wesley is surely the last man in the world that should find fault with mere *assertions*, because he has all his life time made use of them instead of arguments. But whether my letter to him contains any one assertion without offering a proof of it, let the candid reader decide for himself—the letter is before him. As to the florid [p. iii] *quotations*, I certainly might have saved myself the trouble of telling the reader they were quotations. Mr. Wesley has a shorter way. Like him, I might have made them *my own words* and kept my own counsel, and who knows but I might have passed undetected? Or if detected, how easy would it have been to have replied, I received new light from these authors myself, and therefore extracted their chief arguments that I might impart the light I had received to others. To be sure, if Mr. Wesley had recommended Johnson's book which had imparted such light to him, or candidly informed his readers upon his *first* publishing his address that it was chiefly extracted from Johnson's treatise, this would not have answered the end of imparting light to others! But the *only way* for him to do this was, it seems, to become a barefaced

¹Caleb Evans added this dated preface to the 3rd edn. of his *Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley*.

plagiary himself. A character by no means new to him.

[6.] But my name he makes you believe is 'legion'. He is informed, he tells you, by a correspondent in Bristol that my letter was wrote by 'two Anabaptist ministers, assisted by a gentleman and a tradesman of the Church of England'.² A goodly company! We must have wrote then, I suppose, about a half-penny worth apiece, for the whole performance sells for two pence. But perhaps you may wonder why he tells you this marvellous tale, supposing it were true. Why the reason is that he may cry out, 'Anabaptist! Anabaptist!'—taking it for granted that none of his people will ever dare to look into the performance of an Anabaptist. To save his correspondent in Bristol the trouble of sending Mr. Wesley any more of this anabaptistical information, I have prefixed my name to the letter I before published under the signature of 'Americanus'; and do assure you that no gentleman or tradesman of [p. iv] the Church of England, or of any other church in the world, furnished me with any single sentiment contained in it, with a view to its publication. The facts relative to Mr. Wesley himself I had long been possessed of, and should not have wrote at all, as I verily believe, had it not been to expose the shameful versatility and disingenuity of this artful man, and to prevent, as far as I could, the spread of that mischief his performance might otherwise be productive of.

[7.] He pretends to give you a 'specimen' of my arguments. With what fairness and integrity he does it, I appeal to the public, at whose tribunal I stand. This writer ('Americanus') asserts, says Mr. Wesley, twenty times 'He that is taxed without his own consent, that is without being represented, is a slave.' Mr. Wesley answers, 'No. I have no representative in parliament, but I am taxed; yet I am no slave. Yea, nine in ten throughout England, ...' He ('Americanus') replies, 'but they may have votes if they will, they may purchase freeholds.' 'What', says Mr. Wesley, 'can every man in England purchase a freehold! No, not one in a hundred. But be that as it may, they have no vote now. Yet they are no slaves.' Such, reader, is the 'specimen' Mr. Wesley exhibits of my arguments, and of his decisive answer to them! Methinks, instead of telling his readers they may be all contained in a 'nutshell', he should rather have said they were nonentities—for according to *his specimen* of them, they subsist only *in vacuo*. But if you will be at the pains to review my arguments, you will find that the purport of them is to prove that the *non-represented* in England, if possessed of property enough to purchase 40 shillings a year freehold, may become, if they please, *represented*; or if they do not, that they are nevertheless secure [p. v] against the abuse of the power of taxation, because those that *tax* must pay the same tax with the *taxed*, and the *represented* share the burden equally with the *non-presented*. But (and here the *whole stress* of the argument lies) that none of these circumstances will apply to the case of the Americans, and that no conclusion therefore can be drawn to justify the taxing them without being represented from the case of the *non-represented* here. And now, what think you, reader, of Mr. Wesley's specimen of my arguments? Does it not prove how unjustly I have strewed my letter to him with the flowers he speaks of? After this proof of *ingenuity* and *candour*, who will ever dare to charge Mr. Wesley with making use of 'contemptible sophistry'? Who will doubt his *integrity* in doing what he can, to 'serve', as he expresses it, 'his king and country'?

[8.] My florid *quotations* are treated just as cavalier as my own *nutshell arguments*. Nor am I a little proud of the honour Mr. Wesley has undesignedly done me, by placing my arguments as a political writer upon a level with those of such resplendent characters as a Montesquieu and a Blackstone. The celebrated Montesquieu is the *fanciful* Montesquieu, Mr. Wesley tells us. And because he asserts that 'all the inhabitants of England have a right of voting at the election of a representative, except such as are so mean as to be deemed to have *no will of their own*', he very cunningly infers that certainly this right belongs then to every 'man, woman, and child in England'! This doubtless is to prove how scandalous it is to charge Mr. Wesley with making use of 'childish quirks'. How far the ladies have 'really a will of

²See the footnote JW added to the introductory 'To the Reader' in his '4th' edn. of *Calm Address*.

their own' is a point Mrs. Wesley can perhaps better determine than her husband. But that the English constitution supposes the [p. vi] wills of the married ladies, with respect to public affairs at least, pretty much under the influence of their husbands (or, if the wills of their husbands be under their influence, it comes to the same) will not be denied. And if the constitution has made no provision for the exercise of the wills of *old maids* in voting for parliament men it is to be sure a *fundamental* defect, and upon proper application to the legislature from the *spinsters* of Great Britain would, no doubt, be remedied! The answer to Judge Blackstone is of the same complexion with that to the fanciful Montesquieu; and it seems therefore hardly fair not to the honour the judge with an epithet, as well as Montesquieu. Judge Blackstone says, in the quotation I made from that great man, that 'in a *free state*, every man who is supposed to be a *free agent* ought to be, in some measure, his own governor'. But, says Mr. Wesley, 'the argument proves too much. For are not *women* free agents? Yea and poor as well as rich men. According to this argument there is no *free state* under the sun.' Well argued indeed! The sisters of this gentleman's societies, will, it is hoped wait upon him in a body, with Mrs. Wesley at their head, to thank him for thus ably supporting the just rights and franchises of *female nature*! As to the *poor*, they owe him but little for what he has done for them, as they already enjoy the privilege of choosing representatives in a much greater proportion than the rich.

[9.] The curious observations of this gentleman upon slavery and liberty, his alterations of sentiment respecting the American charters *since* the first publication of his *Address*, his leaving out in one part of the *new edition* the *falsehood* he had asserted concerning the Massachusetts charter and still retaining it in another,³ with many [p. vii] other curiosities of a similar nature, I must leave to my reader's own animadversion, as it would be an almost endless task to expose all the inconsistencies of this motley writer.

[10.] The following paragraph is the only remaining one that deserves an answer, and it shall have an effectual and serious one. 'The book', says Mr. Wesley, 'which this writer (Americanus) says I so strongly recommended, *I never yet saw with my eyes*.' I reply, the book referred to (see p. 22 of my *Letter to Mr. Wesley*) is entitled *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves*. Now I solemnly declare this very book was put into my hands by a particular friend of mine, as a book Mr. John Wesley had strongly recommended to Mr. [William] Pine, one of his own people, upon the subject of American taxation. Mr. Pine (printer in Wine Street, Bristol) declares, and will make oath if required, that the Rev. John Wesley with his own hands put this book into his (Mr. Pine's) hands, accompanying it with the strongest recommendations and requesting him to publish extracts from it in his [*Bristol*] *Gazette* for the information of the public. That in consequence hereof he (Mr. Pine) read this book himself, recommended it as from Mr. John Wesley to many of his friends, and published extracts from it, as desired by Mr. John Wesley, in his several papers of Sept. 22, 29, and Oct. 6, 1774. And the identical book which he received from Mr. John Wesley's own hands, Mr. Pine has now in his possession. The Rev. Mr. [James] Rouquet, a worthy clergyman of the Church of England, declares and will make oath if required that the Rev. John Wesley recommended the aforesaid book to him, in consequence of which he purchased and read it. That some time after Mr. John Wesley recommended the same book to [p. viii] his brother, the Rev. Charles Wesley, at his (Mr. Rouquet's) house, as a book that would open his eyes. And that in consequence of such recommendation, he (Mr. Rouquet) immediately produced the said book, and in the presence of the Rev. John Wesley, lent it to his brother the Rev. Charles Wesley, who took it home with him, and after some time returned it with Mr. Rouquet's name written on the cover in his (Mr. C. Wesley's) own hand writing—which identical book is now in my possession, and the title of which exactly corresponds with that which I have given in my letter to Mr.

³In his '4th' edn. JW shortened his original §7, adding a new §8 in which Massachusetts does not appear. But he retained the Appendix reply to Smith's sermon, where Massachusetts is mentioned in §10.

John Wesley.

[11.] Mr. Wesley further says, 'And the words which he (Americanus) says I spoke, never came out of my lips.' Unless Mr. Wesley had more particularly specified the words referred to, it is impossible to give him a direct reply. But that he did speak the *very words* I say he did in my letter, *or words to that effect*, (which was what I affirmed) I do now again aver, upon the *same authority* as I had for asserting that he *recommended* the book which he says he never saw with his eyes. Mr. Wesley says, he 'really believes I was told so', and thereby acquits me of inventing a tale to asperse his character. But to stand acquitted to him is nothing. It is incumbent upon me to acquit myself and my friends to the public. Which I think I have now done; or if not, am ready when called upon yet further to do.

[12.] How far these things may give Mr. Wesley 'more light', I cannot say. But if they do not give the public *more light* into his real character, I can only add

*Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur.*⁴

'If the people *will* be deceived, let them be deceived.'

Source: published transcription; Evans, *Letter* (3rd edn.), i–viii. Also appeared in *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 2, 1775), p. 2; and *Bristol Journal* (Dec. 2, 1775), p. 3.

⁴A well-known Latin proverb.

From Thomas Joel¹

London
c. November 7, 1775

The Foundery Set to Work
Ammunition made and sold by J. W. Cracker-maker
to Laird Boot and Miss Jenny Cameron.²

*Ne patriae validas in viscera vertite vires.*³

To JOHN WESLEY, M.A.A.P.A.T.F.

Sir,

I now take up that part of your *Calm Address* wherein you compliment yourself with nothing less than *universal* consent to your peremptory decisions upon a subject which has employed the pens of our greatest civilians. And I take upon me to say, with due submission to your superior understanding, they differ from you in opinion. Indeed their sentiments are the very reverse of what you have, or would impose upon your too credulous brethren. You say (p. 11.) ‘All *that* (you mean I suppose *who*) *impartially* consider what has been observed, *must readily allow* that the English parliament has *undoubted* right to tax all the English colonies.’ Very modest this, whether we consider it as a compliment to your own judgment, or that of your readers. For my part, I have considered *impartially* what has been observed, yet I neither allow nor believe there is even a shadow of truth in your conclusion. For by a statute of Edward the First it is declared, ‘that no *tallage* or *aid*’ (loans, excise duties, customs, and taxes) ‘shall be levied by the king or his heirs, without the good will and assent of the archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, knights, burgesses, and other the *freemen* of the commonality of this realm.’ Likewise by a statute of King Edward the Third, and other good laws, ‘the subjects have inherited this freedom, that they should not be compelled to contribute to any *tax*, *tallage*, *aid*, or other like charge, *not set by common consent of parliament*.’ Now a parliament is nothing more than *delegates* from the *freemen* of the commonality of Great Britain, or a *representation* of the people of England *at large*. Therefore, if there is any part of the king’s dominions where *subjects*, from *local* circumstances, or *peculiarity* of condition, cannot find *delegates*, or have a *representation* (I might say a *just*, *free*, *equal* one), they cannot be subject, *without their consent*, to a *taxation*; and such *taxation*, if imposed upon them by claims of *prerogative*, an *assumed supremacy*, or *vi et armis*,⁴ would be nothing less than tyranny. But such an imposition has been attempted, under specious pretences, by various means, and the blood of our dear brethren has been wantonly shed, in order to effect a *compulsive* obedience.

Why then do you ask, with an affected hypocritical uncertainty, ‘Whence is all this hurry and tumult? Why, is America all in an uproar?’ I will tell you: Because there is in this nation *not a few* of Mr. Wesley’s *Tory* principles, who for some years past have been industriously *reviving* and *spreading* *abroad*, by memoirs, histories, letters, addresses, speeches, and *calm* jesuitical two-penny pamphlets the

¹This is the continuation promised in Joel’s earlier letter, published in *London Evening Post* (Oct. 19–21, 1775), p. 4.

²See the same heading and a poem in the earlier letter.

³Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi.833; ‘Do not turn your powers against the vital organs of your country’.

⁴‘implied force’.

old refuted doctrines of despotism, which have a tendency to deprecate the Revolution and, while they intend to establish tyranny, unavoidably produce tumults, uproar, anarchy, bloodshed, misery, and ruin. But I beg pardon for interrupting you, when about to favour us with your 'free opinion'. This I perceive is ushered in with an *eulogium* on your dear self of which I shall take no notice, it being *vox presterea nihil*, mere sound without sense.

But to your opinion, it is this: 'We have a *few* men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy.' If you mean by 'monarchy' the English constitution, consisting of the three estates, king, lords, and commons, I agree with you that the enemies to *this* form of government are *very few*. But if you mean by 'monarchy' *absolute power* in the hands of one of the Stuart family, I am persuaded there are *not a few men in England* who, on this ground, 'hate most cordially both the *king* and his *office*', and have been, as you well know, 'for some years undermining it with all diligence'. But it is a doubt with me whether I have yet unravelled your dark sayings. For you hint there are *some people*, who *somewhere*, and *somehow*, are undermining your *darling monarchy*, 'in hopes of erecting their dear *commonwealth* upon its ruins. You *believe* they have let very few into their design.' And pray, Mr. Wesley, how is it *you*, of all men, are let into the secret? If you are *not*, you might as well have kept your strong faith or *belief* to yourself. If you *are*, it would have been more consistent with the character of an *honest* man to have pointed out these subtle dangerous underminers, that the *king's friends* (among whom I place myself) might know them and be upon their guard—especially as you confidently affirm, 'they are steadily pursuing their plan by various means, particularly by *inflammatory papers*'. O your servant, Mr. Wesley, the cloven foot peeps out again. I perfectly comprehend your candid opinion. But I am truly at a loss which to admire most, your *modesty* or your *Christian charity*. Under cover of invidious insinuations, you mean to suggest that the enemies to the obnoxious measures of the present ministry are enemies to the king, and the best friends to the British constitution are 'commonwealth men'. The true lovers of their king and country, who wish sincerely for *peace*, and to this end are opposing the destructive projects of despotism, these very men in Mr. Wesley's opinion 'are the *original cause* of the present breach between England and America'. Thus we plainly perceive the mark to which your poisonous arrows, feathered with calumny, are directed. It is not enough for you, and your pious friend *Lord Boot*,⁵ ye false sons of England, to contemplate the ruinous consequences produced already by the bloody resolutions of a near-sighted administration, who are sacrificing the honour of this nation and the lives of the king's subjects at the shrine of arbitrary power. But *you* must lend your *prostituted pen* to cover their inhuman wicked purposes. *You* must step forward, to increase the number of ministerial incendiaries. *You* must make an artful attempt to propagate the pernicious doctrine of *passive-obedience*, and to augment the fire of civil discord by an increase of fuel from the Foundery.

Sir, these mean surmises, in support of which even *appearances* are against you, merit the severest censures from the pen of truth. I must therefore take the liberty of telling you *my opinion freely* of this part of your *Calm Address*. However I take my leave of you for the present, as possibly you may have an engagement upon your hands, and I would by no means prevent you being '*up and doing*'.

Thomas Joel

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (Nov. 7–9, 1775), p. 1.

⁵John Wilkes's preferred way of referring to Lord Bute, prime minister under George III.

From William Pine¹

Bristol
November 7, 1775

Reverend Sir,

Your observations on the letter to you signed 'Americanus' (which was written by the Rev. Mr. Caleb Evans of Bristol) has involved me in a difficulty which I know not how to get over without suffering in my own character, or publicly contradicting you. Therefore I beg your advice.

The case is as follows. In September 1774, when you was in Bristol, you gave me a pamphlet entitled *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves* (I have been informed since it was written by Mr. Parker).² You recommended it strongly to me to put into my newspaper, as the best thing that had been written upon the subject. I accordingly published extracts from it [for] three successive weeks,³ and told several persons it was a well-wrote pamphlet and recommended by you as the best thing on the subject published.

I never suspected you would alter your mind on that head, otherwise I should have been more on my guard. But as you spoke very freely to me, I had no reason to hesitate about the matter, but thought myself right in encouraging what you had so strongly recommended. Some of Mr. [Caleb] Evan's friends were amongst the persons whom I desired to read the tract on your recommendation, who now call upon me for the truth of my assertion, as you have flatly denied every 'seeing the book with your eyes'.⁴ I apprehend you must have forgot the circumstances. But you will readily remember them, I doubt not, from the above particulars. Please to favour me, therefore, with a line how I am to act, as I have desired time to write to you before I give a positive answer.

Some persons here have been very industrious in circulating lies, and I suppose they are the same that sent you the account from Bristol of the *four* persons concerned in writing Mr. Evans's letter to you—though here they could only muster up *three*, which were Mr. [James] Rouquet, Mr. Evans, and myself. But you know (according to an old observation of your's) 'stories lose nothing by carriage'. I could wish you would be more on your guard against those inventors of lies. They are your flatterers; they are your deceivers. You would do well at least to keep one ear open for your real friends, who wish to acquaint you with the truth, by which means you would escape many inconveniencies as well as much reproach.

Though I am not accountable for my actions to every whisperer and tale-bearer who sets himself up in the judgment-seat to decide on my conduct, yet to you I will frankly declare the whole *previous* knowledge I had of the above *Letter*. The first intimation I received was when Mr. Evans brought me the copy for printing (for whom I have done business several years). Neither was I consulted by him or any other person on the head, anymore than I was about writing your *Calm Address*. So that you may judge what stress to lay in future on the information of those who would invent a falsehood—to be thought wiser than other people; or perhaps to serve a party—would sacrifice you and the dearest friend they have in the world.

¹William Pine (c. 1739–1803) was a printer, book-seller, and editor of two newspapers in Bristol. Pine was also active in the Methodist society in Bristol.

²[Thomas Parker], *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves* (London: Brotherton and Sewell, 1774).

³See the *Bristol Gazette* for Sept. 22, 29, and Oct. 6, 1774.

⁴See 'To the Reader', §4, in the '4th' edn. of JW's *Calm Address*.

I have for many years had the same respect for you as though you had been my father. I have much respect for you still. Actions speak louder than words. I have not admitted anything into my paper against you, though I have been importuned and have even offended persons who have be my customers on that account. Further, I have refused printing several pamphlets that have been written against you, in which my name might have been concealed. So that I have in measure sacrificed my interest and my friends to serve you; but cannot violate my conscience or truth to serve any person or cause whatever. Therefore I beg you will favour me with your reasons for denying any knowledge of the above pamphlet, that I may be enabled to give a proper answer to Mr. Evans's friends, and you will greatly oblige, sir,

Your very obedient servant,

W. Pine

Source: published transcription; Evans, *Reply*, 10–12.

From Alexander Forbes

Pembroke
November 8, 1775

Reverend Sir,

As my design in writing the following lines is that God may be glorified, I am persuaded you will pardon the freedom I have taken.

I was born in the province of Ulster in Ireland, and at the age of seven years could read the Bible tolerably well. My parents, perceiving in me an aptness for learning, had some thoughts of having me taught the languages. But their designs were frustrated by the following accident. A cow running her horn into my mouth, tore it in such a manner the roof thereof was laid almost across my throat, and occasioned my food often to gush out at my nostrils. Yet blessed be God, I was cured, and without any outward deformity.

When near seventeen years of age I enlisted in the forty-sixth regiment of foot [soldiers], where following the example of my licentious comrades, I plunged into all manner of sin. Thus I continued until I entered upon my twenty-first year, when lo, God convinced me of my sinfulness and helplessness. On this I sought the Lord in earnest, and soon found rest in him. I continued happy for some time. But giving way to trifling, I lost the precious pearl. I continued in this state about fifteen months; but being bred a Calvinist, I imagined it was only a 'winter season' and that, as I was once justified, I could never entirely make shipwreck of my faith.

As I sat one day with my comrades, I observed a leaf falling from a tree. Whereupon I reasoned thus: That leaf returns to earth, its original mother; so must my body. But where must my soul go then? This was like thunder to me. On this I instantly left my companions, went to my Bible and read the following words, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget God.'¹ I then knew not what to do! Whatever way I looked, I saw destruction before me. Then, in the bitterness of my soul, I cried, 'Lord save or I perish!'² On reading my Bible again, I found the following words, 'Though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me saith the Lord.'³ O, thought I, will the Lord receive such a wretch as me! Then looking farther I read, 'I will heal your backslidings and love you freely.'⁴ This gave me some comfort. I saw such tenderness in Jesus as emboldened me to pray. I wrestled, groaned, and pleaded with God for an answer of peace; and in less than two days I again found a sense of pardon.

After some time I found the stirrings of evil passions, which lessened my joy and caused me sometimes to doubt of my justification. But in a short time the Lord dispelled these clouds, and cleared up my evidence. After this, Satan assaulted me with many sore temptations. Among other things, I was more confirmed in Calvinism than ever. But after some time a soldier convinced me of the inconsistency of my doctrines—particularly of absolute, unconditional election and reprobation. From this time forth I grew in grace. But the stoppage in my speech still continued, insomuch that sometimes I could hardly tell my experience to my brethren.

Near seven months ago, being sorely burdened with inbred sin, I was often constrained to cry out, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'⁵ When lo, on Wednesday the 19th of April last, just

¹Ps. 9:17.

²Matt. 8:25.

³Jer. 3:1.

⁴Hos 14:4.

⁵Rom. 7:24.

as Mr. D. had done preaching,⁶ the Lord filled my soul with love. O how lovely was Jesus to me then! I shouted out, 'Hallelujah to God and the Lamb! All praise to the Prince of peace!' After praying to and praising God, I departed with heaven in my soul. I could say, 'Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.'⁷ I was a sure that my soul was cleansed from all filthiness as ever I was that my sins were pardoned. But what was matter of more praise, my tongue was loosed and I could speak plain! And whereas I used to shake my head and distort my face in speaking, I could now converse with great ease. My understanding was also much enlightened. For what was formerly hidden was now open and plain. Since that time God has given me some ability to preach, which I have found almost as easy to do as to read.

When I communicated my mind to some of the preachers, they told me the loosing of my tongue was a sign that God intended I should use it in proclaiming the sinner's friend. But for farther direction they desired me to go [to] the all-wise God, which I did.

About a month ago I embarked for America, with a resolution of publishing the gospel there, or wherever else God should cast my lot. But being by contrary winds drove into Milford-haven, and an order having come from government for us to stay in South Wales till further orders, I now embrace the opportunity of craving your advice. And I earnestly request that you will write to me soon. For a few lines from you may be a great encouragement to me, who am willing to spend and be spent in exercising my tongue to the glory of him who has loosened it. It may also remove prejudice from weak minds, who may otherwise be offended at hearing a soldier invite sinners to the gospel feast—not considering that God sends by whom he will send, and that the weaker the instrument, the greater his glory!

With all due respect, I am, reverend sir,

Yours at command,

A. F.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 384–87.

⁶Thomas Dixon was currently assigned at Pembroke.

⁷Isa. 45:24.

From 'Juniolus'

c. November 8, 1775¹

'Simulata innocentia non est innocentia; simulata aequitas non est aequitas; sed duplicatur peccatum, in quo est iniquitas et simulatio.' St. Augustine²

'And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' 1 Kings. 22: 22

[p. 3]

Reverend Sir,

Your many dark insinuations and bitter reflections on several respectable characters may, I hope, warrant any instances of freedom of speech that may appear in the following pages; wherein the writer would not be understood to oppose his understanding against yours. No, perhaps he would rather decline the unequal match. I would only mean to pose commonsense and honesty against your fallacy and false colouring. For what you publish under the notion of the *Free Thoughts*³ seems to me rather what you artfully endeavour to make others think, than the real thoughts of a man of your abilities.

Your *Calm Address* I look upon in the same light, having moreover this disadvantage, that it stands condemned in your own writings. Both pieces, however, are [p. 4] manifestly calculated for the twofold purpose of discrediting the advocates of the people on the one hand, and 'varnishing over the guilt of faithless men'⁴ on the other. Your *Calm Address to the Americans* appears, in general, to be part of the second to your (pretended) *Free Thoughts*, as it enforces the same kind of principles and breathes the same spirit.

To begin with the first, you declare the present state of public affairs to be a subject both dangerous and mysterious. And yet you, who profess yourself so very ignorant of the matter, seem to treat it with a good deal of freedom. You have taken, indeed, the safe side of the hedge yourself. And therefore may I not suppose that the seeming apprehensions in your title-page and elsewhere must be intended as a bugbear to others, and that you envelope the plainest facts in a formidable secrecy in order to prepare the way for your bubbles and impositions. 'Actions and springs of action, persons and things'⁵ on one side the question, you touch with the utmost tenderness; but spare not the worst imputation and rudest treatment on the other. That there may be some hidden works of darkness on the side of government, you seem to allow (page 4); but the bringing them to light you very decently put off till doomsday. [p. 5]

In what a disingenuous manner do you state the cause of the people's complaints! What a mere machine is your correspondent, over whom you have the same command that a showman has of his puppets, and can make him say just what you please. In pages 4 and 5 you make him talk like a fool at first setting out, that you may expose to ridicule, in his person, every friend of your country. And indeed you take care that he shall never speak too much to the purpose, that you may reserve to yourself a

¹There is no dating in the tract, and no advertisement has been located. This suggested date is based on the citation near the end of the tract of a letter by Josiah Tucker that was published Nov. 4.

²Augustine's *Expositions on the Psalms*, on Ps. 63:11, 'Feigned innocence is not innocence; pretended equity is not equity, but double iniquity—because both iniquity it is and pretense.'

³*Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*.

⁴Cf. Joseph Addison, 'An Account of the Greatest English Poets', l. 81.

⁵This and following quotes (or allusions) are from JW, *Free Thoughts* unless otherwise noted.

discretionary power to knock him down.

As I find you drawing a fulsome comparison between ‘tinkers, cobblers, porters, hackney-coachmen, and yourself,’ give me leave to ask what tinkers and cobblers you mean—those of the senate or those of the rabble; those who buy votes, or those who sell them. You seem to intend the most despicable of the people, and as such, for ought I can see, you may even take all these together.

If either precedence can have,
'Tis only this, the greater knave.

Use ‘the privilege of an Englishman’ and welcome. But when you make a generous use of it, you will speak your real thoughts, and will have less need of the common-place raillery of the vulgar. You [p. 6] seem well apprized of the effects of passion in blinding the understanding, and ‘an old writer has told us that interest (a gift) will do it also’. You profess yourself clear of both. How you can be induced to act the double-faced part you have taken, without selfish views, is really wonderful!

You assert with reason the advantage of a dispassionate calmness. But is not even this capable of abuse? A scold that has the command of temper will exasperate and weary out successively half a score who are without it. You will tell us (page 6) that you would not willingly give pain to those of either side. And in page 7 you seem to keep your temper, only that you may be the more insufferable. You ‘call no ill names, give no ill words’, and at the same time call your countrymen (at least, those who dare complain) a herd of incorrigible brutes, in a cool form of words, more replete with venom than any used at Billingsgate. But in answer to your affected fears of wrath from those of the court party, I assure you that in my hearing some of the most virulent Tories have declared their resolution of becoming your constant hearers—such an effect had the reading of your *Free Thoughts* on those who before held you in contempt.

[p. 7] You make your correspondent enquire, ‘what is the direct and principal cause of the present public commotions, or amazing ferment among the people, the general discontent of the nation?’ And affirm that you ‘have heard it affirmed with your own ears, King George ought to be treated as King Charles was.’ This is very extraordinary. I don’t believe there was at that time another pair of ears in the nation that had heard the like. If you did really hear such a speech, you did not however leave it to ‘the birds of the air’ to tell it;⁶ but like those who violated Mr. Wilkes’s *escritore*,⁷ have put that into the heads of thousands, which before existed nowhere else, perhaps, but in your own.

I cannot think his Majesty much obliged to you for the ludicrous, ironical daubing, wherewith you design to set off his character, any more than your countrymen, for the cool freedom you take in painting them out as disliking their prince for his virtues, in doing which you shamefully insult them without using any ill language.

Though virtue in general is becoming to all, and eminently distinguishes great men; yet the great desiderata in a prince are those peculiar virtues of a ‘patriot king’, that are a perpetual source of happiness to himself and mutual confidence between [p. 8] him and his people. If the popular writer you hint at (page 8) is made to mean other than this, it must be by an uncandid acceptance of what he has written. But whoever palliates the vices of government, he it is that resembles both Machiavelli and Mandeville; one of whom upholds the knaveries of state, the other pleads for private vices, which last are always best promoted by the former. And I am sorry your political writings bear so strong a mark of the spirit that actuated both those writers.

Pray which of the pardoned murderers do you mean (page 9)? The ruffians who knocked Mr. Clark on head? Was it ever pretended *they* were not wilful murderers? The reason expressly given in the

⁶See Eccles. 10:20.

⁷A writing desk in which one stored their papers.

words of the pardon itself, if I remember, was not a want of intention in the convicts to kill but a new report of surgeons 'that the wound' (which killed the man) 'was not mortal'. How this 'amazing' report was obtained, and by whom, you may recollect. However the laws having vested in the king a power to remit the crime, I believe as good friends of his Majesty as yourself have wished that the pardon had been absolute, and that no such incredible reason had been given for it. [p. 9]

What you say (page 10) about Carlton House, the king's mother, etc. is so trifling and old-womanish as scarce to deserve notice. You know it is not where or by whom things are done, but whether they were legally and honourably done, is the point. And this you slyly avoid, I suppose 'for want of information'.

You also know very well that neither the number, nor even the value of the pensions, is the thing so much complained of as the application of them. You think all pensions 'well designed'. Indeed you do not say designed for the good of the nation, which certainly ought to be the sole view in bestowing the public money. 'Well designed' for what? For some end or other no doubt. What do you think is the design of bestowing so much on members of parliament, do you think this honourably designed?

Page 11, All you seem to regret is the bounty conferred on certain persons whom you misrepresent as unworthy, ungrateful, etc. Whereas in truth, such as have received their sovereign's liberality as the reward of services done their country, will merit still more by nobly resisting dishonourable measures.

Steadiness and even obstinacy in a good cause will never be objected as a fault, [p. 10] especially in a king. But both king and people have deplored the tragical effects of obstinacy in a bad one.

Page 12. You now come to the 'petitions and remonstrances', and because you know where and to whom they have been particularly odious, you conduct yourself accordingly, and by every art of which you master, jeer, insult, and disgrace them. But in vain. Your fallacy and mockery in this also avail not. Your Kentish tale, supposing it true, makes little or nothing for you. If not one man in a country knew any more than this, that a dependent majority in the senate quite destroy the free representation of the people, it is enough if he is satisfied that the petition prays a redress of that grievance. I mention this both because it is so flagrant and notorious that none can be ignorant either of the fact or its consequences, and also because it is the source of all other public abuses.

Page 13. The London petition and remonstrance become now more especially the object of your contempt. You join the herd of ministerial bullies full tilt, and forgetting all regard to decency, are not ashamed to introduce the colliers of Newcastle, on purpose to draw a most impudent parallel between them and the Corporation of London. And having endeavoured to [p. 11] sophisticate the matter of the London petition into a mystery too deep for their understandings, you proceed to treat their remonstrance as unfairly. You make the king to judge it as intended not so much to inform him as to inflame the people, when you know it was incapable of being so understood. What the petition manifestly aimed at, as well as the remonstrance, was the ancient undoubted rights of the people, especially a free parliament. If this were granted the people must be silenced; if refused, by whom are the people inflamed?

Page 15. As to the 'idle, shameless tale' (as you are pleased to call it) of the royal sneer, if you know it to be false, why don't you say so. If not, why do you mention it at all—unless for mischief?

Page 16. Let me tell you again, his Majesty's character comes out of your hands with disadvantage and disparagement. You treat it in a manner unbecoming the dignity of the subject. Shall I tell you who they are that have done honour to his Majesty? Those, who by a most dutiful application, suppose him to have the wisdom and justice to do his people right, by restoring the purity of the constitution.

As for the ministers, all the comfort you give us is 'that our ministers have been as bad these thirty years', and 'all their [p. 12] measures you will not defend'; but yet apologize even for general warrants by precedent (page 17). And what you dare not justify, partially and meanly palliate, nay extenuate, even the crime of Allen's murder by a softening comparison.

Both the expulsion and incapacitation of Mr. Wilkes seem to be acts of violence, consequent upon evidence violently and unlawfully obtained.

You suppose (page 19) that the encroachments on the people's liberties in the case of choosing members of parliament are as unlike to be drawn into precedent as the falling of the sky. Is it possible you can be so ignorant?

Are not the laws the only guard of our liberties as well as properties? Will your horse be equally safe when the stealing another's is connived at? I shall only observe upon Lord Manfield's speech (page 20) that a defence of the measures against Mr. Wilkes comes with a very ill grace from his Lordship, who had before pronounced the warrant illegal by which his papers had been rifled, from which the matter had been gathered to form the prosecution upon which he was expelled.

Page 25. If those who raise this cry believe what they 'say, are they not under the highest infatuation?' They who [p. 13] pursue for private interest such measures must inevitably terminate in national ruin. These are under the highest infatuation indeed. And if the people can think themselves safe under the management of such, they are infatuated too. But what shall I say of you who tell us that 'we never enjoyed such liberty, civil and religious as at this day.' The freedom of Englishmen consists in the freedom of the House of Commons. Will you assert *that* to be free? Sure you have not the face, though you have the falsehood.

You grant more (page 25) against the American business than any other measures of the ministry. And why? Because you intend to saddle it on Mr. Grenville. But this will hardly do. For allowing that gentleman to be the projector or even the author of an ill-judged measure, they only are without excuse who carried the oppression to such lengths, against conviction, reason, and experience. An unlawful step may be retracted, but to enforce and maintain it is tyranny.

Page 26, you introduce a writer who undertook a work somewhat like washing the Ethiopian white. This gentleman most sonorously applauds the House of Commons by exalting a mere parade of merit into the highest encomiums. When that assembly shall [p. 14] do their duty by studying the good of those they ought to represent, there will need none of the corrupt tools of power to sound their trumpet.

The privilege of parliament was anciently a sort of compensation to gentlemen, who formerly had little else but their pains for the trouble of attending public business. But since parliament work has become so profitable, no thanks if they on whom the public money is so lavishly bestowed should, at least, become liable to the payment of their own debts. Especially when it is considered that, if any merit can arise from the relinquishing a privilege of exemption, it must be due only to such members of the house who make no self-advantage of their seats there. If the adopting Mr. Grenville's method of decision about contested elections may have some appearance of popularity in it, yet what can we think of an English House of Commons refusing to limit the number of placemen in their assembly, and rejecting a bill brought in for that purpose, but that they are resolutely determined to sacrifice their constituents to their own private interest. With the like verbosity of language, the same writer abuses a character that is above the reach of scandal—accuses him of an attempt to extend the control of the [p. 15] peers over the representatives of the people. But first let him prove that such an House of Commons deserve that appellation. For had they really been what he calls them, the act upon which that peer called for the interposition of the House of Lords had never passed.

Page 29. You now begin to halloo. But hold! You are not out of the wood. Every reader will see the futility of your imaginary triumph. Your repeated pretences to simplicity and modesty will not serve you, while such a gross partiality and pitiful craft appear in every line. 'Hitherto we have gained.' What have you gained? The revival of your old appellation, with the additional name of an uncandid and partial writer.

However, you now pretend to touch upon the real cause, etc. And here one might expect something like coming to the point, for hitherto nothing has appeared but a sort of jeering, interrogatory, ironical throwing of dirt on the one hand; with soothing palliatives and disguises on the other. Such

delusive double dealing as procured you, long ago, the gentle name of *Jesuit*, but will never, I believe, get you that of an honest man.

The first and principal spring of this 'amazing ferment' (as you slyly call it) you take to be French gold. This new [p. 16] nothing, I believe, is all your own. No competitor in this 'amazing' invention, for I cannot call it the thought of a man in his senses. Nevertheless, I cannot but give you credit for an 'amazing' knack of removing the cause of the nation's grievances to a convenient distance.

Page 30. You take occasion to give Mr. Wilkes a fine specimen of your 'unwillingness to give him any pain'—see your canting problem, page 6.

Page 16 and 17. Twenty to twenty, and ten against ten, for moral abilities, is the jumbling method you take to give your *Free Thoughts* on our present managers. Pray why did you not give us a cool flourish (page 17) on the character of him who 'judged it proper to send a party of soldiers to prevent violence' in St. George's Fields? No matter, your meekness and impartiality are to come.

Page 31. Another cause you say 'covetousness, English gold, hunger after lucrative developments'. Not a word here of those devouring leeches who share so many millions of the people's money, not a word of the dirty Mungoes who betray the people for reward. Not a word of the public defaulters of unaccounted millions. Not a syllable about placemen, pensioners, and hireling senators. All [p. 17] exculpated as having no share in the people's wrongs! The troublers of Israel you will have to be, not those who receive the 'English Gold', who pocket the public money, but those who want it. And these you insinuate to be those who complain. Which is, in fact, to acquit the criminal and blame the prosecutor. The characters you have drawn page 32 and 33 I pass over brevity sake, leaving to be distributed among your friends.

You say 'the whole nation sees the state in danger'. It is very true. Dissipation and corruption will ruin any state, especially under the encouragement of the gown. They are the worst abusers of the king who abuse his people, and corrupt their representatives. This is the source of jealousies, and bane of mutual confidence between king and people.

Page 34. The more the people are wronged, the more they will be inflamed. It ever was so. The weakest will know their benefactors from their betrayers.

Page 35. The name of Cromwell, or any other man, will receive advantage from a comparison with the name of a worse. Pray in what cases (if there be any) will you allow the people of England to petition their king without the appellation of mob? Without imputation of [p. 18] epidemic madness, or charge of violent outcry.

Notwithstanding your pretty observations about Oliver's times, one may venture to guess which part you would have taken in those days. Though doubtless you would have reserved your *Free Thoughts* till you had known which side was the strongest.

Let all people judge who is more properly the dealer in magic dust, you or Junius?⁸ That writer's meaning is not to be perverted by your sophistry, you hate him for bringing the hidden works of darkness to light, because you will have the nation's wrongs to be unsearchable, least they should be righted.

Page 36 and 37. You say King George has no such furious drivers about him as *poor* (dear, you should have said) King Charles had. Pray what sort of drivers do you call those who drove into *poor* Mr. Wilkes's house and plundered it? Who hired ruffians to knock people on head at elections, etc.? As for painting Lord North and Archbishop Cornwallis like Lord Strafford and Archbishop Laud, there is not the least doubt but a man of your cast would like them the better for the resemblance. Whatever the opposers of King Charles were, it is easy to see in what company you [p. 19] would have placed them, and how much respected them, especially while they acted as petitioners and remonstrants.

⁸The pseudonym of a major Whig author, whom JW criticized.

'Religion' you say 'is out of the question. Neither side give themselves the least concern about it.' The general want of reverence for religion is chiefly owing to the inconsistency of preachers, who are so apt to look one way and row another. One preaching against the gewgaws and luxuries of life, and professing a renunciation of the guise of the world, and by and by turning dotard and voluptuary in his old age. Another affecting a cold indifference to marriage and riches, where the event proved that he only abstained from the first till he could conveniently take in both together.⁹ Others courting the favour of those in power and justifying the wicked for reward. And doing things which 'few would have believed, had a man declared it unto them'.¹⁰

But to return, a man of your artful character will ever be against a man of candour. No one can wonder at your spleen against Junius. He is your opposite. He exposes the knavery of the times; you palliate and hide the treacheries of the great, and join the cry of the Tories to insult the petitioning people, whom you are pleased against all decency to style ignoble, vulgar, beastly herd, mob, [p. 20] tinkers, cobblers, etc. You seem to confess that the requiring tonnage and poundage, the imposing ship-money, star-chamber processes, etc. were real and intolerable grievances. But what would be your thoughts on those very grievances, had they the sanction of a venal senate in the present times? Can any of your readers doubt but, like the Middlesex election, etc., they would become pretty objects for the diminishing glass of your raillery. Is there a mischievous measure that you have not justified, or a popular man of any eminence that you have not degraded? How do you gnash your teeth at Mr. Wilkes! And why? But because he was foremost in the opposition to falsehood and public treachery. Tell us, if you can, why the present opposition does not consist of a body of men equal at least, in all respects, to those who opposed the oppressions of Charles I? Or why Mr. Burke is not as calm, and as disinterested too, as Mr. Hampden was? And what is your reason for preferring the patriots of that reign to those of the present? Nay for sneering as you do at patriotism itself in your co-temporaries, as reprobates do at religion, insinuating its professors to be hypocrites? Is it not merely because you owe a spite both to patriotism and patriots, and are yourself a Tory? [p. 21]

Page 38. In the days of Charles I a handful of people professed 'great zeal for the good of their country and were continually declaiming against either real or imaginary grievances' (you do not say which of the two). 'These were soon joined by men eminent for probity as well as understanding.:' Surprising indeed that wise and honest men should be the complaining party. But the eminence of their understandings, alas became soon darkened! For in your very next page we find them so weak as to be led by the nose 'by the art of their leaders' into an aversion for the king. Why don't you write the honest truth of the matter? Which was no other than this: They first complained of 'illegal, inequitable, and imprudent measures' at which they were disgusted. And when they found that the king supported and enforced those measures with others still worse, they were disgusted at him too, as a natural inseparable consequence.

Page 39. Petitions and remonstrances you have animadverted on before. But yet you cannot forbear (page 39) another bitter stroke at them, after your sly manner. And now having mentioned the beheading of Charles I, you ask, 'What man who has the least degree of understanding [p. 22] may not see how surprisingly the parallel holds in all these circumstances?' To be sure, you except the amputation.

Page 40. You now make your opponent ask, 'But do not you think it is in the power of the king, etc.'

It is really pitiful to see how a man of learning can trifle as you do, and fill up four or five pages with such idle impertinent stuff as a school-boy would be ashamed of—in the course of which, however, you do not forget again to make sweet mention of Mr. Wilkes and Junius, and then conclude with an appeal, 'does it not then appear, etc.' In all which you have not mentioned one word of the great—almost

⁹Referring to JW's marriage to Mary (Goldhawk) Vazeille, a well-to-do widow.

¹⁰See Acts 13:41.

the only— thing the king can do (because it is effectually in his power), namely the stopping, abating, or limiting the practice of hiring senators into crown pay. And declaring (especially in the house) his abhorrence of all such dishonourable practices, and resolution to establish his throne in righteousness and the affections of his people, discountenancing treachery, perjury, and venality in every department of the state. Whether such measures as these would not be more likely to produce the wished effects of peace and happiness to himself and his people than the sanguinary course you broadly hint at (page 46), [p. 23] where you may be said pretty fully to show your spirit, and what you would really be at.

In short, I think it must be discoverable to every sensible impartial reader that the thing you pretend in the beginning, namely the stating the cause of the popular discontent, was farthest of all from your intentions. There is not, in all that you have written, anything that looks like pointing out either the disorder or the cure. Nothing but adulation on the one hand, detraction on the other. Uproar, outcry, and madness are the names you give to the petitions and complaints of the people, on whom you bestow the appellations of tinkers, cobblers, colliers, beasts, et., etc. But on their oppressors and betrayers, not the most gentle rebuke. The great disease the people labour under, as being productive of every other, you know to be the corruption of their senate. The cure is also manifestly lodged in the crown. A patriotic king will remove the destructive bait. About neither of these have you said one word; which I think is, of itself, enough to prove your insincerity.

You give us, indeed, a new surprising idea of the relation between the House of Commons and the people, when (in page 41) you compare the case of the king dissolving the parliament at [p. 24] the people's request, to that of 'the sheep that had given up their dogs'. By what unheard of analogy you make this comparison I cannot imagine, or else have you been impelled for once to speak the truth and give the people warning! For if they who were instituted as a guard of the people against the stretch of royal power have changed sides, and are become of the king's party, then farewell British liberty. And the Lord have mercy on the people.

Next follow some brief animadversions on your *Calm Address to the Americans*.

In page 25 of your *Free Thoughts* are found these words, 'I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America. I doubt whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence.' In your *Calm Address to the Americans*, page 13, appears the following exclamation: 'But how is it possible that the taking this reasonable and legal step should have set all American in a flame?' Now, to what cause are we to attribute the great change of sentiment implied in the foregoing contradictions? Is it owing to your former ignorance? Or latter information? Or to any new light [p. 25] that has been thrown on the argument? Truly, to neither of them. The mystery lies here: When you wrote your (pretended) *Free Thoughts on the State of Public Affairs* the American dispute was too material an object to be omitted. Your touching upon it was indispensable. And yet, as the matter then stood, it was very difficult for such a writer as you to speak fairly to the point. It was not then a clear case, whether the measures were to be enforced or retracted. Under these circumstances you contrived to take such an equivocal part as might suit with either event. If government should, by retracting, acknowledge them wrong, you had before ascribed 'the whole merit' of them to Mr. Grenville. But if the present ministry should adopt those measures, and resolve to dragoon the colonies into submission, then you can find a salvo in the ambiguity of your words, and may plead that you did but negatively condemn, by saying you would not justify or defend them, etc. The latter has been the fatal determination of our managers. Whereupon you instantly throw off the mask, decide point-blank against the poor Americans, sign your pitiful recantation, and atone for your former mistake by writing a whole pamphlet against them and in favour of their [p. 26] enemies. Wherein you assert that the American colonies are in point of *law*, *equity*, and *prudence*, taxable by an English House of Commons, without the right of being represented therein.

The Americans' argument, no representation, no taxation, you say 'proves too much'. And infer that no sort of laws made by an English parliament could in that case bind them. You tell them that they

have always admitted our statutes, for the punishment of offences, preventing inconveniences, etc. The reception of which has necessitated their admitting taxation. But you cannot rely on your own argument, knowing that property is a peculiar object of parliamentary protection, and that for the vast provinces of America to be taxed by an English House of Commons where they have not a single voice is (in an Englishman's account) little else but to be robbed. The great incentive to injury is gain. Money matters are of a special nature. In other affairs the American and ours may be a common cause. Their readiness to accede to the laws of the mother country in general cannot be deemed a sufficient reason for delivering their purses. Their lives and liberties cannot easily be applied to the support of English luxury, dissipation, and worse purposes. [p. 27] But their money may, and the assertion that being taxed without representation must render their property precarious is as true as demonstration can make it.

Your drawing a parallel between such a case and ours at home, all not being electors, yet equally obliged with those who are, seems unequal. For our vicinity and likeness of circumstances makes the case common, and the protection much the same as if all voted; non-voters and voters being taxable in the same proportion. But the American provinces, by their distance and other circumstances, are, especially in matters of property, a distinct community. They therefore cannot be taxed with us, unless they be co-represented. Otherwise they are to pay their money without anyone to see or to speak for them. The Americans never pretended to any dispensation from obedience, or any degree of independence, not enjoyed by other Englishmen. The privilege common to Englishmen is that they shall not be taxed without their consent. Which I understand to imply not that every individual shall have a voice in the choosing of representatives, but that the people in general shall have an independent body of men of their own delegation, incorporated in the state of the realm, for a security of [p. 28] their natural rights as Englishmen, and especially their pecuniary property, none of which can be taken from them without the consent of their parliament. But you insinuate that the colonists have forfeited the right of being represented in the British parliament, having resigned their votes by emigration. Pray, did you learn this since you wrote your *Free Thoughts*? You tell them also, that 'they do inherit all the privileges which their ancestors had'. Pray, were their ancestors ever taxed by an English House of Commons? Or is not that the peculiar happiness of the present generation? You allege that 'what their ancestors did not bring with them, neither they nor their descendants have acquired'. But yet it seems their descendants have acquired the blessed (new privilege) of being taxed by a most honourable, virtuous, and tender House of English representatives, in which there is not one single delegate to represent the vast continent of America.

You say the charters of Pennsylvania expressly, and that of Massachusetts Bay by implication, enjoin taxation by parliament. But pray (supposing this to be true), is there the least pretence for their being taxed without being represented? Or is not rather taxation by a parliament where they have no one to speak a direct contradiction in [p. 29] terms? A parliament where they cannot be heard, as to them, being no parliament at all.

You speak so very reverently of royal charters, rest so much upon them, and seem to treat them with such a profound veneration, that I could wish you would favour the public with some of your cool and free animadversions on that *great charter* called the Bill of Rights. Excuse this digression. All who consider impartially what has been observed, must readily allow, that an English House of Commons taxing the unrepresented Americans can, in reason, be deemed no other than assessors; and cannot, with any propriety, be called (as to them) a parliament.

'But whence then' say you 'is all this hurry and tumult? Why is America all in an uproar?' My dear sir, I'll tell you why. The Americans think of the measures taken against them just as you did when you published your *Free Thoughts*. They think their treatment cannot be defended, either on the footing of law, equity, or prudence. You pretend 'the Americans, a few years ago, were assaulted by enemies, whom they were not able to resist; that on representing this to their mother country, they were largely assisted.' By your stating of the case, one would think the last war was [p. 30] undertaken on the account

of the colonists to whom you are now writing. But this also is a fallacious account of the matter, wherein you have confounded the new settlement of Nova Scotia with the united colonies. For it was in defence of the former that the last war was undertaken, with whom your *Calm Address* seems to have nothing to do.

As to your notion of 'a few men in England, who are determined enemies to monarchy', though you usher it in with a protestation of an unbiased, unprejudiced, and brotherly love, yet I doubt not your fallacy and inveterate malice will be discovered by every ordinary reader. For who does not know under what fondness of the people, and what pre-possession in his favour, the present king came to the crown? To what then can be owing any dislike, but to a disappointment of the hopes they had conceived that he would restore the health of the constitution by discountenancing the infamous practice of smuggling parliaments, and all other abuses of course? But now so it is, that ever since his accession, corruption and venality have increased, and violences have been committed with a high hand. And when the people complained of whips, they have been answered with scorpions. Moreover, you cannot pretend that commonwealth [p. 31] principles were ever dreamt of in the nation till the tyranny and 'intolerable grievances' of a certain reign had forced the people to have recourse to some remedy or other. And then so little relish had they, radically, for that form of government that they embraced the first opportunity to throw it off again in favour of monarchy. You know also that the very same people who dislike the present sovereign had no dislike at all to his royal grandfather, who was also a king. Whence it follows that your idle question about hating the king for his office is mere fallacy. But the truth is (and you know it) that the object of hatred is neither the king nor his office, but the misconduct, the perjury and treachery of those in power. Moreover it is plain enough to be seen that under the chimerical notion of republicans, you here point at the very same characters you have taken so much pains to blacken in your pretended *Free Thoughts*. And now you will needs have them to be haters of the king and of kingly government, underminers of royalty, determined republicans, and what not. Which is somewhat like dressing them in bearskins, in order to get them baited. But the gall of bitterness is too gross throughout your political performances not to be seen and felt, so that your poison is [p. 32] become its own antidote.

After all your tender professions and calm pretences, public treacheries, abuse of office, and prostitution of honour, are the things that rouse and inflame a people. 'Art thou he that troublest Israel?' was a canting question formerly. And the answer was, I am not he, but thou art. This is parallel to the case in hand. For you will have it that not the crime of wickedness in high places, but they who declare against it, do inflame the people. Thus you palliate the treachery of the great, and inveigh against those who expose them. You enhance the evil of the times, and strengthen the hands of the people's betrayers, all in your power. It is such as you that widen the breach betwixt England and the colonies, by justifying the innovations that created it. It is such as you that pour oil on the flame, by acquitting those guilty knaves who kindled it, and opposing, under a variety of pretences, all the measures of amendment. So that though all his Majesty's subjects, on this and the other side the water (all, I mean, who are not cheated and amused by such artful men as you) wish to see a stop put to public abuses, and right to take place. Yet 'tyrannical, inequitable' and imprudent measures are more and more enforced, and none can tell where the mischief will end. The Tories [p. 33] hope it will end in a total overthrow of the Americans. If this should be effected, they trust the people will be everywhere so miserably crestfallen that they should be able, with or without foreign assistance, entirely to destroy the rights and liberties of the subjects, especially while the parliament and the army are so conveniently lodged in the power of the crown. The present state of government in this nation is *corruptio optimi*;¹¹ an unhappy perversion of the best system in the world. In its genuine state, when the senate is free and independent, all is constitutional, all complaints cease (but those of the Jacobites), no murmur is heard, all goes well. But when the senate is corrupt, all is out of course, jealousies, abuses increase, the people are betrayed, the worst of tyrannies

¹¹'Total corruption.'

take place, and complete slavery is in the rear—an universal curse that can be exceeded by nothing, unless it be that depravity of spirit which is capable of bearing it.

But my dear sir, after all the vehement outcry against the Americans, what more would you have of them? What greater proof of their loyalty and affection than they gave in the last war? After which, to replace the disproportion of their contributions, we paid them back four hundred thousand pounds. You ask, 'what civil liberty the Americans can have [p. 34] more than they now enjoy?' You certainly mock them in the cruellest manner, while they labour under the oppression of sword and famine, and the *civil* treatment of horse, foot, and dragoons—and all this for resisting the iron rod of a despotic Tory ministry. A comfortable sitting this, 'everyone under his own vine'! You ask them, 'Do they not, high and low, everyone enjoy the fruit of his labour?' If they do, I wish they may so continue. It is much more than their brethren of old England do, where more than 9/10ths of their earnings (it has been proved¹²) are devoured by taxes. The Americans cannot be suspected of a wish to be independent of England. But if they can keep clear of its wrongs and oppressions, they are in the right of it, and I wish them good luck. No government under heaven is more despotic than a Tory government. No subjects are more tyrannically governed than those of a Tory ministry. If anyone doubt of this, let him look back to the times of Charles the First and James the Second, if our own times are not sufficient. This is so obvious that none but a *cobbler in politics* can overlook it.

You now pretend to sigh over poor [p. 35] America. And oh what convulsions must she feel, etc. The Americans have considered the case, and weighed it like Britons. They have experienced of old the cruelty of their Tory enemies, and they have felt of late the tender mercies of their Tory friends, and upon the whole have concluded that nothing can be worse or more unworthy of free subjects than a servile submission to their tyranny.

'Brethren, open your eyes! Come to yourselves! Be no longer the dupes of designing men.' Whoever your designing men, your Ahitophels may be, the measures seem to resemble those of Rehoboam. I wish the alienation of all the American tribes may not be the consequence of such 'legal, equitable, and prudent' management.

If you are the well-wisher you pretend, represent the madness of the present inflammatory measures to those in power! Those who, to augment the present resources of their extravagance, forfeit their oaths and honour, abuse their power, distress the colonies, stab our trade, and enforce their unlawful, inequitable, and imprudent measures with the sword. Let these show pity, if they have any—if their hearts be not, as formerly, harder than the nether millstone. Those who made an ignoble peace with the [p. 36] nation's enemies, and have now begun an inhuman war with their own people. Spare your entreaties of the Americans, who do their duty to themselves and their posterity, and lift up your voice like a trumpet to show the baneful effects of wicked example in the higher classes, from whence it overspreads the land. But this is no part of your talk. You are not like to become obnoxious for your plain-dealing with those in power; nor, like Micaiah, to be hated for *having no good to say concerning those who have sold themselves to do wickedly*. Nay, what you disapproved in your *Free Thoughts*, namely the measures relative to the colonies, you resolve upon second thoughts to vindicate in your *Calm Address*. And then, under the mask of pity and compassion, consign the noble-spirited Americans to the utmost rigour of Tory despotism and cruelty. You know what spirit it is that dictates the parasitical addresses now in vogue. Yet not a syllable from you against them! Not the most distant hint, the least misgiving, or apprehension, either from the tenor or tendency of them! Although you see all the Tories, Jacobites, and Papists in the kingdom flocking to sign them. It is remarkable, as well as alarming, to see how universally the Roman Catholics approve and applaud the present measures and managers! They [p. 37] are always

¹²Footnote in the original, 'See Mr. Shebbeare's letters to the people of England, written before his annual pension of hush money was settled.'

consistent and uniform in the main point, and can sign a panegyric on the parliaments of our times upon the same principle that prompted their predecessors to blow up that of 1605. Nor can there be any doubt but the name of Guy Faux, were he living, would appear among the rest.

The fidelity, moderation, and humanity of these three classes of his Majesty's dutiful and loving subjects are so amply recorded in the annals of England, Scotland, and Ireland that I shall forbear at present to enlarge thereon. The rather as I observe so large a body of the clergy in their interest, and especially yourself, for whom I have not a little veneration. The 'few republicans' you mention (page 14) seem to be creatures entirely of your own manufacture to serve a purpose—imaginary, ideal non-entities; having no existence but in a sly, malicious invention. But suppose there was in the whole kingdom one man of republican principles (which is much to be doubted). Nay, suppose a large body of such exist. Pray, will not even you allow that such a party were as good friends to royalty as a body of Tories, Jacobites, and Papists can be to the Revolution, the Brunswick succession, or a limited monarchy? But although your sham republican be a fictitious [p. 38] phantom, the same cannot be said of the others. For they alas have ever been both seen and felt, heard and understood, the real pest and calamity of the whole realm.

In the whining conclusion of your *Address* you tell the Americans, 'The real ground of all our' (not their) 'calamities never will or can be thoroughly removed, till we fear God and honour the king.' Your meaning is well understood. But let me observe that where the fear of God presides, the honour done the king will chiefly consist in a faithful obedience to the laws that give him authority, and not in the flummery of a fulsome address. The history of Charles I will exemplify that the betrayer and the parasite have been united in more instances than that of Judas. Those who *have the fear of God before their eyes will renounce* (not vindicate) *the hidden things of dishonesty*,¹³ faithfully admonish their fellow subjects, and dutifully petition their king against them, and much more against flagrant and notorious abuses. The fore-mentioned prophet had power, wealth, and numbers, yea the whole clergy against him, and yet he was right. He no doubt feared God, and honoured the regal office, and yet was no flatterer of him who bore it.

As for your observations on Dr. Smith's sermon, [I] shall pass them unnoticed, except [p. 39] in one instance, p. 21, where you again show your principles, by asserting that 'every sovereign under heaven' (and consequently our own) 'has a right to tax his subjects or grant their property with or without their consent.' Which monstrous doctrine, however it may go down in the present, would have endangered in any other reign since the institution of parliaments the ears, if not the life of its author. That excellent discourse being now extant, is a sufficient vindication of itself and a full refutation of your remarks thereon.

Thus I have briefly endeavoured, where you have not done it yourself, to strip off your mask and set you in a proper light. In doing which, if you think me chargeable with any severe reflections, I seem to have a right to plead your example, and hope you will attribute any such passages to my fondness of copying after so great an original.

Juniolus

P.S. A letter in the *Gloucester Journal* from the Rev. Dr. [Josiah] Tucker,¹⁴ wherein he complains of a surreptitious use the Bristol Addressers have made of his name, by affixing it without his consent to their late address to the king, puts me in mind that you have taken a great deal of pains in your *Free Thoughts* to make the petitions [p. 40] of the people appear contemptible. But like the true stalking horse

¹³See 2 Cor. 4:2.

¹⁴This letter was dated Nov. 1, 1775; It was printed in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Nov. 4, 1775), p. 3.

of the party, are totally silent as to the unwearied endeavours and various methods employed, both to suppress them and also to conjure up and procure addresses of adulation in their stead. Although you cannot be ignorant that all the engines both of tyranny and subtlety, threatening and delusion, have been set to work for that twofold miserable purpose, by the tools of power all over the kingdom. So that these petitions which have been presented are only such as the fore-mentioned wretches could not find means to stifle and defeat. The brevity of my reply to this, as well as many other passages in your pamphlets, may serve to show my backwardness in recrimination, and unwillingness to give you pain.

Source: 'Juniolus', Fallacy Detected; in a letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, Master of Arts, wherein his 'Free Thoughts on the State of Public Affairs,' and his 'Calm Address to the Americans,' are considered and compared (London: s.n., 1775).

From Joseph Benson

[Newcastle upon Tyne]
c. November 10, 1775

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

I was sorry to hear about three weeks ago that Mr. [Robert] Empringham¹ had been so imprudent as to comply with the advice (or I might say rather to obey the commands) of John Fenwick and go among the people here, to get them to sign their names to an address, remonstrance, petition (or what shall I call it?) sent to you on behalf of Miss Hurrell.² For, not to mention the tendency of such a proceeding to make a party among the people (and indeed preachers too) and alienate their affections from one another, it was directly calculated to make you believe that some of us had opposed her (which we have not done) both *violently* and *publicly*.

For my own part, I can assure you, dear sir, that I have never said a syllable against her preaching in *public* in any one place; and if I have mentioned my objections to her proceedings in *private*, it has been to very few individuals and that with great calmness and moderation.³ And the same I may affirm of Mr. Smith, [Joseph] Cownley, [Matthew] Lowes, and others with us. No such opposition has been made to Miss Hurrell by any in this circuit as they have insinuated to you—and as yourself seem to believe when you commend to Mr. Fenwick to insure the countenance and assistance of Mr. [William] Thompson that he may the more easily and effectually draw the teeth of the rest of the preachers. Alas, dear sir, most of us, especially Mr. Cownley and Mr. Smith and myself, have had most of our teeth drawn, and those that remain are quite decayed and broken, so that nobody need apprehend any danger from us. But if this had not been the case, we are not so malicious and ill-natured as to be inclined to bite so good a woman as Miss Hurrell.

Believe me, I am in perfect good humour. And though I think your expression not very pretty, and am grieved for your sake that John Fenwick should not have prudence enough to keep your letter to himself, and not show it up and down among the people (to some of whom has wellnigh proved a stumbling block), yet I am not offended, but feel the same regard for you as ever. Only I wish you had told us your mind more explicitly on the subject of female preaching (that is upon supposition you do not *now* approve of what you have *formerly* published to the world on that subject), that we might have known better how to act on this affair. Your last letter to me, had I made any such use of it, would have authorized me publicly to oppose her preaching on this circuit (where you judge 'she has no more place'⁴). Whereas John Fenwick produces letters of a quite contrary import. You see, dear sir, the

¹Robert Empringham (d. 1792) first appeared in the *Minutes* in 1771 (*Works*, 10:396). He served 1771–78, took a three year break, and returned in 1782 to serve until his death. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1792), 1:258.

²Elizabeth Hurrell (1739–98), born in Harston, Cambridgeshire, was converted under the ministry of John Berridge in nearby Everton. By the mid 1770s Hurrell had become acquainted with Mary Bosanquet and Sarah Crosby, and joined them in undertaking preaching. As this letter suggests, JW came to support her in this enterprise. But resistance from persons like Benson led her to desist preaching by 1780, and to settle in London. On her death she was buried in the crypt at Wesley's Chapel. See Taft, *Holy Women*, 1:175–81; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 172.

³This claim of Benson must be balanced by consideration of another letter he wrote about the same time to an unnamed fellow itinerant strongly rejecting female preaching. See Paul Chilcote, *John Wesley and the Women Preachers of Methodism* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1991), 305–08.

⁴JW to Benson, Oct. 30, 1775.

tendency of such proceedings not only to set the preachers and people against each other but likewise to set the preachers against you, you against the preachers, and even you against yourself. And this will be the case while you put so much confidence in such men as Mr. Fenwick, whom ere now you might have known better than to put it into his power to do so much harm. By all accounts he *has* been useful. But he must be more watchful and circumspect in his behaviour before he will do much good in this neighbourhood for the future. Alas, preaching and talking are different things from vital godliness! We often, too often, observe more of the former when we can find none of the latter!

Till about an hour ago I had no thought of saying a word to you concerning the little things just mentioned, believing it best to pass them over in silence. But finding them now and then cast in my way by the enemy and likely to prove hindrances to me in the Lord's work, and fearing lest they should in any degree tend to lessen my affection for you dear sir, whom I wish ever to esteem and love as a father and friend, and under whose direction I wish still to labour, I take the liberty thus to open my mind to you concerning them. And I hope you will do me the justice to believe what I write is dictated not by prejudice or resentment, but by a tender regard for your character (on which I should be sorry to see the least spot) and the cause of God (which is sometimes injured by little things).

As for myself, though I have found such things at times in danger of making my hands hang down (being constitutionally prone to reason too much on most occurrences), yet at present, I bless God, they do indeed work for good, having a happy tendency to destroy in me all undue desire to please man (I mean myself) and to make me only regard his approbation whose servant I am and to whom *only* I am accountable. I assure you, dear sir, I have much comfort in my poor labours. And the people will witness that I do not spare myself in the Lord's work. I can and do rejoice to spend and be spent for the good of souls. And with regard to visiting the people at their homes, though I might have done it *more*, yet I have done such throughout the circuit since Conference.

I am, dear sir,

Your obedient servant in the gospel,

Josh. Benson

Source: secondary transcription (by Robert Thursfield-Smith in 1905); Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box CO 1.

'Socrates' to the *London Chronicle*

c. November 11, 1775

Sir,

Your kind admission of my last letter encourages me to renew my correspondence. Having lately perused Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address to the Colonies*, I therein observed that he vindicates a general and (as he calls it) an undoubted right of the British parliament to tax America without her consent. By way of proof Mr. Wesley asserts that two-thirds of England are not represented, yet pay taxes without refusal. Since this is the case (says Mr. Wesley) why should not the colonies also submit to the like exaction? In answer to which: though every individual of this country is not particularly represented if destitute of a vote, yet any person of the trifling property of a freehold of 40 shillings per annum may procure if he chooses it such a representation. But as our British senators represent counties and towns, and some little boroughs that do not contain 200 inhabitants, therefore the nation is generally though not individually represented. But America is neither partially, totally, or at all represented. And yet Mr. Wesley contends that they are in duty bound to submit to the control of the legislature. This, Mr. Printer, is an unjust disparity. For Americans are free born as well as us, and therefore is it not unreasonable to deprive them of the privileges of Englishmen? If we tax them, they have a right to send and appoint persons to enquire into the distribution of their monies, and to seek for redress when they think themselves oppressed. Besides, if our legislature has an indispensable right to tax America without her consent, of what benefit is her alliance to a free nation, since she is divested of any of its privileges? They might then with equal advantage submit to the Grand Monarque or the Great Mogul, as in being subjects to the king of England—as one ingeniously observes in his answer to Mr. Wesley's *Address*.¹

Ireland has a parliament of her own, whereunto the people of that country may seek for redress when oppressed by their own legislature. And the Scotch send their own peers, who sit in the House of Lords to represent the kingdom of Scotland. But amidst all America, whose extent far exceeds the united kingdoms of Great Britain, Scotland, and Ireland, is not in any degree represented. Common reason must tell us this is an insufferable partiality. Not all the sophistry or political subtlety of the Rev. Mr. Wesley, when exerted to the utmost, can separate the inseparable union between taxation and representation. I shall not follow him through the numerous contested points contained in his 'Cool Address to the Colonies' at present, but conclude with an observation or two.

It has been suggested, though highly improbable, that the sole aim of the colonists is to form themselves into a republic and become independent of England. How is it possible? This can no more be effected on a sudden than Rome could have been built in a day. Where are their fleets and armies to effect so great a design? Such an attempt would expose them to the mercy of the French, who could (was England to lie dormant and suffer it) land one hundred thousand well-disciplined troops and overrun their country. The Americans know their own interest too well to aim at so inauspicious an event, which would issue in our injury and their ruin. I could prove the impracticability as well as the bad policy of such a step by numberless suggestions, which I must defer to another opportunity. In the interim, suffice it to observe that, as our interests are mutually connected, a speedy reconciliation will be most to the advantage of both countries.

Socrates

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle*, (Nov. 11–14, 1775), p. 471.

¹Evans, *Letter*, 13.

Anonymous Critic of Wesley's *Calm Address*

c. November 15, 1775¹

[p. 1]
Sir,

Your *Calm Address to the American Colonies* I have perused, and acknowledge you make a tolerable appearance in *borrowed plumage*. But sir, you have proved yourself an advocate, rather more willing than able, to defend the measures of the ministry. Dr. Johnson and other pensioned writers have endeavoured to vindicate the proceedings of the ministry against our American fellow-subjects, by specious and plausible arguments *of their own framing*. But you, Mr. Wesley, though a reverend divine of much learning and extraordinary pretended sensibility, have attempted to defend their conduct by the reasonings of [p. 2] *other writers*, and have had the modest assurance to *filch* their arguments and pass them off for *your own* in your *Calm Address to the Colonies*.² But sir, as your *Address*, thus cooked up, hath been highly applauded by the ministry, and many thousands of them circulated through the nation by their direction, it shall be my business to show the fallacy of it, and to prove that every argument you have made use of therein was pirated, almost verbatim, from Johnson's pamphlet called *Taxation no Tyranny*. But believe me, Mr. Wesley, I do not take this step with a view of exposing you, but of showing to what extremity the ministry are driven, and what little mean artifices they make use of, to deceive and persuade the public to approve of their bloody measures against our American colonies. Johnson, it is well known, wrote his pamphlet of *Taxation no Tyranny* by order of the ministry. And is there not the strongest reason imaginable to believe that you have now meanly stooped to hash up his arguments in your *Address* by their direction also, from the great pains they have taken to circulate it through the kingdom?

You begin your *Address to the American Colonies* by asking this question, 'Has the English parliament power to tax the American colonies?' And in order to determine this point, you define the nature of our colonies, by saying, 'an English colony is a number of persons, to whom the king grants a charter, permitting them to settle in some far country as a corporation, enjoying such powers as the charter grants, to be administered in such manner as the charter prescribes.' [p. 3] 'As a corporation they make laws for themselves. But as a corporation subsisting by a grant from higher authority, to the construal of that authority they still continue subject.'

Now let us see what Johnson says on this point: 'An English colony', says he, 'is a number of persons to whom the king grants a charter, permitting them to settle in some distant country, and enabling them to constitute a corporation. As a Corporation subsisting by a grant from higher authority, to the control of that authority they continue subject.' This part, sir, you have copied verbatim from Johnson's pamphlet. What you have copied, sir, you certainly think sound reasoning. But it is very far from being so. It makes a distinction without a difference, for if a colony make laws for themselves, as a corporation, it must be by virtue of that authority which you say hath a right to control and make laws for them, which is a manifest contradiction. For what can be more absurd than to say that as a corporation they do not make laws for themselves, but that somebody else has a right to make laws for them. For the word 'corporation' hath the same meaning in both parts of the sentence, and consequently that superior authority which enabled them by charter to make laws for themselves could not, at the same time, disable them from making laws for themselves. But indeed the authority of the crown, from whence they received their charters, has not the power of [p. 4] legislation, and therefore can have no control upon the colonies

¹First advertised in *London Evening Post* (Nov. 18–21, 1775), p. 4.

²This charge is ironic, since this author borrows major portions from Caleb Evan's *Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley*, as will be noted below.

as legislative bodies.

The next part which you have pirated, sir, from Johnson's pamphlet is in order to prove that the supreme power in England hath a right of imposing taxes upon the American colonies: You tell them that 'if the Parliament cannot tax them, because they have no representatives therein; for the same reason, it can make no laws to bind them. For if a freeman cannot be taxed without his own consent, neither can he be punished without it. For whatever holds with regard to taxation, holds with regard to all other laws. Therefore he, who denies the English parliament the power of taxation, denies it the right of making any laws at all.' And Johnson's pamphlet says, 'he that denies the English parliament the right of taxation denies it the right of making any other law, civil or criminal.' This argument, or rather this false assertion, is so frivolous it scarcely deserves an answer. The English parliament is not denied the right of taxation, according to the constitution of England, and within the limits of its jurisdiction, which was never extended to the colonies before the present despotic times. This right of parliament was necessarily precluded by the exercise of the royal authority in the grant of charter, which were wisely framed on purpose to exempt them from the general form of government in England, which could not be rendered practicable or compatible with their circumstances or situation they cannot serve two masters. If they are subject to the authority of the crown they are not [p. 5] under the power of parliament, and therefore have no occasion for foreign statutes, either civil or criminal, when their own internal government can much better answer the purposes of legislation. But if they are at all subject to the mother country in matters of internal government, they are all subject alike, as their relation is the same. Yet their different charters and modes of government contradict this, and clearly prove that nothing was intended to be superior to their respective legislatures but the prerogative of the crown, and that only as far as it can be lawfully exercised. And the crown hath no power of taxation. Having therefore chosen our mode of governing our American colonies by charters, we have no right to supersede their long established governments by bringing them under the English legislature.

But you, Mr. Wesley, say, 'the colonies have never disputed this power'; that 'they have always admitted statutes for the punishment of offences, and for the preventing or redressing of inconveniences'; and that 'the reception of any law, draws after it, by a chain which cannot be broken, the necessity of admitting taxation'. And Johnson's pamphlet says, 'that they have always admitted statutes of some kinds; and that the reception of any law draws after it by a chain, which cannot broken, the unwelcome necessity of submitting to taxation.' Are you not ashamed, sir, of such plagiarism? But in answer to you, and your author Johnson, we assert that the Americans do not refuse being taxed in the same manner as Englishmen are, who being that constituent branch of the legislative power [p. 6] which presides over property, and passes all grants to the crown, do literally and truly tax themselves. And all that the colonies contend for is to enjoy the great privilege of Englishmen to tax themselves, and give their own money, like freemen; and not to have it taken from them without their consent, like slaves.

A tax, according to the English constitution, is a voluntary gift of the people to the crown. And this great right of not being subject to have their money taken from them without their consents constitutes the freedom of the Englishmen. And if ever this right of giving their own money voluntarily should be taken from our American fellow subjects, they would be no longer freemen. But sir, you and your author Dr. Johnson, in order to evade the important distinction betwixt voluntary and compulsive taxation, betwixt giving our money and being robbed of it, take much pains to lessen and ridicule the popular part of our government, and the rights of the subject. You say, 'it is absolutely false, that every freeman is governed by laws to which he has consented, for that in wide-extended dominions a very small part of the people are concerned in making laws. This, as all public business, must be done by delegation, and the delegates are chosen by a select number. And those that are not electors, who are far the greatest part, stand by idle and helpless spectators.' And Johnson says, 'it is a position of mighty sound *only*, that a free man is governed by himself, or by laws to which he has consented. The business of the public must be done by delegation; and those who are not electors stand [p. 7] idle and helpless spectators of the

common-weal, wholly unconcerned with the government of themselves.' But what Johnson and you so confidently assert is not true, since the whole community have not only an influence upon but are represented by the elective body, as much as the electors are represented by the persons they choose. It is a gross mistake to say that no people are represented in parliament but those who have by law the right of electing members thereto. For the knights of the shire do certainly represent not only those who possessed the right of choosing them, but all others living in their respective counties. But to set this matter in a clear light, let us consider the representation of the city of London. The liverymen of London are, by law, the only electors of members to parliament for the city. But will any man say that none but the liverymen are therefore represented in parliament? Would it not be extreme folly to imagine that our great merchants, traders, and all other citizens of London are not represented in parliament, by the members for the city, because they were elected only by the liverymen? Nothing can be more clear and certain than that all the people of Great Britain, excepting the peers of the realm, are represented in an House of Commons.

It is very observable that it hath been the practice of persons in power, for some years past, to treat the commons or trading part of the people with scorn and indignity. To call them the scum of the earth. To despise their sentiments of government. To take every method of impoverishing and oppressing them. To [p. 8] condemn their remonstrances. And to show a desire of subverting all popular rights. Towards accomplishing their wicked and arbitrary designs, they have employed numbers of mercenary writers to diffuse and inculcate the old Tory principles of passive obedience and non-resistance; among whom, you Mr. Wesley, and Dr. Johnson whose words you echo, must certainly be reckoned. For you, sir, tell the American colonies in your *Address* to them that 'the consent of the people to laws, even those now made in England, is purely *passive*; and in every place, as all men are born the subjects of some state, or other, so they are born *passively*, as it were consenting to the laws of that state. Any other than this kind of consent, the condition of civil life does not allow.' And Johnson's pamphlet says that 'in the most favourite residence of liberty, the consent of individuals to institutions of government is merely *passive*. As all men are born the subjects of some state or other, we may be said to have been all consenting to some system of government. Other consent than this, the condition of civil life does not allow. It is the unmeaning clamour of the pedants of policy, the delirious dream of republican fanaticism.' Such sentiments as these, sir, are a scandal and disgrace to the name of an Englishman. They are false and infamous, slavish and traitorous, and would put the free people of this limited monarchy upon a level with the enslaved subjects of the Grand Signior. Those ministerial writers who have the audacity to publish such sentiments are certainly guilty of high treason against the majesty of the people of England, [p. 9] as they tend to convert their free constitution into a tyrannical government. What sir, have Englishmen no laws, no rights, no freedom to defend? Does not the great charter of England, which hath been ratified and confirmed more than forty times in full parliament, expressly declare the laws, rights, and liberties of Englishmen? Does not the king, at his coronation, take a solemn oath to maintain them inviolate? Hath not the lowest subject of this state, when wronged in property or freedom by the highest, a power of appealing to the laws of this free country for redress? And will they not, if justly administered, redress him? Is not the king himself subject to the laws? And should he ever wrong the meanest of his people, may he not be compelled by them to do him justice? And may not the most despotic minister, who shall dare to suspend or evade the force of the laws, be made to feel the just resentment of personal injury by the hand of personal vengeance? What was it that obliged a tyrant to acknowledge and recognize the ancient rights and liberties of Englishmen in the great charter of England? Was it *passive consent* to his government, or *passive obedience* to his orders? And when Mr. Wilkes bravely stood forth the champion of the laws and freedom of his country by opposing and denying the legality of *general warrants*, and was successful in the glorious struggle, what became of that *passive* tameness and *implicit consent* which venal writers tell us, 'is all that the condition of civil life allows'? And when the immortal Hampden, the Wilkes of a preceding age, had the brave resolution, with the laws [p. 10] on his side, to refuse paying a

small but arbitrary tax, imposed upon the people by the prerogative of the crown, did not the tyrant, in consequence of Hampden's heroic fortitude, lose in the issue both his crown and his head? And when that arbitrary prince James the Second had, by encouraging popery, by suspending the laws of the land, and other tyrannical proceedings, so totally offended his people and lost their affections as to induce them to call over the Prince of Orange, and give him the crown of these kingdoms, where was that *passive consent* and *tame obedience to government* which ministerial writers have the assurance and folly to tell us, 'is all that the condition of civil life allows'?

The arbitrary princes of the house of Stuart attempted, contrary to the laws, to impose taxes upon their people by virtue of their royal prerogatives, and were defeated in their designs and severely punished for their attempts. But have not some princes since their day, taken a safer, though more infamous, method of imposing arbitrary taxes upon their subjects, by corrupting their parliaments and bribing them to frame laws of taxation which clearly contradict and subvert the rights of the people and the fundamental principles of the English constitution? But sir, as you tell us from the high authority of Dr. Johnson, pamphlet-writer-general to the ministry, that 'as all men are born subjects to some state or other, so they are born, *passively* as it were, consenting to the laws of that state, and to the system of that government'; from hence it is plain both you and Johnson mean that the people [p. 11] should not only submit to, but support those laws, and that system of government they were born under. For once we will agree to your doctrine, and apply it to the present case of our American colonies. Those colonies were born under those laws, and that system of government, which the crown of this kingdom had granted to their ancestors by royal charters; and which they never complained of, but lived very contentedly under. Now, when an arbitrary ministry would deprive them of those laws, and that system of government they were born under, they, like good and brave subjects stand up in defence of them and resist their tyrannical and unconstitutional attempts. Are not the Americans, therefore, by your own doctrine, good and faithful subjects to that form of government they were born under?

But again sir, you echo from Johnson that 'the ancestors of the Americans, if subjects, acknowledged a sovereign. And if they had a right to English privileges, they were accountable to English laws, and had ceded to the king and parliament, the power of disposing, *without their consent, of their lives, liberties, and properties.*' But we have before shown that the colonies owe their political existence to their charters; and that the power of legislation, the administration of justice, and the security of property were all bestowed upon them by the royal grant; and that they neither derived their powers as colonies, nor their privileges as subjects from parliament; and therefore cannot be truly said to be guilty of disobedience to it. If their *property* was *secured* to them by a constitutional act of the crown, by what right can the [p. 12] parliament tax it, since that which is in the power of another cannot be *secure*? But as your preceptor, Dr. Johnson, allows in his pamphlet of *Taxation no Tyranny* that 'all personal immunities and securities, by which the condition of the subject has been from time to time improved, have been extended to the colonies', it is astonishing, sir, how he, and you after him, could advance so false and infamous a doctrine that '*they, and consequently all Englishmen, have ceded to the king and parliament the power of disposing, without their consent, of their lives, liberties, and properties.*' This is an assertion, sir, the most unconstitutional, and the most destitute of truth, that was ever vented by a Tory writer. It is indeed nothing less than high treason against the majesty of the people of England. The power of king and parliament, taken in its utmost extent, is but a power delegated to them by the people, to be always employed for their service and benefit, never to their hurt and injury. Mr. Locke, in his *Essay on Civil Government*, says, 'the legislative power is limited to the public good of society. It is a power, that hath no other end but preservation, and therefore can never have a right to destroy, enslave, or designedly to impoverish the subject; for the obligations of the law of nature cease not in society.' And if ever, therefore, a king and parliament were to pervert the power delegated to them by the people for their own good and happiness, and frame laws destructive to their rights and liberties, and subversive of their constitution, they would not only have an undoubted right to *resist such laws* but to reassume the [p. 13]

power which had been so abused again to themselves. For the collective body of the people of Great Britain delegate, but do not give up; trust, but do not alienate their right and their power. Was you, therefore, to put so extravagant a case as to suppose the two houses of parliament concurring to make at once a formal cession of their own rights and privileges and of those of the whole nation to the crown, and ask who hath the rights and the means to resist the supreme legislative power? I would answer, the whole nation hath the *right*; and a people, who deserve to enjoy liberty, will find the *means*. An attempt of this nature would break the bargain between the king and the nation, between the representative and collective body of the people, and would dissolve the constitution. From hence it follows that the nation, which hath a right to preserve their constitution, hath a right to *resist* an attempt that leaves no other means of preserving it but *those of resistance*.

Johnson's pamphlet, from whence sir you have pirated every paragraph in your *Address* to the colonies, was written, it is well known, by direction of the ministry. And certainly it is an omen very unfavourable to the rights and freedom of this nation when principles so false, and of such a tyrannical nature, as that *the king and parliament have power to dispose of the lives, liberties, and properties of Englishmen without their consent*, shall be written and published by order of the king's ministers. Is it not fully sufficient to alarm the people, and to raise suspicions in their minds that there is, at this time, a design of converting the constitution of this [p. 14] kingdom into an absolute government?

You proceed from the Doctor's pamphlet to observe that 'they, who form a colony by lawful charter do not certainly lose any privilege thereby, as they are guilty of no crime. But what they do not forfeit by any judicial sentence, they may lose by natural effects. He who goes voluntarily to America, ought not to complain of losing what he left in Europe. He can be but in one place at once, and cannot enjoy the benefits of a multiplied residence. He is still concerned in the *government of himself*, and is represented, according to *his choice*, in the general representation.' This silly and ludicrous kind of reasoning may be fully retorted, and perhaps best answered by arguments of the same nature. If government chose to rule the colonies by charters, it cannot at the same time do it by parliament. If it would encourage subjects to emigrate and establish colonies, to increase the trade and revenue of the mother country, it cannot complain that they who are busy in cultivating the lands of America do not pay the land-tax or window lights in England. If they are employed for the general good in importing our manufactures, and exporting such commodities as both we and our West-India islands want, they can neither be cringing at St. Jeanne's for a pension, nor making interest at and bribing our boroughs to return court members to the House of Commons. Government has therefore, in like manner, not nullified its right, by any formal surrender. But it hath lost the power of taxation through physical necessity, by which even a Tory ministry will allow the [p. 15] omnipotence of parliament may be bound. By its own choice, and established by a long succession of government, the supreme power hath given up taxation for other greater advantages, accruing from the commerce and growing population of America. It hath preferred a charter to a parliamentary authority. It has chosen what was thought, and what certainly was, most beneficial to the state and nation, the increase of trade, dominion, and revenue. And it is neither justice, law, nor policy that America, to serve the purposes of government, should be considered at one and the same time as being on both sides of the Atlantic—under the authority of the crown and charter-laws on one side of the globe, and under the supreme power of parliament on the other. For otherwise, I see no reason why the West-India islands, with our vast territory in the East Indies, should not be equally liable to taxation, from which they are exempt, partly because out of the realm and jurisdiction of our parliaments, but principally because they are taxed in other forms of customs, etc. and have been ever thought to do their duty to the state as good subjects by other modes of contribution, although not taxed, nor taxable by parliament. For as a man cannot enjoy the benefits and satisfactions of two remote situations at the same time, so he ought not to be subject to the disadvantages and inconveniences of them. It would be very hard for anyone to be punishable for not paying the poor's rate in St. James's parish who was never out of the province of New England, or for not contributing towards the pension of

Dr. Johnson, or [p. 16] rewarding Mr. Wesley, for their labours in endeavouring by their writings to rob him of all his rights and liberties.

You assert, sir, from Johnson's authority that 'the Americans have not, by abandoning their right in one legislature, acquired a right to constitute another; anymore than the multitudes in England who have no vote, have a right to erect a parliament for themselves.' If the American colonies have no right to constitute another legislature, why have they been permitted from the very beginning of their existence to form a legislative body, similar to that of the mother country? And why hath the supreme power of England suffered them for more than an hundred and fifty years, and to the reign of his present Majesty, to exercise this legislative power of their own, to frame laws for themselves, and to give and grant money for the service of their government with their own consents? But sir, you have admitted that the people who crossed the Atlantic and settled in America did not thereby forfeit any of the rights and privileges of Englishmen, but that they rendered the exercise of some of them *no longer possible*. And certainly it is a clear truth it is *no longer possible* that the Americans should vote for members of the British parliament. Consequently, *no longer possible* they should be *represented* in a British parliament; and therefore *no longer possible* that a British parliament should have the power of disposing of their property, without, and contrary to their consents, without rendering them absolute slaves. [p. 17]

It is to be hoped the British parliament will be more just than to attempt to enslave our fellow-subjects in America. For certainly they did not leave their native country, and encounter every danger and distress, to be reduced to a state of slavery. No, they expected protection, not chains from their mother country. Mr. [William] Pitt, when a commoner, fully expressed his sentiments in the House of Commons on the power of a British parliament to tax the American colonies in the following words: 'The commons of America, air, represented in their several assemblies, have ever been in possession of the exercise of this their constitutional right of giving and granting their own *money*. They would have been *slaves* if they had not enjoyed it.' For says he, 'the idea of a *virtual representation of America in this house* is the most contemptible idea that ever entered into the head of a man. It does not deserve a serious refutation.'³ And that able lawyer and truly great man, Lord Camden, in his speech on that subject in the House of Peers,⁴ says, 'that taxation and representation are inseparably united. God hath joined them. No British parliament can separate them. To endeavour to do it, is to stab our vitals. ... My position is this ... I repeat ... I will maintain it to my last hour ... *taxation and representation* are inseparable. ... This position is founded on the laws of nature; it is more, it is itself an eternal law of nature. For whatever is a man's own is absolutely his own; no man hath a right to take it from him without his consent, either expressed by himself or representative. Whoever *attempts* to do it, attempts an *injury*. Whoever does it, *commits a robbery*. [p. 18] He throws down the distinction between liberty and slavery. *Taxation and representation* are coeval with, and essential to this constitution.' And that great and immortal reasoner Mr. Locke says, 'what property have we in that which another may, by right, take when he pleases to himself?'⁵ Indeed, he must be a perfect stranger to the nature of the English constitution, who does not know that the right of granting our own money, and its not being to be disposed of without our consent, is the principal foundation of our freedom, and the basis of British liberty.

But you tell the Americans, sir, from the authority of Johnson's pamphlet, that 'they have no right to constitute a parliament of their own'. But sir, the Americans do not want to constitute a parliament, because it is ready made for them by their charters. You allow, sir, that the colonies have a right to all the privileges granted them by royal charters, but deny, in the words of Johnson, 'they have any right to those privileges which they have given themselves by provincial laws', because, you say, 'a province cannot

³See Evans, *Letter*, 15.

⁴*Ibid.*, 5–6.

⁵*Ibid.*, 4.

confer provincial privileges on itself'. But Johnson forgot, or did not choose to remember, that the king is present, by his deputies the governors, in their assemblies, and that no acts can pass in favour of the colonies, or any new privileges be conferred without his concurrence. Which is an effectual security to his own prerogative, as well as the honour and interest of the nation, and is realizing, as far as possible, the actual existence of a British parliament in America, by the constant residence of the representative of [p. 19] it's chief estate, the crown, with the same negative control upon the legislatures of the provinces. So that every new grant or privilege derived to them by their own laws, has in fact the same royal sanction and authority that gave them their charters. But if charter-powers to enact laws can confer no privileges on these corporate bodies, for what purpose were they given and granted? Certainly, they cannot be said to have given themselves what the king hath granted by his representatives, the governors.

But with a view of degrading and debasing the authority of the assemblies, or parliaments, in America, Johnson and you compare the legislature of a colony to the vestry of a parish. But this is such a very poor, parish conceit, as any constable would be ashamed of, and which deserves the correction of the beadle.⁶ It is a comparison, sir, not only disgraceful to the American assemblies but scandalous to the king himself, whose representative is the head of and presides over them. And it is as void of all similitude as it is of all decency. For a vestry is not a government, and hath no powers but from the laws existing. And its cess upon the inhabitants may be appealed from, and litigated in the courts of law. Whereas the assembly of a province, with the king's representative at its head, hath all the forms and efficient powers of a parliament, and is a government in the last resort, both on the behalf of the crown and the province; and from whence no appeal from taxation, or any other lawful act, can be made to a higher authority.

But you, from Johnson, say that 'the charter of Pennsylvania has a clause [p. 20] admitting, in express terms, taxation by parliament. And that if such a clause be not inserted in other charters, it must be omitted as not necessary, because it is manifestly implied in the very nature of subordinate governments; all countries, which are subject to laws, being liable to taxes.' This is a wretched argument indeed! Little better than giving up the point. For if it was implied in all the charters, as so self-evident a principle, why was it expressed in any one? If it be urged a claim or foundation for the right of taxation, it can only operate as such where it is expressed. But it is an insult upon government to suppose that a right of such a magnitude could be left, in deeds so solemn as these charters, to implication only. Or that such right should continue unasserted, from age to age, till the present time. It is a clear demonstration that no such right was even dreamed of when the charters were granted. And that it was the wise and equitable intention of government that they who were subject to the *colony-laws* should be subject only to *colony-taxation*. And from this unalterable principle of the English constitution, that they could no where else be taxed, as *Englishmen, but by their own consent*. Nor was this an immunity granted, as is falsely insinuated, but an *inherent right* which, as English subjects, they could not be deprived of. *A right which no legislature hath the power of annulling*. But the rights of the subject, which were deemed sacred under a government ruling on the *principles of the Revolution*, will always be looked upon with a jealous and an evil eye by a *Tory administration*, ever inimical to [p. 21] all the rights of the people. A ministry composed of Tories must, by the principles they profess, be enemies on course to the rights and liberties of Englishmen, and to the free constitution of this kingdom. And if you search the annals of England, you will find they always have been so. The slavish and absurd principles of Toryism, such as the divine hereditary right of kings, the sacredness of their persons, the unlimited power of their royal prerogatives, and the passive obedience and non-resistance of the subject, were first broached in this kingdom under the reign of that pedantic prince, James the First. And we are to thank *that Scotchman* for all the innumerable evils and oppressions, for all the troubles, commotions, and blood-shed, that have happened in this nation, since his days, in consequence of the impious and tyrannical principles he first vented. On the death of

⁶The lowest level of a parish official.

James, his son Charles the First succeeded to the throne. He had a ministry who were true and perfect Tories by principle, and in them placed the utmost confidence. And by the advice of this Tory ministry he attempted to set aside the ancient laws of the land, and to convert the free constitution of this kingdom into a tyrannical government. They persuaded him that his royal prerogative was above law, and that his proclamation ought to pass for a law. And consequently he took upon himself to impose a tax upon his subjects, called 'ship-money', by the authority of his royal prerogative only. And by the counsel of his Tory ministry, took so many other despotic measures totally contrary to the laws of the land, and [p. 22] wholly inconsistent with the rights and freedom of the subject, as to force the people to have recourse to *that resistance which they had an unquestionable right to make use of, whenever it became absolutely necessary for the defence and preservation of their constitution.*

This tyranny, and the people's resistance, occasioned a long and bloody civil war in the nation; when, after a contest of many years, *right* at last prevailed and the head of that unhappy, misled prince was brought to the block. James the Second had also the misfortune to have a Tory ministry, who advised him to lift his royal prerogative above the laws, to suspend the execution of them, to encourage popery, to imprison the Protestant bishops, and do to so many other despotic acts as at last roused up the resentment of the nation, and obliged the people to make use of their *right of resistance*, in defence of their laws, liberties, and religion—when they called over the Prince of Orange, and gave him the crown of these kingdoms. The next *Tory ministry* which this nation was cursed with was at the latter end of the reign of Queen Ann, when they had formed a conspiracy to deprive the house of Hanover of the succession to the throne, and to place the crown upon the head of a popish Pretender. But their plot being found out, was timely prevented by the Duke of Marlborough, assisted by other noblemen, and all the Whigs of the kingdom. The next Tory-ministry which Englishmen have had the misfortune of groaning under is the present. But though they have involved this nation in a bloody and unnatural war with their own [p. 23] colonies, we shall mention no more about them; because it is impossible to say what may be the consequences of this unnatural contention, what hardships and distresses it may bring upon the people of England, what commotions such miseries may produce, what dreadful catastrophes they may cause, or what may at last be the fate of the king and kingdom.

But it cannot be improper, especially at this perilous juncture, to consider a little why the reigns of so many of our kings have been inglorious, unfortunate, and even fatal to themselves. From a close perusal of the annals of this kingdom it will appear that the unhappy reigns of so many of our kings were occasioned by and arose from one of these *two causes*: Either from the ill designs and attempts of the *prince himself* against the liberties of the people, or from suffering some other person or persons to engross his authority and tyrannize over them in his name. There may indeed, we allow, be now and then an unhappy prince who falls a sacrifice to the frenzy, or unreasonable jealousies of his subjects. But generally speaking they are victims to their own *bad conduct*, or *blind confidence in their servants*. The last of the two is of much the worst consequence, both to the people and prince. It is so to the people, because oppression from a fellow-subject is always more grievous and heart-burning than from one vested with royal power. And it is so to the prince, because nothing can be more ignominious than for a great king to become the *tool of his own servant*. For does he not then, in a manner, *change stations with him*? Such mean stoopings are not [p. 24] only dishonourable but dangerous, for they naturally create *contempt*, as well as *hatred*, in the minds of the people—which is the most terrible circumstance a prince can possibly fall under. This servile disposition of the prince being the most pernicious, as well as the most common evil of the two, it cannot be improper to expatiate a little upon the fatal tendency of it. It will be generally admitted that the hearts of the people are the strongest guard of the prince. But how can a prince expect to reign in the hearts of his people, who suffers a favourite servant to act the part of the king? What pretensions can a prince in such circumstances have to the affections of his subjects, which can never be retained without knowing their sense of things, and redressing their grievances. But is it to be supposed that *his governor*, who is himself the people's greatest grievance, will ever let him into the

secret, or put him in a way to redress it? Another thing, absolutely necessary to make a prince beloved and esteemed by his people is a sacred regard to veracity, and an inviolable observation of his royal word, which ought never to be falsified or prostituted upon any occasion. But how is it possible for a prince in the state of vassalage described to keep his honour untainted in this particular? Being industriously kept in ignorance by his *regent favourite*, and obliged to utter whatever is put into his mouth, he is always liable to be imposed upon, and sometimes made to declare things utterly unworthy of a king, under a firm persuasion of their being strictly true; or at least without knowing anything to the contrary. This is the case [p. 25] in most countries where the prince hath the misfortune to fall into the hands of a favourite, who directs him as he pleases, and whose safety consists in concealing the true state of the nation from his knowledge. When a *favourite* hath reduced his royal master to this wretched condition, he will take every possible method of hiding it from him. And will endeavour to persuade him that he is popular, and that the measures of his government are highly approved of by his subjects, at the very time they are so grievous and oppressive to them that they are ready to rise up in resistance against them. For this end and purpose, he will sometimes hire a ragged mob to huzza him when he goes abroad, to imitate the voluntary acclamations of a joyful multitude. For this end he will also, by the distribution of places, pensions, and the public money procure addresses from both houses, applauding the wise measures of his government, and their most zealous and fervent thanks for the same. And for this purpose he will also obtain, by the aforesaid means as well as by every other artifice and deception, addresses from the people without doors, expressing their highest approbation of the public measures, with offers of supporting them with their lives and fortunes. And when through his infamous conduct, he hath plunged the kingdom into the worst of all evils, and is so conscious of his guilt as to be fearful of being detected by his prince, he will sometimes form a *plot* to further his purposes, and persuade his royal master that there is a conspiracy against his life. And though his plot should be so highly improbable and ridiculous [p. 26] as not only to be discredited but laughed at by the whole nation, he will, from his long influence over the mind of his sovereign, and keeping him under a state of credulous submission to his direction, prevail upon him to believe it. By these and other such deceitful practices, the *favourite* will delude his prince, make him suppose the measures of his government are approved of by his people, and that his kingdom is in a perfect calm, till a thunderstorm bursts out at once, and involves both king and people in the most ruinous and fatal calamities that can possibly happen.

Having thus made a long digression from your *Address to the Colonies*, we shall now, sir, return to it and examine the remainder of your arguments. You say that ‘the first settlers in Massachusetts Bay were promised an exemption from taxes for seven years’; and then immediately ask, ‘Does not this very exemption imply that they were to pay them afterwards?’ No sir, it implies no such thing. Nor hath it any reference at all to what is understood by *taxes*. For it was most certainly an exemption from the payment of *quit-rents* to the crown for the lands they occupied, for the term of seven years, and which is commonly granted to the first settlers in every new colony. That it could not mean an exemption from parliamentary taxation is very plain from your own arguments, because you assert that the parliament always had the power of imposing taxes upon the colonies. And consequently, if the parliament always had such power, the king could have no right to promise by charter that the parliament should not tax them for seven years. And [p. 27] as to the charter of Pennsylvania, in which you say, ‘there is a clause admitting, in express terms, taxation by parliament’, it was never understood to mean what you suppose, a power of imposing internal taxes for the purpose of raising a revenue. But merely the laying on of such duties as might be necessary for the regulation only of trade, and which appears evident from this plain fact: No such taxation was ever imposed upon the colonies till the fatal imposition by the Stamp Act, and which was then universally complained of by the colonies, as an innovation and a grievous infringement

of their *chartered*, as well as their *inherent rights*.⁷ Besides sir, it is inconceivable that, if parliament did always possess a right of taxing the colonies, and thought the exercise of it consistent with the English constitution, it should not, for the length of an hundred and fifty years or more, lay one single tax upon them, but permit them to tax themselves by their own representatives in their own Assemblies.

You say next in your *Address* to the colonies that ‘a few years ago you were assaulted by enemies whom you were not able to resist. You represented this to your mother country, and desired her assistance. You was largely assisted, and by that means wholly delivered from all your enemies. After a time your mother country, desiring to be reimbursed for some part of the large expense she had been at, laid a small tax (which she had always a right to do) upon one of her colonies.’ But sir, did not your conscience fly in your face when you wrote this? For certainly so gross a misrepresentation of facts was never [p. 28] asserted by any ministerial mercenary tool before in this nation. The late war, sir, was not undertaken, as you assert, for their sakes and on their accounts; but in defence of the people in the new plantation of Nova Scotia, who are unconcerned in the present dispute. And yet, it is well known to the whole nation, and will be acknowledged by everyone who hath any regard to truth, that the colonists exerted themselves in that war, and assisted their mother country in it to a degree so much beyond what might have been expected from them, or what they could afford to do, that the *king and parliament*, at the conclusion of the war, judged it right and reasonable *to make them large reimbursements, as a kind of recompence or reward for their extraordinary services*. This is a fact, sir, which you know to be true and cannot deny. And yet you have so much disingenuity, and so little regard for veracity, as to represent the matter in a manner the very reverse, and assert that the mother country laid a small tax upon one of the colonies to reimburse herself for some part of the large expense she had been at on their account in that war. Can you imagine, sir, that such a gross misrepresentation of facts will tend to persuade the colonies to believe you? Will they not conclude, sir, that some bribe or other from the ministry hath prevailed upon you to set their conduct in so untrue a light, and to do them injustice? The imposing taxes upon the colonies is not the way to benefit the mother country, for it is well known that the advantages which accrued to this kingdom from monopolizing all the trade of our American colonies were infinitely [p. 29] superior to any internal taxations which a British parliament could possibly impose upon them, had it a right to do so. For they brought in and secured to us an immense revenue. Mr. Pitt, now Lord Chatham, speaking on this point in the House of Commons, thus expressed himself; ‘When I had the honour of serving his Majesty, I availed myself of the means of information which I derived from my office. *I speak therefore from knowledge*. My materials are good. I was at pains to collect, to digest, to consider them. And I will be bold to affirm that the profit of Great Britain from the trade of the colonies, through all its branches, is *two millions* a year. This is the fund that carried you triumphantly through the last war. The estates that were rented at two thousand pounds a year, sixty years ago, are at three thousand pounds a year at present. Those estates sold then from fifteen to eighteen years purchase; the same may be sold now for thirty. *You owe this to America. This is the price America pays you for her protection*.’⁸ But this immense revenue to the British crown hath been lost by parliament’s assuming a right of imposing taxes upon the colonies without their consent, and contrary to the spirit of the English constitution. Thus the nation hath lost a great and glorious substance, by grasping at a trifling inglorious shadow.

If the people of America did not forfeit the rights of Englishmen by crossing the Atlantic, they certainly ought not to be taxed without their own consents, given by their representatives. And nothing can be more clear than that they are not represented in a British [p. 30] parliament. Should the people of America be taxed without having, or the possibility of having any choice of the persons, who laid the taxes upon them, they would no longer be the subjects, but the slaves of government. For they are truly

⁷See Evans, *Letter*, 18.

⁸*Ibid.*, 19–20.

slaves, whose property may be taken from them without their consents, and at the pleasure of other people. But our excellent constitution hath united the right of taxation with, and rendered it inseparable from, the right of representation. And could any pretence whatever justify the separation of these rights with a *part* of the British subjects, the same would hold equally good to the *whole*. But these rights are so essential to our constitution that the *legislature itself* hath not, nor is vested with, a power to annul or undermine them, but is bound to regulate the laws it frames in conformity to them. The legislative power of this kingdom is circumscribed by, and limited to the constitution of it; and it certainly hath no more right to make laws for depriving the people of their properties, than for taking away the privileges of the Peers, or the constitutional prerogatives of the Crown.

Having gone through all the argumentative part of your *Address* to the Americans, totally borrowed from Johnson's pamphlet, we now come to the persuasive and declamatory part of it. And which you begin by asking the Americans, 'How it was possible that the taking a reasonable and legal step of laying a small tax upon them should have set all America in a flame?' And then say, 'I want to tell you my opinion freely. My opinion is this, we have a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy. Whether they [p. 31] hate his present Majesty on any other ground than because he is a king, I know not. But they cordially hate his office, and have for some years past been undermining it with all diligence, in hopes of erecting their grand idol, their dear commonwealth, upon its ruins. I believe they have let very few into their design; and you are made the dupes of men, who owe you no good will and employ you only for their own purposes. I make no doubt but these very men are the original cause of the present breach between England and her colonies.' This opinion of yours, Mr. Wesley, is a very extraordinary one, and the more so, as it not only contradicts facts, well known to the whole nation, but your own sentiments also, which you published in the year 1770, called *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs*. It contradicts notorious facts, because the Pennsylvanian Farmer, in his excellent letter to the people of America, says, 'It hath been said in Great Britain, that Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, and some other great men have taught the colonies to despise her authority. But it is as little true as the multitude of invectives vented against the colonies. The constant practice in these publications is to confound facts and dates, and then to rail. It should be remembered that *the opposition in America to the Stamp Act was fully formed, and the Congress held at New York, before it was known on the continent that our cause was espoused by any man of note at home.*'⁹ And it contradicts your own sentiments given in your *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs*, wherein you expressly say, 'I do not defend the measures taken with regard to America, I doubt whether [p. 32] any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence.' And it is well known that you, not long ago, expressed yourself very warmly in different companies, and upon different occasions, in *favour of the Americans*, affirming, 'that they were, in your opinion an *oppressed, injured people*. And that if *they submitted to taxation by our parliament*, they must be either *fools or knaves*. And that they would then be *enslaved*; and if they were enslaved, *Ireland would follow next, and then England.*'¹⁰ Now Mr. Wesley, notwithstanding your publication of your sentiments, and your frequent declarations of them in various companies, concerning the American dispute, you will have it that the opposition to the measures of the ministry respecting America is entirely owing to these wicked men, these *king-haters*—with whom you appear to be very intimate, for though you say they have let but very *few* into the secret, it seems you are one of that *chosen few*.¹¹

But sir, what are we to think, what will the Americans think, of your *present opinion*, so wholly contradictory to *your former*? Must we not, will they not be very apt to conclude you have, for some private advantage or other, been gained over by the ministry, and that you have bartered a fair reputation

⁹Ibid., 21–22.

¹⁰Ibid., 22–23.

¹¹Ibid., 22.

and a good conscience for a bribe? However, sir, your present opinion is so ill founded, and so far from being just, it will do very little harm, as most people will despise it. For though you say our monarchy is endangered by the wicked practices of men who are of republican principles, and king-haters, every sensible person in this nation well knows that [p. 33] the very reverse is true, and that the rights and liberties of the people are in the utmost danger of being destroyed by Tories and Jacobites—who, by the principles they profess and industriously inculcate, and by the arbitrary steps and measures they have taken and continue to take, give the strongest grounds for supposing, they have an intention of changing the free constitution of this kingdom into a despotic government. Of this the people in America are thoroughly convinced, for they have severely experienced the fatal effects of their tyrannical and unconstitutional proceedings. Can you imagine, sir, that the fallacious declamation in your *Address*, in assuring them that ‘they have the happiness of living under the most desirable form of government in the world’; that ‘they enjoy all the blessings of liberty they can reasonably wish for’; and that ‘every man may sit, without restraint, under his own vine’, can impose upon their understandings and deprive them of their feelings? Can heal the wounds they smart under, or make them forget the lives of their countrymen that have been lost by the cruel and bloody measures of a most arbitrary ministry? No sir, your *Address* does certainly expose yourself, but cannot deceive the colonies.

The Americans, sir, are a wise and brave people. They are wise in knowing the value of freedom, and they are brave in defending it with their blood. They will immediately perceive that all your arguments were taken from the minister’s pensioned advocate, Dr. Johnson; and that all your persuasions and professions of love and friendship for them are false and [p. 34] insidious, and only to seduce them into a state of slavery. They will therefore despise you, as a writer, for your gross plagiarism, and detest you as a man, for your canting hypocrisy.

Having gone through the argumentative and declamatory parts of your political performance, I must not, sir, omit taking proper notice of an extraordinary assertion you have made towards the end of it; an assertion, sir, which you have doubtless made with a view of depreciating and throwing a disgrace upon the inherent power of the people of England. You assert, sir, that ‘you know but *one instance* in all history wherein *the people gave the sovereign power to any one*, and that was to Masaniello of Naples’. And you ‘defy any man living to produce another instance in the history of all nations.’ I accept your challenge. And though the people of England did, at the happy Revolution, most certainly transfer the sovereign power of this kingdom from King James to our glorious deliverer from popery and slavery, King William, yet I will not bring that as an instance against you. But shall produce several instances of a people’s giving the sovereign power, and making kings, from an history which you certainly must have read, and that is the history of the Jews, as recited in the Bible.

I shall give you chapter and verse for the instances I bring, that you may see I transcribe them truly. The first instance is 1 Kings, ch. 12. On the death of King Solomon, his son Rehoboam succeeded to the crown. At the beginning of his reign all the people of Israel came to him and said, (v. 4), [p. 35] ‘Thy father made our yoke grievous. Now therefore, make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke he put upon us, *lighter*, and we will serve thee.’ But Rehoboam, consulting with and following the advice of such evil counsellors as may, with great propriety and similitude, be compared to our present ministry, rejected the prayers of his people and refused to lighten their grievances. Upon which, all the people of Israel, except the tribe of Judah, revolted from him and v. 20, ‘*gave the sovereign power to Jeroboam, and made him their king*’. And we further read that when Rehoboam was preparing an army to compel the people, whom he called ‘rebels’, to return to their obedience, the prophet Shemaiah was sent from God to him, and the tribe that remained with him, forbidding them to go up and fight against their brethren, for what they had done *came from him*. This passage of holy writ affords a very useful and instructive lesson to both prince and people. For it proves that it is the duty of all kings to listen to the petitions of their people, and to redress their grievances. And it instructs the people that whenever they shall be so unhappy as to have a king that shall refuse to listen to their prayers, and to

redress their grievances, it is in the sight of the Almighty a sufficient reason for their resistance to him, and also to give his crown to another. The next instance is 2 Kings, 3:20, 'In his days, Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and *made a king of themselves.*' Another instance is ch. 21, v. 24, 'And the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against King [p. 36] Amon, and *the people of the land made Josiah king.*' There are many other instances in the history of the Jews of the people's giving the sovereign power, and making kings. But those are fully sufficient to convince you, Mr. Wesley, how vain your defiance is, and how easily you are confuted out of that very book you ought to have by heart.

Having now totally done with you, and your *Address*, I shall enter a little more fully into the consideration of the question whether the parliament of Great Britain hath a right to tax the American colonies.¹²

Source: Anonymous. *Resistance No Rebellion; in which ... the Infamous Fallacies in John Wesley's 'Address to the American Colonies' [are] Exposed and Censured.* [London:] N. Maud, 1775.

¹²Our transcription ends here, since the engagement with JW ends here. Much of what remains in this pamphlet is drawn from an Old Member of Parliament [Arthur Lee], *An Appeal to the Justice and Interests of the People of Great Britain in the Present Disputes with America* (London: J. Almon, 1775), 4ff.

From 'Patrick Bull'

c. November 15, 1775¹

Melius et fortius ...
ridiculum acri ...
... hic niger est;
hunc tu, Romane, caveto²

[p. 2]

To the Reader

It may perhaps be necessary to mention that Father Petre was that Jesuit who endeavoured to establish popery and despotism in the reign of James the Second. He was not only father confessor to that weak monarch, but also of the Privy Council. And in consequence of his pernicious counsels our constitutional rights both in church and state were trampled on and invaded. And the sovereign rendered himself so odious by following them that he found himself under the disagreeable necessity of abdicating his throne.

[p. 3]

The Jesuit Unmasked

Brethren and Countrymen,

The grand question by us to be debated is this,³ Has Father Petre's ghost appeared in the shape of John Wesley or not?

In order to determine this, let us consider the nature of *apparitions*. An apparition is the shade of some deceased person to whom the infernal powers grant a charter, permitting it to visit some far country as an apparition, enjoying such powers of scaring women and children into fits as the charter grants, to be used in such a manner as the charter prescribes. As an apparition it may make laws for itself, and be visible or invisible just as it pleases. But, as an apparition on a visit, by a permission from higher authority, to the control of that authority it still continues subject.

Considering this, nothing can be more plain than that the supreme power of [p. 4] hell has a legal right of sending forth an apparition for any end beneficial to the whole empire. The introduction of popery would crowd the infernal regions with subjects, and therefore it was highly important to the devil that *Father Petre's ghost* should appear to preach the Roman Catholic religion, which will necessarily follow under a despotic government.

But you object that the *devil* has no power over any man but by his own consent, and this consent is given by every man who leads a wicked life. *John Wesley never led a wicked life*, therefore the devil could not empower Father Petre to appear in his form for the purpose of propagating the pernicious

¹This was advertised in *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Nov. 4, 1775), p. 4; but on page 7 it refers to a sermon JW preached at Bethnal Green in London on Nov. 12, 1775. So either it was delayed or the full version given here had additions after that sermon.

²Horace, *Satires*, x.14–15, iv.85; 'better and stronger ... sharp satire ... that man is a dark character; you, Romans, beware of him.'

³The author scatters short excerpts from JW's opening to the *Calm Address* throughout these opening sections. There are frequent quotation marks meant to indicate this, but no explanation that this is what is happening. We have omitted these quotation marks, to render the text more smoothly.

doctrines contained in that *Calm Address*, which is falsely ascribed to him.

I answer, this argument proves too much. If the devil has no power over you unless you consent, for the same reason he can make no laws to bind you. If a man cannot be represented by any ghost without first consenting to sin in his life, neither can he be scared without it. For whatever holds with regard to *representation*, holds with regard to all other maxims. Therefore he who denies the devil the power of representation, denies him the right of sending forth any apparitions. But this power *over the ghosts* you have never disputed. You have always admitted that ghosts may appear for the [p. 5] punishment of offences in the discovery of horrid murders, and for the preventing or redressing of inconveniences in revealing where a bag of money is hid, or where the title-deeds of an estate which have been lost are to be found.⁴ And the reception of one *apparition* draws after it, by a chain which cannot be broken, the necessity of admitting that apparitions may, when upon an expedition, assume whatever forms they please.

But I object to the very foundation of your plea, that Father Petre's ghost has not appeared, and that the *Calm Address* is written by John Wesley himself. As confidently as it has been asserted, it is absolutely false. You must acknowledge that it is calculated to prove that we have nothing that we can call our own; that our lives, liberties, and property are all dependant on the sovereign's will. Is not this a diabolical doctrine? Was it not penned by a devilish spirit? John Wesley is too good a scholar to display such sophistry! *Too good a man* to display such depravity of heart! *Too good a subject* to broach such seditious doctrines! John Wesley therefore cannot be the author of the *Calm Address*; but it was written by one of the same name, and in a form so like, that a vulgar understanding cannot distinguish the difference. Nay, the same starched stiffness straightened the [p. 6] very hair of his head, and suppressed the most distant inclinations to flow in graceful ringlets on his shoulders. It will appear therefore that it was a ghost. True, a ghost it was, but his ghost it could not be. For though he were even politically, morally, and spiritually dead, it is certain that he is not naturally so. And I will prove, from the doctrines of the pamphlet, that it was the ghost of a Jesuit; and from some circumstances, that it was not only the apparition of a Jesuit, but that of all Jesuits it was Father Petre himself, who was delegated by the infernal states to pay us this visit, with a view to promote the good old cause.

We all know that, a few days since, this *Calm Address* made its appearance in a fury. It was never so much as advertised. But, contrary to all probable or natural means, like a mushroom it sprung up in one night, and in the morning was dispersed in the most distant parts of the kingdom. Nay, so zealous was this spirit that he planted a few *devils* to cry them at the Royal Exchange, posted another party to sell them at the Custom House. Nor was the *real Mr. Wesley's own religious* family at his house, next door to St. Luke's Hospital for incurables (a very convenient situation, considering the state of the poor gentleman's brain) exempt from the attacks of this inimitable phantom, who distributed his poison in that holy retreat with uncommon alacrity and *terrible* success. [p. 7]

Nor did this jesuitical spirit stop here. But after having visited Bath, Bristol, and many other places, he returns in the twinkling of an eye to London. And at the parish church of St. Matthew, Bethnal Green⁵ (oh horrid sacrilege, dreadful phenomenon, though the windows were all fastened and the doors shut to keep out the cold!) darts down the chimney of the vestry. And though the minister, not foreseeing so strange an accident, had neglected to sprinkle his surplice with consecrated water, and as he stood without the circle of gospel humility, could not keep the devil of ambition at a distance, was in the

⁴Footnote in original, 'See his History of Apparitions, and particularly Dr. Scott's relation' [referring to Daniel Defoe, *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions* (London: Roberts, 1727)].

⁵JW describes preaching this sermon on Nov. 12, 1775 in his Journal (*Works*, 22:471). There is also an account in *London Chronicle* (Nov. 11–14, 1775), p. 472. The sermon was published with the eventual title of 'National Sins and Miseries' (see *Works*, 3:564–76).

reading desk, in the middle of the service, this daring spirit, to the great offence of all serious Christians, and the astonishment of the whole congregation, in the *very voice* of that reverend, (and *a voice so like*, as I have been informed, that those who were present in the church could not discover any difference) delivered in a distinct and audible manner that *Calm Address* which is *imputed* to John Wesley, and preached an excellent political sermon. Some have said it was the *parson himself* who acted that rash and imprudent part, to curry favour with the Bethnal Green justices; or, what is more probable, in hopes of being rewarded with a fat benefice. But I believe you will agree with me that *no Christian minister in his right senses* would have behaved in a manner so highly culpable. It therefore was certainly a spirit, and I am sure a very [p. 8] bad one. And I am the more confirmed in my opinion, because that clergyman was so obstinately bent against the gospel, or Methodism *as it is called*, that being said to be the production of John Wesley's pen, who was himself once called a 'gospel' or 'Methodist' preacher, was a reason more than sufficient to have prevented the entrance of it within those consecrated doors.

I think, my friends, it will be unnecessarily for me to enter into particulars, and seriously to refute those jesuitical arguments, since the *Letter* from Bristol, signed 'Americanus', and especially the *supplement* to that letter, or a *Second Answer* by W. D. (which fully supplies the deficiencies of the first) have sufficiently exposed and answered the arguments advanced by Father Petre's ghost. And therefore I shall, in justice to the injured character of that *upright individual*, John Wesley, offer some reasons to prove that this *Calm Address* is not the production of his genius, but that it was written by the *spirit* of a Jesuit.

As I always desire to support what I advance by indubitable facts, I made it one day my business to call upon Dr. Johnson, a man too eloquent to be comprehended by the vulgar, and informed him how ill Mr. John Wesley had been used in this particular instance. I told him that I was certain he had no just title to those arguments contained in the *Calm Address*, notwithstanding all that his enemies had said. The Doctor, who, as [p. 9] he was born with a *caul over his face*, is consequently a cunning man and has the gift of discerning spirits, agreed entirely with me in sentiment. Adding, at the same time, that he knew the spirit who was the real author of them as well as he knew himself, and that the same spirit had lately published a famous pamphlet, entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*, of which the *Calm Address* was only an abstract, divested of all that bombast of eloquence, to adapt it to the understanding of common readers, that the poison might spread universally.

Can any person be so unreasonable as to imagine that a man so consistent in his conduct as John Wesley, would be inconsistent in his writings? Indeed some have alleged against him that he is never long of one opinion, but has changed from system to system, and from profession to profession, till he is at last become a *mere professor* in religion. But this is no proof that he would flatly contradict himself in what he publishes, after the maturest deliberation, for the inspection of the world. And yet this must be the case if we are so absurd as to imagine him the author of the *Calm Address* that came forth in his name; for he says, in a treatise that he published in 1780 entitled, *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*, 'I am no politician. Politics lie quite out of my province.' If he was no politician then, why [p. 10] does he pretend to be one now? Has he left preaching, which was his province, for politics, which were not? Or does he mean, with the quondam Parson Horne,⁶ to dye his coat red *in the blood of Americans*?

Perhaps you may answer that he may truly say *he is no politician*, and yet be the author of the *Calm Address*, since there is nothing in those *shallow* arguments that can contradict so just an assertion. But though you should thus evade this argument, there is one that I shall now produce that I believe is unconquerable. For he says, in the 14th page of that treatise, 'I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America. I doubt whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity or prudence.' And can we imagine that, after having started so reasonable a doubt, he himself

⁶The title used by 'Junius' for John Horne Tooke, in his public letters defending John Wilkes.

would be the first to defend those very measures which he pronounced indefensible? The contraction is too glaring. And I think that this circumstance alone is sufficient to prove, to demonstration, either that John Wesley is not the author of that pamphlet (which is what I contend for) or that he is so wavering in his sentiments that his opinion can have no weight in the scale of reason. So inconsistent in his principles that we may in a few days expect from him a *vindication* of the Americans, and a satire upon administration. And in this point of view his character must appear so [p. 11] *despicable*, and his conduct so absurd, that instead of raising our indignation we can only regard him as an *object of our contempt*.

Mr. Wesley professes himself a minister of the gospel of peace, and is it consistent with such a profession to kindle the torch of war, and to foment a civil dissension? Instead of a *minister of peace*, surely none but a *chaplain in ordinary* to the *furies*, or *minister extraordinary to Bellona, goddess of war*, could ever be the author of that *inflammatory* Calm Address.

Mr. Wesley expressly declares that 'He is a friend to the Americans, that he loves them as brethren.' And how does he prove his love? What testimony does he give of his friendship? The *Calm Address* attempts to demonstrate that they are *traitors* and in *actual rebellion*. And consequently that *a halter alone is too good a reward for them*, but that they deserve to be drawn and quartered into the bargain. A strange method of testifying regard! I am of opinion that his dear American brethren would not thank him for this proof of friendship. But I am sure that, after such a profession, John Wesley could not write the *Calm Address*, and therefore he ought not to be stigmatized as a most servile flatterer, and the most artful hypocrite that ever (under the cloak of religion, and a black gown) endeavoured to conceal the *blacker* designs that lurked within a deceitful heart. [p. 12]

Mr. Wesley is a loyal subject. He hath subscribed the thirty-nine articles. He hath taken the oaths of allegiance. Can we then be so absurd as to suppose him the author of a treatise that labours to establish the old fashioned doctrine of hereditary right, or that kings derive their power *jure divino*?⁷ A treatise that is repugnant to the principles of the constitution, and a libel upon the Revolution? Impossible that even John Wesley should call William the Third (of glorious memory) an usurper; or have the audacity to declare that the Hanoverian family has no right to the crown. Yet this, and more, is attempted to be proved in that *Calm Address* which was published by Father Petre's ghost, and of which John Wesley cannot be the author. And therefore, since from these reasons (and many more which might be added, if it would not be tedious) it must certainly appear that John Wesley is not the author of the *Calm Address*, let us leave him to his repose whilst we return to Father Petre's ghost, and endeavour, from the very words of the pamphlet, to demonstrate who is the real author of it.

I lay down these three propositions: First, that the arguments are sophistical or jesuitical, which are synonymous terms. Secondly, [p. 13] that they are injurious to his Majesty, because calculated to prove him an absolute monarch. And thirdly, that they are written in favour of his royal highness Prince Charles,⁸ since they prove that the present family has no right to the crown.

In the fifth page of the *Address*, the ghostly author says, 'Therefore he who denies the English parliament the power of taxation, denies it the right of making any laws at all.' Is not this sophistry? Does not Ireland deny the British senate the right of taxation, because unrepresented therein, and yet it submits to laws for regulation of their government and trade? And does not America acknowledge the supremacy of the English parliament, in submitting to the Navigation Act, and other acts that restrain the benefit of their important commerce to us alone? But they deny that we have a right to tax them,⁹ because they are

⁷Footnote in original, 'As all my readers may not understand Latin, it may be proper to observe that the words *jure divino* signify that kings have a *divine* right from God to play the *devil* whensoever they please with their subjects.'

⁸I.e., Charles Edward Stuart (1720–88), the grandson of James II; called 'the Pretender'.

⁹Footnote in original, 'In our parliament at Westminster.'

not represented therein. And they are right in their denial, for a *freeman* cannot be taxed without his own consent. And surely they ought to have a parliament of their own, as Ireland; or to be represented, as Scotland is, in the British parliament. And if we admit, from such a sophism, that the Americans are *rebels in arms*, we must condemn the Irish as *rebels in heart*. And surely such an argument can only be calculated by a Jesuit (who remembers that a kingdom divided cannot stand), to light the torch of civil [p. 14] discord at home, and then to take the advantage of our intestine confusion to introduce popery and the Pretender from abroad.

Page 6. 'The case of electors is little better, when they are near equally divided. Almost half of them must be governed, not only without, but even against their own consent.' A fine argument truly! Let us consider the consequences of it. There is scarcely an act of parliament passes without division, if on an important occasion. And as the *minority* do not consent, it is not their act. They are not bound to obey it. How can the *acts of* other men bind them? Well then, they have a right to resist it. And if this is true, there is not a felon that is executed but dies wrongfully, for he never gave his consent. There is scarce an action tried but is determined unjustly. And what is more, there is scarce a member in the house but represents us unlawfully. Shall I draw one inference more from this doctrine? His present Majesty, God bless him, reigns over almost half his people unjustly, for his great grandfather was placed on the British throne by a majority of only one deciding vote; and *one was as good as a million*, for a majority includes a minority. Father Petre's ghost says, No. But John Wesley is a learned man, and knows better. He knows that I am represented, *actually* or *virtually*, though there may exist a person that I should rather choose, if I could have my will—as a man when cursed with a shrew, finds to his [p. 15] sorrow, she is a *very wife*, though there are thousands that he may like much better.

Ah Satan! Hast thou at last discovered thy cloven foot? All thy sophistry will not serve thy turn (for speaking truly, nothing but a halter can), and we now see the only end that the ghost proposed by this argument was to prove that near half the people may, with a safe conscience, take up arms against his present Majesty, as they did not place him on the throne, according to their maxim,

*Edvardum occidere nolite, timere bonum est.*¹⁰

Having thus proved from examples in his own words that these arguments are sophistical or jesuitical, I shall, secondly, demonstrate that they are injurious to his present Majesty, because calculated to prove him an absolute monarch.

Page 19. 'If they contend for this (that is a right of granting their own money) they contend for neither more nor less than independency. Why then do they talk of their rightful sovereign? They acknowledge no sovereign at all.' None but an absolute monarch can tax his subjects without their consent. In France, '*c'est la volonté du Roi*'¹¹ is a sufficient justification of the most arbitrary measures. But it is not, or at least ought not to be, so in any part of the British dominions. Now the ghost of Father Petre either means to prove from these words that our sovereign is arbitrary, or else that we have no sovereign at all. How then has England no sovereign? [p. 16] Nor Ireland? Nor Scotland? Because they tax themselves; that is, by their representatives, grant their money with their own consent. Father Petre *dares not avow* such a principle. But he insinuates as much, for the natural inference from his words is, that as we grant our own money, we have no sovereign at all. And then it follows, as a necessary consequence, that the throne is vacant. And therefore we must call over the Pretender, *jure divino*, to fill it. And if this is not injurious to his present Majesty, I know not what is.

¹⁰Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*; 'Do not be afraid to kill Edward; it is good.'

¹¹'It is the will of the king.'

Page 20. 'Every sovereign *under heaven* has a right to tax his subjects; that is, to grant their property with or without their consent.' None but an arbitrary monarch could ever boast such a prerogative. What is that privilege which distinguishes between freemen and slaves? The right of disposing of their own property, a privilege that British subjects will never resign but with their lives. Nay, so jealous are they of this glorious right that they never permit king or peers to interfere with their property, farther than by a passive consent. In the House of Commons every money bill originates, and the Lords only confirm it, without daring to make any alteration. But, says the ghost, 'Every sovereign *under heaven* has a right to be a tyrant, and a robber, and to plunder his subjects without their consent.' This is a mysterious text. And these Jesuits are so equivocal that it is difficult to ascertain [p. 17] their meaning. But I apprehend that the true sense is as follows: Every sovereign under heaven is a tyrant, and consequently (which is a lie direct) his present Majesty is one. Or else he must mean, what is equally unwarrantable, that Prince Charles is the lawful heir, and that George the Third is not the sovereign *under heaven*, as he does not claim the crown by divine right, therefore has nothing to do with the point in question.

From these observations on his own words, it must be obvious to reason how injurious this *Calm Address* must be to the king, since it plainly affirms that instead of being beloved as the father of his people, he deserves to be hated as an absolute tyrant. Surely the orthodox John Wesley would never be guilty of such political heresy! And therefore, having thus proved my two first propositions, I draw this simple inference, that such sophistical arguments and arbitrary principles demonstrate it to be the production of a Jesuit. And in the consideration of the third proposition, I doubt not but I shall produce such reasons as will fix this *Calm Address* upon the ghost of Father Petre himself.

We all know that Jesuits are generally bigots, with a great appearance of outward sanctity, though strangers to the power of inward holiness. And as they never marry, are much addicted to fornication. No reflection upon the real author of the *Calm Address*; for it is well known that Father Petre had many [p. 18] nobler views, such as being Lord Keeper of the king's conscience, introducing popery into England, and making the sovereign absolute, together with an uncommon attachment to the family of the *Stuarts*. Now the arguments used in the *Calm Address*, considered with the *principles and spirit* of it, have convinced me, when I at the same time remember the great obligations that Father Petre had to James the Second, that the grateful ghost of that departed saint, taking advantage of the *aspect of the times*, has written this treatise in favour of the Pretender's title to prove that the present family has no right to the crown.

In the 23rd page of the *Address*, speaking of the power of the people to delegate their authority to the sovereign whom they elect, he says, 'They never surrendered it at all. They could not surrender it, for they never had it.' Then I should be glad to know by what authority James the Second was excluded the throne? By what power the Prince of Orange called himself king of England, if he was not elected by the people? If the people never gave the sovereign power to anyone but Masaniello of Naples, William III was a tyrannical usurper. And unless by jesuitical logic he can prove the king to be the Neapolitan fisherman, it is plain that he affirms that he has no right to the crown. The Hanoverian line was elected to the British throne by the voice of a free people. But if the [p. 19] people, according to his doctrine, have no such power, this is the very point Father Petre's ghost labours to prove, and then it consequently follows that Prince Charles has a just title to the crown.

However I shall here dismiss the *Calm Address*, which must appear to everyone who candidly considers it equally a libel upon *king and people, Great Britain, America and Ireland*, and I doubt not will inspire every breast with honest indignation. And as I have endeavoured to prove from several reasons that John Wesley would not write the *Calm Address*, so I hope it must appear clear to everyone that as John Wesley did not write it, the ghost of Father Petre knowing his *popularity as a preacher* (that he might delude his *followers*) and his consequence as a man, assumed his *person and name*, to usher it with greater solemnity into the world.

Various have been the conjectures concerning this surprising apparition. Some have endeavoured to solve the difficulty by admitting the Pythagorean doctrine of transmigration, and bodily assert that a certain minister in our day is the same crafty designing priest that Father Petre was in the reign of James II. Others shake their heads and complain that Father Petre has had of late too great influence in the council; that contrary to the wise precautions of our ancestors, the *Roman Catholics of Ireland* are permitted to bear arms to cut [p. 20] the throats of our *Protestant brethren* in America, and that we may expect to hear of another Irish massacre.

Some with more reason conjecture that Father Petre, perceiving the favourable disposition of the *present ministry to popery*, which they have *established* in the extensive province of Canada and in Quebec, whilst the poor Protestants are only *tolerated*, thought this a proper juncture to appear, and by misrepresenting the king, to pave the way for the accession of the Pretender. Or as *his good friends in administration* have confessed that they were *ignorant* last year of the true state of affairs in America, and that their *blunders* have prevented their *success*, that he came out of friendship to give them *better information*.

However I apprehend that they are not in the secret, and have not divined the real cause that induced the apparition of Father Petre to pay us such an unexpected visit. But as I have received *extraordinary intelligence* that may throw some light on such a mysterious subject, I shall proceed to communicate it.

Sensible men have lately been very much surprised at the *incredible information* given upon oath by adjutant Richardson at my Lord Rochford's office, and for which Mr. Sayre has been committed to the Tower.¹² It appeared improbable that a man of Mr. Sayre's undoubted good sense should be madman enough to form a plot that could not have the most distant prospect of success, and fool enough [p. 21] to communicate it to *such a man* as Richardson. But alas, they never reflected that there might be a *wheel within a wheel*. Indeed when we look upon Mr. Sayre as a man of *revolution* principles, attached to the *Hanoverian* succession, and then reflect upon the absurdity of the plot, we are apt to want faith, especially as the *meal tub* has not yet been discovered.¹³

But though it is *highly improbable* that Mr. Sayre could by himself seize the *king's person* at noonday, in the midst of his subjects, and at a time when he is best attended and guarded. Though it is difficult to believe that the guards would run the risk of *hanging*, for the small bribe of £1500. Or that the Tower would surrender to an individual. Or that the present government, *however weak*, could be so easily overturned. Yet when we are informed that Father Petre's ghost was of the party who intended to have made the enterprising genius of Mr. Sayre instrumental to bring about a revolution in favour of prince Charles. When we consider, I say, that the *Calm Address* was sent forth to usher in *despotism*. That the apparition was to have assumed some horrible form to have scared the young officers that are not yet out of their *leading strings* into fits, to have mounted the coach-box himself, and would have driven [p. 22] the king to a place agreed upon by Mr. Sayre. Then would have appeared at the Tower, and have poured a dose of opium down the throats of the drowsy sentinels and sleeping guards, that Mr. Sayre might with greater facility have taken possession. When we reflect upon and *believe* these things, and remember what wonders even a *Cock-lane ghost* could perform, we shall no longer wonder at Mr. Sayre's rashness, nor be ignorant of those *secret causes* that induced *Father Petre's ghost* to appear at this very *critical juncture*. And we must acknowledge that the plot, though impracticable according to all human

¹²In Oct. 1775 an American loyal to the king who served in the British army named Francis Richardson accused another American, Stephen Sayre, of plotting to kidnap King George III, incarcerate him at the Tower of London, and then forcibly abduct him back to the German domain of Hanover.

¹³Footnote in original, 'See Rapin's *History of England*, an account of the Rye House plot, in the reign of Charles II.'

probabilities, was with such supernatural assistance feasible; and that the singular wisdom of administration, in discovering so dangerous a conspiracy, deserves the tribute of our warmest applause.

It has been said that Mr. Wesley has solicited to be made bishop of Quebec, that he may convert the papists from their errors, which preferment he undoubtedly deserves. Whereas whoever dares to maintain the *jacobitical doctrines* contained in the *Calm Address*, instead of *lawn sleeves* should be presented with a *hempen neckcloth*;¹⁴ and, instead of a mitre, his head should be adorned with a white night cap—which in justice ought to be drawn over his eyes.

However, I hope that you will pay *proper* attention to my arguments, and impute the [p. 23] guilt of that seditious pamphlet to that arch-Jesuit, the ghost of Father Petre.

‘Brethren, open your eyes, come to yourselves, be no more the dupes of designing men.’¹⁵ I do not mean any of your countrymen in America. ‘*I know that independency is not their aim.*’ The designing men, the Ahitophels, are *in the ministry* in England. Those who have laid their scheme so deep, and covered it so well, that thousands who are ripening of it suspect nothing at all of the matter. These well-meaning men sincerely believing that they are serving their country, exclaim against *petitions as factious*’ and by their *ill-timed addresses* aggravate our differences ‘above measure, and thereby inflame’ *the Americans* ‘more and more, to the wish of those who are behind the scene.’ But be not you duped any longer. ‘Do not ruin yourselves for them that owe you no good-will’, that now employ *your prejudices* only ‘for their own purposes, and in the end will give no thanks. They love neither England nor America, but play one against the other, in subserviency to their grand design of overturning the *English constitution.*’ Be warned in time. ‘Stand and consider, before it is too late. Before you have entailed confusion and misery on your latest posterity.’ Have pity upon your *colonies*. Have pity upon your own country. ‘Have pity upon yourselves, upon your children, [p. 24] and upon all that are near and dear to you. Let us not bite and devour one another, lest we be consumed one of another. O let us follow after peace. Let us put away our sins, the real ground of all our calamities, which never will or can be thoroughly removed till we fear God, honour the king.’ And firmly associate in the defence of those privileges which we received from our ancestors, that they may descend inviolate to our posterity.

Source: ‘Patrick Bull’. *A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing; or, An Old Jesuit Unmasked ... in the Form of the Rev. John Wesley* (Dublin, [np, 1775]).

¹⁴‘Lawn sleeves’ were part of a bishop’s attire; a ‘hempen neckcloth’ was a popular term for a hangman’s noose.

¹⁵The author is again using several quotes in JW’s closing, but reshaping them to make the opposite point.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

[Otley]

November 15, 1775

Reverend and Dear Sir,

You should sooner have heard from me, had I known how to direct to you. But [I] think by this time it is likely you have reached London, so without long or staying to apologize for my silence [I] will endeavour to tell you how I have been going on.

And what shall I say for my adorable Lord? His love is sure, without either bottom or shore. His love to me surpasses far my scanty thoughts. I hear of wars and rumours of wars, but glory be to God, all is peace at home. Indeed, I have oft been tried to the very uttermost. But when my enemies have most closely attacked me, then has Jesus appeared in my defence and shown forth all his power to save. My soul does ascribe salvation to God and the Lamb, for I feel it is the presence of my Lord that sets me free. The eternal God is my refuge, and beneath me hath been and still are the everlasting arms. If the Lord had not, in a very peculiar manner, been my helper (since I saw you) I should have suffered loss. But I bless his dear name, he hath helped me. And though I have had some such exercises as I never before passed through, yet I can praise the Lord for them, and feel he hath performed his gracious promise—all things work together for my good.

I have been much more amongst the opposers of Christian holiness than ever I was since the time I enjoyed that blessed liberty I now daily feel. I found much love and pity for them who thought me in a delusion, and heartily wished them to partake of the like precious faith.

Another exercise I have had of the same sort as that I mentioned to you at Cross Hall, though from a different person.¹ The two things you mentioned, I often asked myself, but cannot yet see how I can be more holy or useful in any other state than that I am at present in. To be devoted wholly to God in soul and body seems to me all that is worth living for. This may be done in a married state, I make no doubt. But I cannot yet see that I have any call to change. I simply wrote my mind to the young man and told him to trouble me no more on this subject, for I could give him no encouragement. He then begged leave to write me as a friend, but this I durst by no means comply with, thinking it might lay both him and me open to snares. I hope he has took my last for a final answer, as I have not heard from him very lately.² I bless the Lord, I know not that the affections of my soul were, for one moment, drawn from the adorable Jesus. He has long and does still appear 'the altogether lovely'. But I felt the persuasions of friends, the suggestions of Satan, and a diffidence in my own spirit for fear I should do wrong, exercised all the strength and resolution I had. But I have had no reasonings for some weeks about my conduct in this affair, because I could appeal to the great Searcher of hearts [that] my intention was upright before him.

I often called to mind the advice my dear and honoured father³ gave me when in Yorkshire, and always found my highest reason saw to follow it was my present duty. Continue your kindness toward me, by telling me all you feel and fear concerning me. The Lord Himself shall reward you.

How can we sufficiently praise the Lord and thank you, dear sir, for the valuable men you have sent amongst us? The Lord blesses their labours, and gives them the hearts of the people. There is in most places throughout this circuit a revival. And glory be to God, the word of the Lord runs and is glorified amongst us. Our congregations are greatly increased. Upwards of thirty have joined the society since Conference. Many are justified, and some have been enabled to give God their whole hearts. We are now

¹A gentleman courter.

²JW omits the last three sentences from the published excerpt in *AM*.

³I.e., JW. In *AM*, JW changes to 'the advice you'.

twelve in the select band, seven of whom have lately been brought into full liberty, and we do but seem beginning. Indeed most of those who come to labour amongst us seem full of faith for the inhabitants of Otley. May the Lord go on from conquering unto conquering, till all his enemies bow beneath his feet!

Mr. Cayley comes amongst us pretty often.⁴ Numbers, out of curiosity, come to hear him, and I hope some of them have got good. He is very loving, and in general dwells much on what the Son of God has done for lost mankind. So much so that I told him I feared lest some who heard him should think this was sufficient to carry us to heaven, without duly attending to the work of the Spirit in us. He took it exceeding well, and told me he did not mean any such thing; but as some erred on the one side and some on the other, he wished to be one of those who did not endeavour to put asunder what God had so expressly joined together. The two last sermons he preached here he spoke more of the work to be done in us. But at present he is laid up in a fever, proceeding from a violent cold. Mr. [Thomas] Taylor has just left us. He has entrusted me with a charge for which I feel I am very unfit. But the little I can do for my dear Lord I am willing to do. He has given me a little class, chiefly young women. It seems a great charge, but I feel my spirit quite passive. Only let God be glorified, this is all I want. I am the Lord's, let him do with me what seemeth him best.

May the Lord bless you and be every moment your sun and your shield. May your peace be as a river and your righteousness as the waves of the sea. May the Lord be unto you as a wall of fire on every side, and may no weapon ever formed against you prosper. But may you be filled with faith, and love, and with the Holy Ghost, is the prayer of, dear and honoured sir,

Your affectionate, though unworthy daughter,

E. Ritchie

Address: 'the Revrd Mr Wesley / At the Foundery Moorfields / London'.

Annotation: another hand, '10th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6). Cf. JW's published excerpt; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 383–84.

⁴Cornelius Cayley (1727–1779), a native of Brompton, Yorkshire, was educated at a public school and at nineteen became a clerk in the Prince of Wales's treasury. For a while he sought advancements, but by 1751 turned to religious pursuits. He was drawn to the Tabernacle in London and its Calvinist Methodism, and soon began preaching in and around London. About 1756 he came under the influence of James Wheatley, and soon abandoned his wife—Sarah (Dyer) Cayley—and moved to Norwich. When things fell apart for Wheatley in Norwich, Cayley turned to travel and a series of literary pursuits, until settling at an estate in Kingston upon Hull. As this letter suggests, JW had recently allowed him to preach in surrounding towns; see JW to Thomas Taylor, Oct. 30, 1775.

A 'Constant Reader' to the *Kentish Gazette*

Calais
November 17, 1775

Gentlemen,

Seeing in some of your late papers Mr. Wesley's *Address to the American Colonies*, it reminded me what happened in Switzerland in 1528. The canton of Berne had called a general meeting, not only of the ecclesiastics in its own district but also those in the neighbouring states, to discuss the points then in dispute. On the day appointed a great concourse of ecclesiastics, of all ranks and orders, met in Berne, but not one dared to enter the lists. At length a physician named Faber came forward to dispute. At this the reformer William Favel said, with his usual grace, 'Indeed gentlemen, the cause of the Church of Rome must be very bad, as it is in the hands of the physicians.' May it not in like manner be said that the case of Great Britain is very desperate, as it has for its defender a miserable Methodist preacher?

A Constant Reader of your excellent Newspaper

P.S. Your Dr. Wesley is as bad an historian as he is a preacher. Can he be ignorant that of all known governments, none is more free than the Helvetic body, which consists of several republics? If he consults the celebrated Montesquieu or Voltaire, he will see that those two great men affirm this. True it is that in Holland reflections on those who are at the head of state are rare. Why? Because they take care not to abuse their authority. When this does happen, no time is lost in writing—they proceed to business; they treat them like the *De Wits*.¹ I should be glad if Mr. Wesley would tell me who placed on the throne the Prince of Orange, William III, of immortal memory; and who fixed the crown on the present reigning family. Poor doctor! Go back to school.

Source: published transcription; *Kentish Gazette* (Nov. 22, 1775), p. 4.

¹On Aug. 20, 1672, a mob murder John and Cornelius De Wit because of their strong stance against the House of Orange.

From 'An Englishman'

[London?]
November 23, 1775

To the Reverend Mr. W[esley]

In early youth, when Oxford fondly saw
A pigmy tutor give the Tory law,
Didst thou not there espouse each priestly plan,
The friend of tyranny, the foe of man?
Passive obedience to the Stuart line,
And non-resistance to their right divine?
There didst thou reverence the throes, the pains,
The mouse that's born of academic brains.

In middle age didst thou not step astray,
And hook our noses in another way?

Now, when the blood scarce trembles thro' the veins,
And nought but weakness, nought but fear remains,
To every twig the old transgressor flies,
On every early prejudice relies.
At thy command, the giant periods fall
From J[ohnson]'s stilts, down on the ground to crawl.
Lest moles below'd should blunder into day,
Thou darkenest with dust their feeble ray.
America and England too must yield,
When two such sturdy veterans take the field.
The sum of J[ohnson]'s argument is clear,
J[ohnson] is paid some hundred pounds a year.
And from thy *Calm Address* the king may know
Where he a bishopric might well bestow.
That panders, in whatever robe array'd,
Traitors, who human nature dare degrade;
The willing prostitutes of every sinner,
That recommends a deanery or a dinner;
Who, when the soul becomes with guilt obscene,
Believe the royal touch can make it clean;
That such may end their few and evil days
In penitence and tears, devoutly prays

An Englishman

'Homo' to the *London Chronicle*

[London]

November 23, 1775

Sir,

I have read Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address*, and his great original, *Taxation no Tyranny*. Their arguments, if admitted, would prove rather more than has yet been avowed. As Mr. Wesley has been in America, I can hardly attribute it to his ignorance when he asserts that the commotions in America are entirely owing to the conduct of the opposition here. This is the same stale nonsense so continually rung in our ears by those who, throughout the whole of this business, have shown as little acquaintance with the temper of America as the interests of England. 'If ignorance were bliss, 'twere folly to be wise.'¹ But the obstinate ignorance, so much beloved by our betters, must be destructive in the end. *Sunt lachrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.*²

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle* (Nov. 23–25, 1775), p. 508.

¹Cf. Thomas Gray, 'Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College', 99–100.

²Virgil, *Aeneid*, i.462; 'There are tears in things and mortality touches the mind'.

From A Lover of Truth and the British Constitution [Titus Hibbert¹]

[p. 2]

My dear Friends and Countrymen,

Though this letter is addressed to Mr. Wesley, it was written for your sakes. When I saw such principles instilled into the minds of the ignorant, and such falsities believed and propagated, I could not stand by unconcerned. My motives purely are: to instruct the ignorant in constitutional principles, and to undeceive those that are in error. Such Men as I have here opposed, while they are flattering his Majesty, and as far as they can bestowing upon him unbounded power, are in fact undermining *his throne* and our *liberties* as Englishmen and Protestants. His Majesty's title is founded on liberty. I desire you to read with candour what is now offered to you, and also to read a pamphlet entitled *An Appeal to the Justice and Interest of Great Britain, in the present Dispute with America*.² Consider the arguments, and examine the facts laid before you, and believe and profess as you shall then see cause. I have not knowingly thrown out *one* censure on Mr. Wesley which he has not given great and just occasion for, and am surprised every time I think on his performance how he could assert such things as he has done. And on second thoughts, I can no way account for his conduct but in the manner I have done at the end of my letter. May Britons see their true interest before it be too late. May you be wise, good, and happy.

Manchester
November 25, 1775

[p. 3]

Reverend Sir,

I have read your *Calm Address to the American Colonies*. I am sorry to find a person of your abilities and influence, reason so inconclusively, hold principles so inconsistent with the natural rights and liberties of mankind, and so subversive of the British constitution; and above all, to assert such glaring falsehoods as you have done in this *Address*.

In the first place, you seem to make no distinction between power and right. Be pleased therefore to consider that a man may have *power* to do what he pleases, but he can have no *right* to do anything that is wrong. And I am fully of opinion that it was very wrong in the British parliament to tax the Americans, for these reasons. First, because they are unrepresented in Parliament. Secondly, because they have been always willing to give and grant a sufficiency of their own money whenever able, and a proper requisition has been made. Have you forgot that in the last war they so greatly exerted themselves, in raising men and money to assist government in subduing the French that grateful acknowledgments were made them, and a considerable sum returned?

It is undoubtedly the privilege of freemen to be taxed only by their own consent, and no power on earth has a right to tax them without it. If this is not the case, we have no right in our property; for what right have I in that property which another has the right to take from me when he pleases? Nor does this

¹Titus Hibbert (c. 1717–95) was the founder of a mercantile family in Manchester, and steady supporter of the Presbyterian chapel in Cross Street. When he forwarded a copy of this pamphlet to *Monthly Review*, he noted that he was moved to write because 'Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address* has been circulated through many counties in these parts gratis; one impression at the expense of the Corporation of Liverpool, I am informed, and another impression free to the public at another town in this county'. See Mary Clementina Hibbert-Ward, *The Life and Correspondence of the Late Samuel Hibbert Ware* (Manchester: J.E. Cornish, 1882), 68–69.

²By 'An Old Member of Parliament' [Arthur Lee], published in 1775.

argument prove too much, for I also assert that the parliament has not a right to make laws to bind freemen in other respects without their own consent. But the Americans have consented to laws for the regulation of our trade with them, though they have never owned our right to tax them in the British parliament. According to Reason and Nature, and [p. 4] agreeable to the British constitution, the people are to be bound by no laws, whether relating to taxation or other matters, but those to which they give their consent. And if any laws are made without universal or general consent, it is owing to the imperfections of man and all human institutions. But what I have laid down is the rule of government, and it is the duty of everyone to support and abide by such rules, as nearly as possible.

You say, 'If a freeman cannot be taxed without his own consent, neither can he be punished without it; for whatever holds with regard to taxation, holds with regard to all other laws. Therefore he who denies the English parliament the power of taxation, denies it the right of making any laws at all.' This argument is not just. Laws relative to trade, etc. and laws relative to taxation are so different in their nature that they may exist separate and apart, as the experience of many ages can testify. Ireland, sir, ever since it was annexed to the English crown, has been made a partaker in the English constitution, and governed by English laws, but never taxed by the English House of Commons. And the plain reason for it is they were not represented there. And ever since we had American colonies, they have been governed in the main by English laws, but not subjected to English taxation. There is a wide difference between making Laws for the regulation of our trade with the Americans, and taxing them without their consent. If to follow a trade under such regulations seems inconvenient or unprofitable to us, we can quit such branch of business, though we may suffer some inconvenience thereby. But to tax a community without representation is unconstitutional, and takes from them the money they have *already* acquired, which most certainly is their own, whereas what we *are* to acquire by future trade is not our own.

There was a time when Wales, Chester, and Durham were unrepresented in parliament, and also when Calais belonged to the English crown and was unrepresented. And the king and parliament of those days were so far convinced of the injustice of taxing them unrepresented that the privilege of choosing representatives in parliament was granted to them all. Now if Ireland has always been governed by our laws, without being [p. 5] subjected to our taxes, and if the American colonies have ever till lately been governed in the same manner, why should we depart from such a form of government, attempt innovations, and sacrifice the blood and treasure of the English nation to gain an object which will vanish in the contest?

We readily allow that in wide extended dominions many are not concerned in making laws, and that there are many who are not electors. But this is no argument that so it ought to be. Indeed, all that have considerable property should be electors, for it is the property which pays taxes. And suffer me to tell you, sir, that all the property in Britain is represented, though I own very unequally. But that I reckon as one of our greatest grievances. It prevents us from having an independent House of Commons. And it would much better become you, and every man of influence, to point out such capital grievances to his countrymen, and to pray for and attempt a redress of them.

You ask, 'How has any man consented to those laws which were made before he was born?' I answer, in this case our forefathers were our representatives, and we consent to the laws they enacted by not repealing them. The good laws they made are left us as a fair estate, and a valuable one they are. And any bad laws that may have taken place are to be considered as an incumbrance upon it.

You allow that the colonies have a right to all the privileges granted them by royal charters. Why then have royal charters been altered? And I apprehend they have also a right to the privileges granted them by provincial laws—the provincial laws being such as they are allowed to make for internal government, and ratified by the king. He is their sovereign, and their assemblies are their parliaments.

With regard to a clause in the charter of Pennsylvania, or any other admitting taxation by the British parliament, the colonies I suppose submitted to it because they could not obtain better terms. For it is a condition quite repugnant to the spirit of our happy constitution. But if such a clause be not inserted

in other charters, it by no means follows that 'it must be omitted as not necessary'. It is sufficiently evident that no taxes were expected for the purpose of [p. 6] raising a revenue here, where they are not expressed in their charters. Suppose I take a lease of a good estate. Must the granter of that lease take such a field of it from me when he pleases, because such a piece of injustice is not expressly forbidden in my lease? I have impartially considered all that you have advanced, and yet do not see that the British parliament has an undoubted right to tax all the English colonies. They must indeed be taxed for the support of internal government. They cannot support civil governors, and keep soldiers for defence, without raising money for those purposes. It is taxes for the purpose of raising a *revenue*, levied upon them without their own consent, that we apprehend are unconstitutional.

You say, 'Because whence is all this hurry and tumult? Why is America all in an uproar?' If you have given yourself time to think upon this subject, you are very unhappy in thinking in so preposterous a manner as follows. You say, 'My opinion is this. We have a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy.' Very few indeed! So few that I never conversed with one in all my life who desired England to be reduced to a commonwealth. I did not imagine you had been capable of such scandal. Who are the men? Point them out? Inform the ministry who are these enemies to the king and monarchy. How do you know that they cordially hate his office? And what has been done so diligently to undermine it? I repeat it, How do you know these things? Are you an accomplice in plots and treasons? Speak out, and let the world know the reasons for your assertions; for if this be false, it is no petty scandal! Are you one of the few who they have let into their design? If you be, you can let us know who they are. And though it should be [Lords] Essingham, Rockingham, Chatham, or Shelborne, we will desert their cause and acknowledge them traitors.

But at present my Opinion is that *you* are a greater enemy to the *constitution* of these kingdoms than anyone that I know is to the king or kingly government. You talk of inflammatory papers! Verily, reverend sir, your *Calm Address* stands in the foremost rank of that kind, and yourself and your followers are arrived nearer to the pitch of madness than any people that I know. I mean your followers in your political [p. 7] principles. It is the treatment which the Americans have received that has inflamed *them*, and that treatment is the original cause of the present breach between England and her colonies. And such men as I imagine you have been stigmatizing, have been endeavouring with much sincerity to bring about a reconciliation.

You—if you had eyes to see, and ears to hear—might see other causes of their complaints than any you have offered. Again you say, 'These good men hope it will end in the total defection of North America from England.' I answer, this good man Mr. Wesley continues his scandal, and arrogates to himself the power of knowing the hearts of men. Have these good men whom you vilify any estates in this nation? Have they friends or relations? Or in short, have they any sense, that they should be thus bent on their own and the nation's ruin? The account you give of these good men will agree with no party that I know of, unless it be the friends of the house of Stuart, who would be glad to see Britain reduced to such a condition that France and other adherents of the *Pretender* might have an opportunity to set him on the throne of these kingdoms. And permit me to tell you, reverend sir, that your principles are much like these, and have a tendency to bring about such an event. For never was anything advanced more in favour of arbitrary power, not even in the reigns of Charles the First and James the Second, than you have done in this very *Calm Address*.

Under your number ten we find several queries, in which the privileges British subjects *have* enjoyed are well set forth. But in the conclusion your censures on republics are amongst your falsehoods. You say, 'No governments under heaven are so despotic as the republican. No subjects are governed in so arbitrary a manner as those of a Commonwealth. Republics show no mercy.' If these assertions were not untruths too glaring to merit a serious refutation, I would refer you to Portugal, to Spain, or to France and Rome for conviction. I never read of a Bastile or an Inquisition in any of the republics you mention. You aim to be severe upon republics, as the very worst of governments, but tenderly pass by popish and

arbitrary kingdoms where the people are subject to priests, whom you too much resemble, as [p. 8] well as to arbitrary kings, such as you assert our sovereign has a right to be.

In your next paragraph you seem to lament a poor America, and her condition indeed is lamentable enough. But I fear she will never be benefited by your *Calm Address*. After this, you again bring upon the carpet this *secret* which you *know* of, and do not *reveal*—this *grand scheme*, which you know is ‘laid so deep, and covered so well’. It appears to me that duty to your king and country should induce you to *uncover* this plot and draw it into daylight, and *undeceive* those ‘thousands that are ripening it to maturity’. If you have nothing of this kind to discover, you are like ‘the madman that casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, and saith, Am I not in sport’.³ You say, ‘They love neither England nor America, but play one against the other, in subserviency to their grand design of overturning the English constitution.’ This again is a description that agrees with none but the partisans of the proscribed house of Stuart; such as want the Romish religion, French laws, and the Pretender for king. These men, and those who voted for a law to establish popery in so large a part of his Majesty’s dominions as Canada, do best agree with *your* description of the men in secret.

Further, Dr. Smith is certain, and so am I, that the Americans have a right to grant their own money; and that when it is taken from an unrepresented people (I am not speaking of individuals) it is an arbitrary proceeding, and contrary to the constitution of Britain. Your ignorance, reverend sir, in these affairs is so great that you seem to know no medium between a people being entirely independent or entire slaves. That happy medium has been known, and that knowledge reduced to practice with respect to English colonies, for 150 Years. The colonies do acknowledge a sovereign, but whose rights and prerogatives are bounded by law and by charters. Would to God the united force of laws and charters were a sufficient barrier against ministerial vengeance.

A little further you say to the Americans, ‘You had the very same liberty we have in England. I say you had.’ Reverend sir, a greater falsehood than this cannot be uttered. Everyone knows, who [p. 9] knows anything of the matter, that the North American colonies are very far from having the liberty of trade which we enjoy. They are restrained in more instances than I can mention, but the following are some of them.

First, the prohibition of making steel, or erecting steel furnaces, has been absolutely prohibited. This has reduced all America to the necessity of buying these articles from a few persons in England engaged in this manufacture.

Second, the Americans have been obliged to land the Spanish and Portugal wine and fruit which they import in England, subject to high duties and heavy charges for re-shipping. This restriction not only grievously enhances the price of these necessary articles, but exposes their vessels to the danger and expense of an additional voyage of 1000 miles, in a boisterous sea in time of peace, and in time of war to a great advance in insurance.

Third, an absolute restraint has been laid upon the sale of hats, and the exportation of them has been prohibited. In consequence of this, an inhabitant of one province cannot buy a hat from his neighbour being a hatter in the other, but must send 3000 miles for it, at three times the price, for the benefit of our manufactures.

Fourth, the Americans are not suffered to erect plating or slitting mills, or tilt hammers. Thus, though iron is the produce of their own country, they must send it to England, and pay us for manufacturing it, before they are suffered to avail themselves of those advantages which God has given them. Nails, hoes, ploughs, axe, etc. they are under the greatest necessity of using, from the nature of their country, in great quantities; yet they are obliged to take such as we please to send them, at our own price, loaded with our taxes, and the charges of double freight, commission, etc.

³Prov. 26:18–19.

Fifth, by the supreme authority of Great Britain, the Americans have been prohibited from carrying wool, or any kind of woollen goods made in one colony, to another. A single fleece of wool, or a dozen of home-made hose, carried from one colony to another is not only forfeited, but subjects the vessels, if conveyed by water, or the wagon and horses, if by Land, to a seizure, and the owner to a heavy fine. [p. 10]

Sixth, the Americans are not permitted to carry logwood to any foreign market, without first bringing it to some British port, to land and reship it, at a great risk, expense, and loss of time.

I cannot go on to enumerate particulars. But these are sufficient to show what hardships the colonies have submitted to, rather than shake off the authority of the mother country. And also sufficient to show that your repeated assertion that the colonies had all the liberties that Englishmen enjoy is one of the greatest of falsehoods. I am really astonished how a man of sense of learning, and a professor of the religion of Jesus Christ, can show his face in society after having published such pernicious and unconstitutional doctrines, such scurrility and slander, and such glaring falsehoods!

Further, in the next paragraph you assert that 'Till the Americans appointed their new sovereigns, they enjoyed all the privileges of Englishmen.' Another declaration of the same falsehood. To be restrained in trade in the manner I have just mentioned, and in many more instances, and to be taxed by a foreign parliament without any representation at all—once more, in the name of commonsense, let me ask you if these are the liberties wherewith God has made us free? If these are the liberties wherewith the English constitution hath made its subjects free? And will you again assert that the Americans ever enjoyed all the liberties and privileges of Englishmen? I hope you will not.

The Americans say, 'No power on earth has a right to grant our property without our consent.' You reply, 'Then you have no sovereign, for every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects; that is, to grant their property with or without their consent. Our sovereign has a right to tax me, and all other Englishmen, whether we have votes for parliament-men or no.' These assertions, sir, are equally false, unconstitutional, and pernicious. It was for an adherence to such doctrines as these that your royal martyr lost his head.⁴ What he attempted, and what he did, you assert every sovereign under heaven has a right to do. And you confer this power on the sovereign solely, without ever mentioning the House of Lords or Commons. And you [p. 11] must mean as you say, because the greater part of sovereigns under heaven have no parliaments. If every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects with or without their consent, if he has a right to make his will the law in this respect, he has a right to make his will the law in all other respects. If this doctrine be true, James the Second had a right to do everything he did, and his people had no right to resist him. Therefore, upon your principles, the Revolution was a rebellion, the Act of Settlement was made under a usurped authority, and the House of Hanover never had, and the reigning prince, our present sovereign, has no right to the throne of these kingdoms. These are not remote, but the direct consequences of the right which you assert belongs to every sovereign under heaven. Your assertions, reverend sir, are equally repugnant to reason, to justice, and truth.

By and bye here's another repetition of a falsehood asserted several times before: 'Every right which I enjoy is common to Englishmen and Americans.' Did you imagine this to be a truth when you wrote it? Your ignorance and effrontery are really astonishing! Everyone that knows how the Americans are confined to an exclusive trade, if he knows nothing about taxation, can refute this.

It is an argument very inconclusive, very fallacious, that because individuals here who have no votes for members are taxed, therefore whole communities, whole nations ought to be taxed without any representation at all. Hereby you would establish a precedent for arbitrary power over America from an unavoidable defect in the British constitution. When the British parliament lays a tax upon the people here, they tax themselves, their friends, their relations at the same time, and those who have votes for

⁴I.e., King Charles I.

members are taxed equally with those who have no votes. Therefore those who have no votes have not so much to fear from being taxed and unrepresented as the Americans have. For when the Americans are taxed by our parliament, those who lay the tax bear no part of the burden.

Your assertions being thus examined, and found absolute falsehoods, vainly do you exhort and argue from them. The fabric of your *Calm Address* resteth on [p. 12] rotten pillars, which shrink at the touch, and consequently the whole falls to the ground.

A little further you say, 'None desires to withhold anything that is granted by the express terms of your charter.' I answer, has not a bill been made for altering the charter of Massachusetts Bay? Do not the charters expressly promise all the liberties and privileges of Englishmen? And it is the privilege of Englishmen not to be taxed but by their own consent, given by their representatives. Yet these Americans are taxed without any consent, or any representation at all. And in order to force obedience to such laws as these, the blood and treasure of Britain is wasted, the affections of all the colonies alienated, and the government runs a risk, by your account, of being overturned by republicans. But alas! Greater is the danger that our open and avowed enemies, France and Spain, will sooner or later avail themselves of this pernicious and dreadful contest, and lay Great Britain low. On this account every humane mind must be deeply impressed. Every friend to his country must abominate those addresses which encourage his Majesty to expend more blood and treasure in this pernicious contest, and evidently risk the ruin of the nation. It is evident to me that none but lenient measures are ever likely to render the colonies of any further value to this nation.

In your last paragraph but one, you have the strangest assertion I ever heard advanced—viz., 'I know but one instance in all history wherein the people gave the sovereign power to anyone, that was to Masaniello of Naples; and I desire any man living to produce another instance in the history of all nations.' So far is this your assertion from being true that it is the people who give the sovereign power to every king, otherwise he has no right to it. It is this gift, or consent of the people, which constitutes his best claim to the governing power. And without it he cannot have a right to govern any nation, unless God Almighty should bestow it upon him, which is not the case in our days. Pleading a right by lineal descent from a former king, if other qualifications are wanting, signifies nothing. This in Great Britain is true constitutional doctrine, and we need not go farther than the history and laws of our [p. 13] own country to prove it. And also to prove the fallacy of your assertion with respect to the people giving the sovereign power.

King Alfred, notwithstanding his coronation by the pope, acknowledged his kingdom to have been the bounty of his people; and in his will he expresses himself thus: 'I desire to leave my people as free as man's thought within him.'

Though William the First gained the crown by the assistance of the Norman army, it was not the case with William Rufus, his second son. Though he had an elder brother living, yet by the mediation and assistance of the leading men in the state, and by engaging to abolish the over-hard laws made by his father, and to take off the taxes and imposts, he drew the people generally to confirm him in his kingdom, and stand in his defence. And a better title he could not have, than such proper qualifications and the suffrage of the people.

Henry the first also, and King Stephen, came to the crown by election, and not by right of succession. Their elections, and the oaths they took, are to be found in the old historians. That of King Stephen is very full and expressive, as follows. 'I Stephen, by the grace of God, the consent of the clergy and *people*, being elected king over England, and consecrated by William, Archbishop of Canterbury, legate of the Holy Roman Church, confirmed by Innocent, pontiff of the same see, do declare,'

The elections and oaths of Henry Second and Richard First are equally clear. But in King John's coronation we are brought beyond dispute; in full parliament of archbishops, earls, barons, and commons, when the archbishop stood up and spoke as follows. 'It is well known to you all that no man hath right of succession, except that by *unanimous consent* of this kingdom, with invocation of the Holy Ghost, he be

elected from his own deserts. But if any of the last king's race be more worthy and better than others, *his election* is more proper and reasonable, as it is now in Earl John here present.' It was this king who granted Magna Charta, the great, the irrevocable charter of our liberties.

In a case so plain, it is needless to collect more [p. 14] instances. Though it is undeniable that it was the *people* of England that made William and Mary king and queen of these realms, and set aside the house of Stuart. And it is as evident that it was the *people* of England who settled the crown on the house of Hanover. Our present most gracious sovereign owes his crown to the *expulsion* of a tyrant, and the *gift* of his people.

I hope I have said enough to convince everyone who is willing to be convinced that your reasonings are inconclusive, your principles unconstitutional, and your assertions falsehoods.

Government, reverend sir, is not an inheritance, it is a trust. The sovereign is the grand steward of our privileges, and his power is delegated to him by the people. He receives his power on certain conditions. He swears to maintain the constitution in church and state. If he does not do these things, but breaks through all the ties of God and man, he virtually unking himself, and forfeits that right, that conditional right conferred upon him. This was the case with Charles the First and James the Second. I need not tell you the consequences. But if you hold the doctrines of divine right in kings to do wrong, of non-resistance and passive obedience to their will, give me leave to tell you they are absurd and irrational in themselves, and exploded by the British constitution.

And as in principle you are neither an Englishman nor a republican, and therefore unworthy the liberties and privileges of either government, let me advise you to retire to your brethren, the crouching slaves of France or Spain, of Portugal or of Rome, who like you compliment their sovereigns with arbitrary power and right divine—to rob their subjects.

With respect to your last paragraph, I would observe, that the Americans are deprived, in many respects, both of natural and constitutional liberty. That, and that only, appears to me to be the cause of the general resistance made to the measures of administration. That I say is the cause. It is not attempting to gain a liberty of disobeying our lawful sovereign. It is only laws which are not the fundamental laws of our country which they complain of. And notwithstanding all the calumnies of their [p. 15] enemies, there is I think no proof that they are contending for anything more than a repeal of unconstitutional laws, and to regain that liberty, though less than constitutional, which they have so long enjoyed, and which has proved by long experience to be of mutual advantage to Great Britain and America.

Notwithstanding all that I have said to you, I profess myself your friend. I am an enemy to no one. In consequence of this disposition, I have been endeavouring to make some excuse, some apology for you. But the task is so difficult I am obliged to give it up. It remains for you to consider for what reasons you have published principles and sentiments so contrary to the British constitution; so contrary to reason, to law, and historical facts; and so contrary to yourself, to what your own avowed principles were till very lately. For I am fully satisfied you have at different times, and at different places, expressed yourself on the subject of our quarrel with the American colonies in a manner directly contrary to the principles and sentiments contained in your *Calm Address*. Such inconsistencies in the conduct of a pretended patriot, or a thorough-paced courtier, I can account for. But I, and your more particular friends, are moved with concern and astonishment when they so strikingly appear in the conduct of *Mr. Wesley*.

As far as you have been instrumental in awakening sinners, and turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, I have rejoiced in your success. In that walk may you and your brethren go on and prosper. But with respect to such publications as this, that your repentance may be timely and sincere, is the real wish and heart's desire of, reverend sir,

Your's and the public's humble servant,

A Lover of Truth and the British Constitution

P.S. Just after I had wrote this small piece I met with an abstract of the charter granted to William Penn by Charles the Second in 1681. The first article sets forth that such a tract of land was granted to William Penn, his heirs and assigns for ever. And the 18th article exempts them from taxation by any [p. 16] power whatever, except with the consent of the inhabitants and governor, in words as follow: 'We do covenant and grant, to and with the said William Penn, his heirs and assigns, that we will not set or make any custom or other taxation upon the inhabitants of the said province, upon lands, houses, goods, chattels, or merchandises, except with the consent of the inhabitants and governor.'

If it should be thought that I have not sufficiently obviated the objection that a right to make laws for the regulation of American trade infers a right of taxation, and that it appears inconsistent to allow the one to be a right and not the other, I answer: in the government of far distant provinces we proceed as it were by way of compromise. We regulate and restrain their trade in a manner greatly to our advantage. In consideration of this, and because they are not represented, we have exempted them from taxation for the purposes of revenue. Thus you see we give and take, in order to draw somewhat of a straight and equitable line. But when we would take all and give little or nothing, when we would regulate their trade in every respect, and tax them as we please, we break that line. And instead of allowing them all liberties and privileges of Englishmen, we allow them none of them, save that of going to heaven their own way. Nor can they be secure in the enjoyment of that privilege, when they have no other left. Such will be their abject state, if the present coercive measures are successively carried on. And can we desire that to be the condition of any subject of the British empire?

Finally, if I was an enemy to truth and liberty, if I was an enemy to the rights of mankind and the British constitution, if I was an enemy to my king and country, I would approve of ministerial proceedings. I would address his Majesty in the courtly style, and I would write as *Mr. Wesley* has done. And if I was a friend to popery and arbitrary power, if I was a friend to France and Spain, to Rome and the Pretender, I would write and act in the same manner.

Adieu.

Source: [Titus Hibbert] *A Lover of Truth and the British Constitution, A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, on his 'Calm Address to the American Colonies'; wherein is shown that his arguments are inconclusive, his principles arbitrary, and that his assertions are without foundation* ([Manchester: np], 1775).

'Juvenis' to the Printer of the *Middlesex Journal*

c. November 25, 1775

Sir,

I have perused, with attention, Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address*, and think it scarcely deserves a serious answer. It consisting of groundless assertions and proofless postulations, plainly indicating that, though the author would fain defend the acts of the ministry, his abilities revolt at the shameful idea. In short, never was a bad cause so badly defended. However the pious preacher (who is evidently desirous of basking in the sunshine of court favour), in feeling his present incapacity, may comfort himself with the hope that his literary talents, by frequent prostitutions, will become fit for any dirty job and in time stamp him a complete tool of power. But while this learned divine is so diligently seeking laurels in the political field, his pastoral charge may suffer by neglect. That this may not appear mere hypothesis, the following fact is presented to the world:

In a town eastward of London, long famous for most of its inhabitants being enthusiastic followers of Mr. Wesley, I have observed those people who never used to visit the church flock thither in such swarms that the rest of the parishioners with difficulty reach their pews. I forbear commenting on the matter, but wish that the reverend gentleman's next calm address may be calculated to recall his scattered sheep to the flock.

Juvenis

Source: published transcription; *Middlesex Journal and Evening Advertiser* (Nov. 25–28, 1775), p. 4.

From an Unnamed Correspondent

London
November 29, 1775

Sir,

In the *Morning Chronicle* of today, you say the Americans 'are not injured at all', that they are contending for 'the illegal privilege of being exempt from parliamentary taxation'.¹ Now sir, I am of a different way of thinking, but acknowledge at the same time that I am liable to err. However if you mean that your word should have any authority in convincing me that I am wrong, you must establish your veracity by clearing up one part of your conduct, the particulars of which I have taken from a pamphlet, published by the Rev. Mr. Evans of Bristol. The paragraph is as follows

[the author then quotes §§10–12 of the prefatory 'To the Reader' that Evans added to the 3rd edn. of his *Letter to Wesley*, dated November 7, 1775 (see above)].

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Nov. 30, 1775), p. 4; *Shrewsbury Chronicle* (Dec. 09, 1775) p 1.

¹JW's letter to *Lloyd's Evening Post* dated Nov. [26], 1775 appeared also in the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Nov. 29, 1775), p. 4.

‘Anti-Jesuit’ to the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*

November 29, 1775

Sir,

Mr. John Wesley has attempted, I observe in your paper, a vindication of himself with respect to his publication of his *Calm Address to our American Colonies*.¹ But I was somewhat surprised that, when this reverend ministerial advocate was labouring to justify himself, he should pass by in total silence the charge of *wilful, deliberate falsehood* which Mr. Evans has brought against him in the second edition of his *Letter* to Mr. Wesley.² Surely a charge of this kind, against a man who pretends to be a preacher of Christianity, is too considerable to be passed over without notice. Mr. Evans's accusation is not anonymous. He has affixed his name to his publication. And he has proved Mr. Wesley guilty of premeditated falsehood by the testimony of Mr. Pine, printer in Bristol, and of a clergyman of the same city; and both of these gentlemen are ready to make affidavit of the truth of what they have asserted. If Mr. Wesley cannot invalidate this charge, he is not entitled to the least credit, and is a just object of general contempt. What regard can the public pay to a man's declarations about his *motives*, who has been convicted of *wilful falsehood*?

Mr. Wesley seems disposed to complain of the *temper* with which his opponents have written against him. And it is true that he has been tempted with some severity. But notwithstanding this, it appears to me that none of his opponents have written with a worse temper than himself. I know of no temper worse than that which leads a man to sit down with cool malignity, and without any evidence, to attribute the worst designs and intentions to those who differ from him in opinion. This temper Mr. Wesley displayed very sufficiently in his *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs*, published in 1771. And he has shown the same spirit in what he calls his *Calm Address*. An affected meekness but little agrees with insinuations that could be dictated only by malevolence. Mr. Wesley must publish a better defence of himself than his last, or he will hardly be considered as justified by any but the weakest of his followers.

Anti-Jesuit

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (December 1, 1775), p. 2.

¹Referring to JW's letter of Nov. [26], 1775, which was reprinted in the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Nov. 29, 1775), p. 4.

²The reference is actually to the prefatory 'To the Reader' added by Evans in the 3rd edn. of his *Letter*; see above, dated Nov. 7.

'A Lover of Truth' to *Lloyd's Evening Post*

ca. November 30, 1775¹

That the public may judge what degree of credit is to be given to Mr. Wesley's declarations, I have sent you the following extract from Mr. Evan's Preface to the second edition of his answer to Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address to the Colonies*.

[the author then quotes §§10–12 of the prefatory 'To the Reader' that Evans added to the 3rd edn. of his *Letter to Wesley*, dated November 7, 1775 (see above)].

I am, sir, your humble servant,

A Lover of Truth

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Dec. 1–4, 1775), p. 532.

¹'Bristol, November 7, 1775' appears at the top of the letter (i.e. the place and date of Evan's original). This letter is clearly in response to JW's letter dated Nov. [26], 1775 that was published in *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Nov. 27–29, 1775), p. 516.

Unnamed Reviewer of Works Criticizing Wesley's *Calm Address*

c. November 30, 1775

Caleb Evans. *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his 'Calm Address to the American Colonies'*

We gave an account of this pamphlet and the *Calm Address* in our last month's review. Since that Mr. Wesley hath published another edition of his *Calm Address* with a preface. He hath confessed his plagiarism from *Taxation no Tyranny*, and to account for his inconsistency he attributes his conversion from the American side to reading lately that performance. Why then doth he censure the Americans, and upbraid them as king-haters, guided by Ahitophels aiming at independence, etc., and seek to inflame the whole kingdom against them, when they are only guilty of the same mistake with himself? Under which he laboured all his life, and which his penetration and ingenuity could not correct until he happily saw pensioner Johnson's pamphlet, and which advantage he know his American brethren cannot enjoy. Besides, he hath changed his mind between his first and this later edition, and retracted part of what he advanced on the power of charters. How often he will yet change his mind, who can say? Mr. Evans, in an additional preface to this edition of his *Letter* animadvert particularly on one very remarkable sentence in Mr. Wesley's preface, as follows.

[the reviewer then quotes §§10–12 of the prefatory 'To the Reader' that Evans added to the 3rd edn. of his *Letter* to Wesley, dated November 7, 1775 (see above)].

W. Denham. *A Second Answer to John Wesley*. London: Wallis & Stonehouse, 1775.

Calls a 'sensible pamphlet' and quotes its conclusion (pp. 21–22).

A Constitutional Answer to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's 'Calm Address to the American Colonies'.
London: E. and C. Dilly, 1775

This answer hath plain signatures of a masterly hand, The author is well acquainted with the constitution of his country, and ably defends it. He hath too much honoured the author of the *Calm Address* by entering the lists with him. When a *Christian minister* becomes a *court sycophant*, and writes to deceive people out of their birthrights, and to inflame one part of the community against another, even to war and destruction, he is below contempt.

Source: published review; *London Magazine* (Nov. 1775), 594–96.

From 'Observer'

Cornwall
December 1, 1775

Sir,

In a letter of yours in the *London Chronicle*,¹ which I have just seen, you give the public a very extraordinary proof of your *disinterestedness* in writing your *Calm Address* to the colonies. If you had designed to get money by it, you say, you would have wrote a *shilling* pamphlet, and entered it at Stationers Hall.

To be sure, sir, everyone knows how ignorant you are of the profits arising from *penny* and *two-penny* tracts, and that it could never enter into your head that a *thousand* two-pences are easier got than a *hundred* shillings. So that your proof that you did not design to get money by your *Calm Address*, because you made only a *two-penny* tract of it, is decisive and unanswerable.

But sir, you seem to have forgot that you stole your *Calm Address* from Dr. Johnson, and have yourself *owned the theft* in the preface to a new edition of the said *Address*. And if so, the argument that you use to prove that you did not write the address to *get money* by it stands thus: It is plain I had no design to get money, for I stole only *five guineas*, whereas if I had a design to get money I would certainly have stolen *five hundred*.

I am, sir,

An admirer of your logic,

Observer

Source: published transcription; *Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 2; *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 3; *London Chronicle* (Dec. 7, 1775), p. 552; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Dec. 7, 1775), p. 2.

¹JW's letter of Nov. [26], 1775 appeared in the *London Chronicle* (Nov. 25–28, 1775), pp. 519–20; cf. *Works*, 29:197–99.

From Caleb Evans

Bristol
December 4, 1775

Reverend Sir,

As I find by the letter you lately published in the *London Chronicle*¹ that whatever contempt you may choose to express for newswriters you are not averse when it suits you to become one yourself, I take the liberty, through the channel of a newspaper, of addressing a few lines to you relative to the controversy subsisting between us originally respecting America—but in which, as the matter now stands, our personal characters are very nearly interested.

In my *Letter* to you, under the signature of ‘Americanus’, occasioned by your *Calm Address* to the colonies, in order that the public might be the better able to judge of the deference due to your political opinions, I publicly reminded you of the few following facts:

That you had asserted in print you doubted whether the measures taken respecting America could be defended either on the foot of *law*, *equity*, or *prudence*. That you had freely asserted in various companies that in your opinion the Americans were an *oppressed and injured people*, and that if they submitted to taxation they must be either *fools* or *knaves*. That you strongly recommended a book entitled, *An Argument in Defence of the exclusive Right claimed by the Colonies to tax themselves*. And, as has since appeared, even desired Mr. Pine to print extracts from it in his newspaper.

Unwilling to appear as great a Proteus in politics as you have long appeared in *divinity*,² you *deny the charge*. Your words are (see p. 6 of the preface to the new edition of your *Calm Address*): ‘The book which this writer says I so strongly recommended I never yet saw with my eyes. And the words which he says I spoke never came out of my lips. But I really believe he was told so.’

But supposing what I asserted was *false*, it is not easy to conceive what reason you could have for believing *I was told so*. For you will please to recollect, sir, that at this time I was perfectly *unknown* to you, and appeared only under the signature of ‘Americanus’.

However, as I still stood before the public as the publisher of a falsehood, I thought it necessary to give the public my name and my authorities for what I had asserted concerning you. I did this some weeks ago, in the preface to a new edition of my *Letter*,³ printed for Edward and Charles Dilly.

I expected an immediate reply, but have hitherto expected it in vain. I now therefore publicly call upon you for it. The public have a right to it.

As you say you have one foot already in the grave, you will excuse me sir if I take the liberty of saying that before the other foot is there too it would well become you, instead of exposing your grey hairs by such low scurrility as talking of people’s licking up Mr. Toplady’s *spittle*, to prove yourself an *honest man*—advice long since offered you by the amiable Mr. Hervey,⁴ and which you will not

¹JW’s letter of Nov. [26], 1775, which appeared in the *London Chronicle* (Nov. 25–28, 1775), pp. 519–20.

²Proteus was a god in Greek mythology, known for his changeable character.

³See above, dated Nov. 7.

⁴See James Hervey, *Eleven Letters from the late Rev. Mr. Hervey, to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley; containing an Answer to that Gentleman’s Remarks on ‘Theron and Aspasio’* (London: Charles Rivington, 1765), 185; and JW’s response in ‘An Answer to James Hervey’, §§17–18, *Works*, 13:387–90.

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1771–75)
Wesley Works Editorial Project

(page 469)

therefore, it is hoped, be offended with having presented to you now by,
Your humble servant,

Caleb Evans

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle* (Dec. 7–9, 1775), p. 556; *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette* (Dec. 25, 1775), p. 5; *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 3; *Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 2; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 1; and Evans, *Reply*, 16–18.⁵

⁵From JW's response on Dec. 9, 1775 we know that this letter also appeared in early December in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, but no copies of this journal during the appropriate week are known to survive.

'Irenaeus' to the Editor of the *Public Advertiser*

December 4, 1775

Sir,

I have seen many remarks on Mr. John Wesley's *Calm Address to our American Colonies* in which too many personal invectives against the man, quite needless with regard to the main question, divert the reader's attention. The Americans in opposition will perhaps make no difficulty now to say, if the [House of] Commons of England have no right to give and grant away their money, not being chosen by them or any of their vicinity, for the same reason they can make no laws to bind them. This they did not say till the unfortunate question about taxation was started, examined so often, and turned into an instrument of provocation on both sides.

It is however by no means true that any supreme power in this country, in quality of its being supreme, has power of taxation. But all taxes here are, by the ideas and by the forms of law, considered merely as the benevolence of the people. Accordingly, when any money bill is passed by the king, his words are, '*le roi remercie ses bons sujets, accepte leur benevolence et ainsi le veut*'.¹ That is, he thanks his subjects, accepts their benevolence, and consequently consents to the bill. Everyone ought to remember that the commons alone draw up and form the bills for money (to raise which, taxes are to be laid) and that the lords and the king must accept or reject the whole, and cannot alter or amend a syllable in any such bill. How oddly, therefore, must money bills formed by the commons of England, giving and granting the money of other people, sound to American ears *post motam litem*, after the question has been started? And how incongruous is the form when applied to such a bill? The king thanks the commons of England, his good subjects, accepts their benevolence at other people's expense, and consequently consents. It is a sad pity that this question was started. It will not bear examination, and the event has proved it.

Mr. Wesley has a right to have what opinion he pleases, and to alter his opinions as often as he pleases. Nothing is more fitting than to allow every man this right, without reproach. It does not appear that he has been induced to change his mind by any mercenary motive; and it is not fair to impute any such baseness to him without very strong proof. But neither is it fair for him to publish his imputations on other people, to their discredit, without any possibility of proof, to the terror also of credulous people here, and to the very probable effect of stirring-up ill blood at home. People and ministers of state are but too ready at imputing the basest designs to the adversaries. One while the opposition was charged with Jacobitism. That is now altered, and the opposition charged with republicanism—with a determination of undermining the kingly office, and setting up republicanism. This is false. It is also false that the king wants to establish arbitrary power.

Mr. Wesley asserts that the determined enemies to monarchy are steadily pursuing that design of theirs. This I believe to be false, and he cannot know it to be true. There is no shadow of necessity to suppose for a moment that these men are the cause of the present breach between England and America, and the fact is totally otherwise.

'The liberty of conscience, of sitting under one's own vine and enjoying the fruit of one's labour', is not enjoyed by Englishmen alone.² In Holland, all these are enjoyed. In Switzerland, the two last. And in other places also, to a considerable degree. Mr. Wesley does not sufficiently know what he says, when he says so boldly no subjects are governed in so arbitrary a manner as those of a commonwealth.

¹This formal language for accepting a bill passed in the British parliament traces back to the (French-speaking) Normans.

²As JW suggested in *Calm Address*, §12.

He had defined real, rational liberty in the foregoing page to consist in liberty of conscience, every man enjoying his own vine and the fruit of his labours. These are essential to liberty. But it is not essential to liberty to be able to talk as freely of government as every cobbler does here, though it may be a means of preserving liberty against novel encroachments. But where there are no novel encroachments to be apprehended, such licentious calumnies as are but too frequent here can only serve to make mischief, and may be restrained without incurring the charge of despotism. Mr. Wesley desires any man living to produce another instance in the history of all nations, than that of Masaniello of Naples, wherein the people gave the sovereign power to anyone. To spare encroaching on your paper, I will oblige Mr. Wesley with one other instance only, which no man of any tolerable degree of reading ought to forget. The people in Denmark made the sovereign absolute—an example that may one day be followed in other places, if the delegates of the people should appear to be irrecoverably corrupt.

Your's,

Irenaeus

Source: published transcription; *Public Advertiser* (Dec. 30, 1775), p. 2; *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Jan. 01, 1776), p. 4.

From 'A Dissenter'

Observations on Americanus's *Letter to Mr. John Wesley*

[Bristol]

c. December 7, 1775

My intention is not to enter into a controversy about the main question in dispute between the mother country and the colonies. That has been more properly stated than Americanus or I shall be able to do. Nor, if we attempted it, are we likely to convince each other. But [I intend] to make a few remarks.

I should not have expected Americanus would have followed the practice of the Americans in asserting what he and they know to be false. Did Mr. Wesley say nothing more than that 'the sovereign had a right to tax us' whether we have votes for parliament-men or not? Did he say nothing more than that 'the sovereign had that right'? Did he not add 'in connection with his parliament'?¹ Why is that clause kept out of sight when it is the part that determines Mr. Wesley's meaning, and which left out makes him seem to plead for absolute power in the king, which he is very express in denying? Americanus must know he asserts an untruth when he says, 'Every man that is able to boil pot in the most despicable hovel may have a vote if he pleases'. Americanus knows it is false, though so roundly asserted. It is but a few lines before that he says, 'This privilege is to not a few boroughs'. But if all the boroughs in England had that privilege, how inconsiderable are they compared to all the people of England? And as to every man of property making himself a freeholder, that he knows is impossible. For if he has property and inclination, he must wait an opportunity. Such small tracts of land as will qualify him for the purpose of voting, that would cost £60 or £70, are not often to be had. And it will not suit but very few whose property is from £60 to £100 to lay it out in land. At present I am bold to say not one tenth part of this kingdom is in any view represented in parliament.

Americanus mentions Montesquieu, saying 'all ought to have a right of voting'. And this is his own opinion. But I fear to new-model the constitution in so capital a part would cost more blood and treasure than an American war. For my own part, I am satisfied with it as it now stands. I acknowledge myself a Dissenter, not merely from education but from principle. We have never wanted protection since this family have been on the throne. Pity it is any of us should wantonly and wickedly treat with contempt what our forefathers so highly esteemed. But although some have rendered themselves undeserving that great favour and privilege by their abuse of it, yet I well know there are yet among the Dissenters great numbers who are of the first consequent to us that would sacrifice their all in support of government, to restore peace and true liberty in America.

The stale story of taxation and representation be inseparable would have much more weight if they had added protection. And if they had told us they had solicited to be represented. But indeed they desire no such thing. And they never told the public, before the Stamp Act was laid on, that they had the offer of raising the money in their own way. But since that has been known, multitudes of people who thought well of them before can now no longer excuse them. Before I knew so much of the wickedness and tyranny of the Americans (and even their friends in England as far as they can copy after them) I had a much better opinion of them myself.

The most lax of their charters has taxation strongly implied. Was there no additional tax necessary to pay the interest of a debt of seventy millions (much of it incurred on their account) and an annual additional expense of near four hundred thousand pounds to protect them?

Americanus, if he had known the amount of the American trade and the profits arising from it,

¹See *Calm Address to Our American Colonies*, Appendix, §6; JW does add a stress on the role of parliament, but only starting in the 2nd edn.

would certainly (as an honest man) have scorned to publish such an absurd account as that in Lord Chatham's speech. It is a doubtful case whether it ever brought neat into the kingdom two hundred thousand pounds a year; very certain it is that it never brought four hundred thousand pounds per annum, instead of two millions! But those great orators' speeches are calculated to deceive the multitude, very few of whom know anything of the matter and therefore will swallow whatever their patron says. However, Americanus should have informed himself better. Every merchant could have told him it was a notorious falsehood. But perhaps the merchants who are his friends are not desirous of doing it, nor he desirous of information.

I will close this subject a little different from Americanus:

If the people of America are protected at a great expense by government, and will not pay anything towards it under pretence of not being represented, which they unanimously say themselves they would not accept of, nor ever did petition for, government ought to oblige them.

A Dissenter

Source: published transcription; *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 9, 1775), p. 4.

'Despiser of Hypocrites' to the *London Packet*

To the Author of a Letter signed W. A. in the *London Packet* of Dec. 6.¹

Bristol
December 13, 1775

Sir,

You write with that degree of confidence and cunning which is the characteristic of a true disciple of Mr. John Wesley. You would willingly screen your apostle from a charge which is supported by evidence that remains unimpeached, and that involves your patron, the 'aged, laborious, and learned minister of Christ', in the guilt of uttering to the world a *palpable notorious falsehood*. You assert very roundly that Mr. Charles Wesley declares he believes his brother Mr. John Wesley never read the book alluded to.² Did Mr. Charles Wesley authorize you, sir, to declare this to the world? I am confident he did not. Mr. Charles Wesley knows, or ought to know, that his brother has *privately* acknowledged what he has not yet been candid enough publicly to confess. The culprit however will be dragged to the public tribunal, unless, to use your own words, 'shame and he have shaken hands and parted'. Mr. Evans pursues him with that zeal which truth will always insure, and I hope will overtake him, though he should make his retreat from Norwich to the north of Scotland.

Supposing however what you assert to be true. What has Mr. Charles Wesley's *belief* to do with the present controversy? There are two credible evidences, the Rev. Mr. [James] Rouquet and Mr. William Pine, who declare, and if required will confirm *on oath*, what Mr. Evans has asserted respecting Mr. John Wesley. Shall the *belief* of Mr. Charles Wesley, not founded on any declaration from his brother, and published to the world *anonymously*, operate against the *solemn testimony* of two known respectable characters, one of whom, by your own confession, Mr. Wesley 'respects as a godly man'? Such an absurdity is too gross to be swallowed, though glossed over with your utmost cunning.

But 'the mistake it seems is on the side of the Rev. Mr. Rouquet'. Very calm truly! The *mistake!* No, sir, the *falsehood* is on the side of the pious Mr. John Wesley. He *recommended* the book in question to his brother Charles Wesley, to Mr. Rouquet, to Mr. Pine. And Mr. Pine, sir, recommended it to me many months ago in consequence of Mr. John Wesley's strong recommendation to him. And yet Mr. John Wesley has said 'I never saw the book with my eyes'. Such an attempt to impose on the credulity of mankind, and under the mask of sanctity, has not its parallel. To this attempt however Mr. John Wesley, with all his art and cunning, was scarcely equal. He has been happily detected, and ought to be fully exposed.

You conclude with observing that Mr. John Wesley is *now* at Norwich, and therefore cannot at present answer for himself. This evasion is in character. It is worthy the advocate of such a man. Was Mr. John Wesley at Norwich, sir, when he received the second edition of Mr. Evans's *Letter*, in the preface of which the charge against him was supported by the authority of the two evidences above-mentioned? Was he at Norwich when he received the *private letters* from Mr. Rouquet and Mr. Pine? Was he at Norwich when he published the last edition of his *theft* from Dr. Johnson, and in the preface to which he has so *quietly and cunningly entirely left out* his former false *assertion*? You know, sir, he was in *London*. And if he had any remaining claim to the character of an *honest, candid* man, it was incumbent on him to have acknowledged his error as publicly as he committed it, and to have apologized to Mr. Evans for his

¹Unfortunately, no copy of this edition of the *London Packet* is known to survive. But the content of this letter can be generally reconstructed from this reply.

²Referring to the debate whether JW had read and recommended Thomas Parker's *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves*. See particularly the letter of James Rouquet dated Nov. 6, 1775 (above).

positive and premature denial.

Like you, sir, I have conversed with pious men of every Christian denomination, and I have found Mr. John Wesley's conduct very generally, and very deservedly, reprobated.

His own people wish to be silent. They know, and they lament. If they speak, his age and his infirmities are their only apology. The men of the world are not quite so ceremonious. When they see a man convicted of *literary theft*, and of *public falsehood*, they treat his character with that freedom which borders on detestation and contempt.

I am sir,

A Despiser of Hypocrites

Source: published transcription; *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post* (Dec. 15–18, 1775), p. 1.

From Mrs. M. L.

Bristol
December 14, 1775

Reverend Sir,

A deep sense of my own unworthiness has caused me to delay writing longer than I wished. But remembering that you never look upon it as loss of time to instruct your friends in the way of righteousness, I beg that you will confer on me an act of friendship which I do not remember you ever yet did—I mean, to tell me all my faults. For I so covet the reproofs of my friends that I can truly say with David, ‘Let the righteous smite me friendly’.¹ I often find such admonitions tend to help me to the knowledge of myself, which necessarily drives me to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness. But I want faith to wash therein and be clean.

I trust that he is carrying on the work of sanctification in my soul, which oftentimes proves painful to the remains of corrupt nature. I am read to cry out, ‘Who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth as a refiner’s fire?’² But he makes me willing to endure, so I may at last awake up after his likeness.

For several weeks past I have experienced great inward and outward trials. But I have also experienced that gracious promise, ‘As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.’³ I find outward trials have a happy tendency to wean me from the world, and sweetly to constrain me to trust in the Lord alone for everything I want. And he is teaching me that, having present food and raiment, I am therewith to be content.

I see more and more beauty in entire devotedness to Jesus, and have lately found myself very ambitious of suffering hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. I think that in general we are too easy, and do not enough take up our cross as the followers of a crucified Master. We are too apt to forget that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs. So that when he gives us to have fellowship with him in his sufferings, we are ready to seek out to ourselves an easier way, forgetting that the servant is not to be above his Lord. From observing lately that this is the case of several I am acquainted with, I am lead to pray that God would give us all

A soul enur’d to pain,
To hardship, grief, and loss,
Bold to take up, firm to sustain
The consecrated cross.⁴

being assured that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.

That this may be our happy portion is, reverend sir, the earnest desire of
Your obedient servant,

M. L.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 329–30 (i.e., 333–34).

¹Ps. 141:5.

²Mal. 3:2.

³Deut. 33:25.

⁴CW, ‘A Poor Sinner’, st. 3, *HSP* (1742), 147.

A Calm Address to Americanus
by
A Native of America

c. December 15, 1775

Sir,

You say 'If you are taxed without your own consent you are slaves' (p. 3). 'Taxation and representation are inseparable; it is an eternal law of nature' (p. 5). 'There is not a blade of grass taxed without the consent of the proprietor' (p. 7). 'Either you are able to purchase a freehold, or your property is so small that it can be of no consequence to you who has the granting it' (p. 7). 'Whatever is a man's own is absolutely his own. No man has a right to take it from him without his consent; whoever does so commits a robbery' (p. 5).¹

Here is the substance of seven pages, which I will now consider. 'If you are taxed without your own consent, you are slaves.' Then I am a slave, and two millions in England besides. I am not able to purchase a freehold at forty shillings a year. So I must be a slave by the British constitution, and a freeman only 'by the eternal law of nature'.

But you comfort me by saying, 'When my property is so small, it is of no consequence who has the granting of it.' Nay, but 'what is my own is absolutely my own', be it little or much. If any can 'take it from me without my consent, I am a slave'. And is it of no consequence to me whether I am a slave or a freeman? I have no freehold. Yet the parliament taxes me, consequently 'robs me'; takes 'what is absolutely my own, without my consent'. Yet 'a blade of grass is not taxed without its proprietor's consent', this being 'the eternal law of nature'.

You add, 'Taxation and representation are coeval with and essential to *this constitution*' (p. 5). Yet you acknowledge that even under this constitution 'the people are by no means equally represented' (p. 12). No, for millions are not represented at all. But to remedy this defect you say, 'every man that has almost any degree of property may acquire a vote if he pleases. And if he does not, he in fact consents to what is done by others.'

See the parallel. By their charters 'the Americans have a right to all the privileges of free-born Englishmen'. Now all Englishmen have a right to be protected by their sovereign; to be governed by laws made of king, lords, and commons; and to purchase freehold estates—by virtue of which they have a vote for parliament-men. The Americans have the same rights. They are protected; they are governed by the English laws; and they may have a voice in the legislature, if they please. If they do not choose it, 'they consent in fact to what is done by others'. Therefore they 'cannot be said to have their property disposed of without their consent'. They 'implicitly give their consent' to what the parliament does. And so do thousands in England. So do the inhabitants of Chelmsford, Birmingham, and many other towns, who choose not to be electors. Such is the English constitution, to which the Americans are bound by all their charters to conform.

You say, 'The colonies claim the same right with Ireland, of granting their own money' (p. 16). But they have no reason to do so, for they are not upon the same footing. The Irish had an original right of taxing themselves. And it is confirmed by many acts of the English parliament. The colonies never had such an original right. Nor have they any such act of parliament. This therefore, as frequently as it is alleged, is not a parallel case.

¹Note in original text: 'N.B. All this is taken from a tract entitled *An Argument for the Exclusive Right of the Colonies to Tax Themselves* [i.e. this author mistakenly assumes Evans is simply digesting Thomas Parker's book of this title (London: Brotherton and Sewell, 1774)].

However, 'the Americans have a right to be represented.' True, and according to your scheme they always have been represented 'by their implicit consent', by not choosing to purchase freeholds in England.

You say, 'The king and nobles have nothing to do, strictly speaking, with taxing the subjects, but the people, the commons alone.' So said Cromwell, in consequence of which, quickly after, he left them nothing to do in the legislature. How exactly do the Americans copy after him! *Mali corvi mala ova!*²

If they will keep the charters whereby they hold their lands, should they not fulfill the conditions by which they hold them? These are that they continue loyal to Great Britain. Obey such laws as are made by the English parliament. Truly tender to the king the fifth part of all ore, stones, etc. And in their corporate capacity make bylaws, but none contrary to any made by the English parliament. Do they think it slavery to fulfill these? England will release them from this slavery on cheaper terms than they will release their Negro slaves. Slaves! Will these patrons of liberty keep slaves? Is not this 'repugnant to the eternal law of nature'? For *us* to do this, it is; but the case is altered if you speak of *them*.

But 'have they ever forfeited their right by an abuse of it'? (p. 19). Yes! By drowning and hanging witches, so called. By whipping Anabaptists. By hanging Quakers. 'Yea, but King William gave them a new charter. Have they forfeited this too?' They have. For they have banished the king's governors and officers. They have proclaimed war and fought battles against him. And have set up a congress which exercises more than regal power over all the provinces. Yet 'they love the king' you say, 'and venerate him almost to idolatry'. Who can doubt it? They love King George III as dearly as their ancestors did King Charles the First!

You say, 'The Americans ought to tax themselves, because the county palatines did' (p. 6). It is not a parallel case. They had charters expressly empowering them so to do. But have the Americans? No. Again the palatinates had grants from the parliament to tax themselves. The Americans have none, nor ever had. Their case therefore is widely different.

You say, 'I am credibly informed the charter of Massachusetts Bay has no reference to taxes, but only quit-rents' (p. 18). Sir, I will inform you better. That charter says, 'in lieu of quit-rent on land *forever* is reserved the fifth part of all gold, silver ore, etc.' And on this consideration they have been exempted from paying quit-rent ever since. From being taxed, their charter exempts them *for seven years* and no more.

But you ask, 'What right had the king to promise that the parliament should not tax them for seven years?' (p. 18). I answer, upon revolution principles the king had just as much right to exempt them from taxes (for seven years or forever) as the House of Lords or the House of Commons had.

If you had duly considered this question, your pamphlet would have died before its birth. For your whole drift is to prove that the colonies are exempt from parliamentary taxes by virtue of their charters. But all these were given solely by the king, who could no more exempt them than the lords or commons could.

If any charter given by a king, lords, and commons exempted a colony from parliamentary taxes, that colony would be a palatinate, but still under the control of the supreme power which gave their charter. So that if this palatinate did not fulfil the terms of their charter, by taxing themselves to support the empire, that supreme power might tax them—yea might abridge or destroy their charter. 27 Henry VIII, 14 Eliz.

All the American charters are royal grants conveying: 1) right of soil, 2) corporation power like that of Bristol, whose mayor, aldermen, and common council resemble the king, lords, and commons just as much as the governor, council, and representatives of Massachusetts Bay. And as the granter has no power to exempt them one moment from parliamentary taxation, with what propriety can you plead that

²'Bad crows lay bad eggs.'

he has exempted them forever?

Nay, the king, lords, and commons together could not give them such a right as you plead for: 'a right to grant or not grant their own money'; that is, in other words, not give one penny to support the government that protects them.

'But why were they not taxed sooner?' They were taxed over and over, ever since the Restoration. But they were the less taxed because they pleaded poverty. England was deceived, and sent them large supplies of money from time to time.

England was deceived again by the petition of the twelve provinces, complaining they could not support themselves against the French in Canada, at the same time that those twelve provinces contained four and twenty times as many souls as Canada. That province contained an hundred thousand; the twelve, 2,400,000. This gross deceit prevailed. England granted their request and, at a vast expense, conquered Canada for them. When afterwards, upon an average made of what the twelve colonies had expended, it appeared that six provinces had contributed nothing, the other six more than their proportion, the parliament returned the surplus. So far were they from any thoughts of oppressing the Americans!

But 'the colonies have taxed themselves for these hundred and fifty year.' They have, for corporation expenses. And so has the city of Bristol. And yet all this time it has been taxed by parliament for the expenses of the government. 'But Bristol is represented.' So are the Americans; you have clearly proved it (p. 7). They have a right to buy a freehold. If they will not use the right which the constitution gives them, they 'implicitly and to all intents and purposes give their consent' to what the parliament does. 'It cannot therefore be said' (they are your own words) 'that they are taxed without their consent.'

You say, 'If England has the power to tax America, England is under the greatest temptation to abuse that power, because every shilling they take out of the pocket of the Americans is so much saved in their own' (p. 16). Nay, if England has not power to tax the Americans, these are under the greatest temptation to abuse that exemption, because every shilling they refuse to England is so much saved in their own pockets. You see the temptation is alike on both sides. In order to judge which are the most likely to yield to it, let us consider the former behaviour of England toward America, and of America toward England.

England, instead of oppressing the Americans, has protected them by sea, at a vast expense. Has supported their civil governors with annual salaries. Has paid them not less than sixty thousand pounds a year bounty on the timber, oil, flaxseed, hemp, and other commodities which they have sent over. Has purchased the friendship of the Indians for them. And conquered all their enemies. What could she have done more for the Americans? And what has America done for England? They have voted that they are free, and that no power on earth has a right to tax them but themselves. That they will pay what they please for the support of the empire (but they do not seek to be independent). They have allowed England their trade just so far as it suited their interest, but meantime have smuggled whole cargoes of goods, those especially on which they received the king's bounty.

But you say, 'We receive two millions a year by their trade.' Be it so. What do they receive by our trade? Add to this the expense of shipping to protect them, of purchasing the friendship of the Indians for them, of annual salaries to support their civil government, of bounty-money to encourage their trade, and of the war in Canada. Compare these with the profit of the American trade, and what will England gain then? Two millions? No, not two hundred thousand pounds. No, not a shilling! Nay, the balance is against her!

To conclude. The burden of your song is, 'Taxation and representation are inseparable.'

Allowing *you* to show what representation means, Mr. Wesley does not deny it.

Taxation implies a law made by the king, lords, and commons. The power of making laws is lodged in king, lords, and commons jointly.

Where the power of legislation is not, there can be no power of taxation.

Therefore when you write again, please to say representation and legislation also are inseparable in England—not indeed by the eternal law of nature, but by the British constitution.

Source: published transcription; appended to JW's last printing (in late December 1775) of *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies*, with separate pagination. It was subsequently printed in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Jan. 6, 1776), p. 4; and *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Jan. 13, 1776), p. 4

From 'A Friend of the People and Their Liberties'

St. H[ele]ns [Lancashire]
December 16, 1775

*Pro Rege, pro Patria et Constitutione*¹

[p. 2]

To Mr. Richard Naylor of Manchester.

With the greatest respect for his public-spirited conduct and the active part he has taken in the cause of liberty and the brave Americans, the following piece is inscribed,

By his affectionate, obedient humble servant,

The Author

[p. 3]

The *Address* which has appeared under Mr. Wesley's name I apprehend contains in it positions inconsistent with the rights of Englishmen, and subversive of the British constitution. And although some persons affect to treat that gentleman with contempt, yet considering his extensive connections in the country, with the very high opinion his followers are taught to entertain of him, I think it deserves particular notice. I find many people (not qualified to judge of reasoning and its consequences) hold that performance in great admiration, and some deem it unanswerable. I shall however risk a reply to it.

Mr. Wesley's professed design in the above performance, is to reconcile the Americans to the present plan of government. But it appears to me not only calculated to widen the breach with the Americans, but also to instil the most abject and slavish principles into the minds of people at home. Whether Mr. Wesley is employed by a certain class of men, the author will not undertake to affirm. But this is certain, he has with great gravity and apparent zeal propagated a doctrine of so pernicious a tendency as will, if left to its full operation, soon reduce the subjects of Great Britain to as complete a state of slavery as the Inhabitants of France or Turkey. He has made a solemn parade of answering the objections of the Americans to an internal taxation; but by no means with judgment, or in a manner that can give satisfaction to persons of the least discernment. My reason for this [p. 4] assertion is his being obliged to recur to principles in the highest degree arbitrary.

It would be exceedingly unhappy indeed for the good people of England if the conduct of their governors should need Mr. Wesley's principles to justify it. It is greatly to be hoped providence has not so severe a judgment in reserve for them. I look upon the whole address before me as one continued train of sophistry, and I believe what this gentleman has advanced about the first Massachusetts charter containing only an exemption from taxes for seven years to be a mistake.² Query: Whether the word taxes be in the original? Or if it is, whether anything more than a quit-rent to the king, as proprietor of the lands was meant by it? For it is very strange, when Mr. Mather came from Boston in the latter end of James's reign to get that charter renewed, and actually got a renewal of it with some enlargement of its privileges by the glorious King William the Third, that not the least notice should have been taken of that circumstance. And it is much stranger still that Charles the Second, who for a considerable time had a parliament entirely at his devotion, should not have seized the opportunity of taxing them, especially as it is well known he was so highly offended with them as to threaten to take away their charters. And it is astonishing that the famous cabal who moved all the wheels of state did not advise that king to exert the right of taxation, rather than to the desperate expedient of shutting up the exchequer? But however,

¹'For the King, Country, and Constitution.'

²Footnote in the original: 'Mr. Wesley's assertion concerning the Pennsylvania charter appears to be either a mistake or a misrepresentation. See what is inserted concerning the Massachusetts and Pennsylvania charters, etc. at the conclusion of this piece, under the article "Charters".'

waving for the present the subject of charters, I shall begin some remarks upon Mr. Wesley's view of representation; in which he asserts that the Americans are equally represented with himself and millions more in Great Britain. Now if this assertion can be proved [p. 5] in fact to have no good foundation, his whole superstructure will of course fall to the ground, and some inferences in favour of the Americans will naturally arise which may deserve our attention.

The parallel Mr. Wesley has laboured so hard to draw between his own situation and that of the Americans does not appear to me a just one; and I am confident, upon the principles of sound reason will not hold. There appears in my train of ideas an essential difference, and I hope to make that difference fully evident to others. In order to which I beg leave to observe that it is by no means necessary for every individual to have a vote at an election in order to his being free, or properly represented in the House of Commons. To suppose this necessity will draw after it consequences which Mr. Wesley will not allow, consequences he would think severe and such as our laws are totally ignorant of. If this were to be admitted, no man could claim the benefit of the law who was not an elector. The electors alone would be in a state of freedom, and all others must be slaves. In this debate we are to consider Great Britain as one single community, and in respect to all legislative acts as one body politic. The members in the House of Commons are the representatives of this whole body. They have always deemed themselves such, and this is the light in which they are considered by the fundamental principles of the constitution. In consequence of which, every act of theirs in that capacity equally operates through the whole community. The security of the persons and properties of all is equally provided for; which could not be, were not all in a state of freedom and represented. It is to be remembered that the law supposes every man, woman, and child free, without the least regard to their having or not having votes for members. It is a known fact that in cases where persons seek redress from the law the question whether they are electors never is asked. As to Mr. Wesley's flourish about every man's being born passively into the civil state, it will by no means justify the conclusions drawn from it. What signifies [p. 6] attempting to blind the eyes of the simple with phrases which, when properly understood, will by no means support the principles intended to be established by them? Being born passively can only mean that Men are brought into the World without their own Agency or Choice. And does not Mr. Wesley know, that every man is born in this sense passively into the state of nature, or into a situation where there are no fixed maxims of government. But must we thence infer that they are not born free?

It is plain then that Mr. Wesley's way of reasoning proves a great deal too much. In short, it will prove there can be no such thing as a state of freedom at all. But he allows it in the state of nature. And why men who are born passively into a state of government which is deemed free should not in fact be free is a finesse much beyond my poor comprehension. This passive syllogism is so very lame, in one part at least, that I would advise him in his next edition to cast out the whole of it, as an absolute incurable. I apprehend then, notwithstanding Mr. Wesley was born in his passive sense under the English government, he is free, and gives his consent to acts of the state? I'll for once venture to put a case, which appears at present exceedingly plain to me, and I hope will do so to Mr. Wesley, notwithstanding he is no freeholder. It is well known there are laws in being which fix what money every inhabitant in this kingdom shall pay for his windows. But suppose a king's officer was to demand of Mr. Wesley a double or triple proportion. What course would he pursue in such a case? Would he not refuse payment, and seek protection in the law which fixed the smaller sum? Certainly he would. And I want to know upon the principles of commonsense what the plain language of such conduct would be? Evidently no less than this, that he thought himself to have been represented when that law was enacted, and that his property was secured by it. I therefore humbly apprehend that Mr. Wesley's representation in the British senate is sufficiently proved, and that the law which secures his property, [p. 7] and from which he would seek his remedy in case of violence, is not made absolutely without his consent.

I profess it greatly surprised me to find a man of Mr. Wesley's abilities affecting to treat a consent given to acts passed before men were born with sovereign contempt. And I shall beg leave to set

down the sneer as no argument, because I have no inclination to be laughed out of my senses. I take it for granted, till the contrary is proved, that there are many ways by which mankind may give their consent to things (and to all intents and purposes make them their own acts and deeds) which really existed long before they were born. But as this will be perhaps looked upon as a bare affirmation, I shall give a proof in point. It is well known that Magna Charta was in being long enough before the present generation were thought of. But should any man affirm that the king by his coronation oath did not bind himself to govern agreeably to it, and by that oath give his consent to it (as much as if he had existed when it passed, or had been active in the framing of it) he would be deemed an enemy to the rights of the people, and defective in his understanding. Now so long as Mr. Wesley is a member of a society which is properly represented, and enjoys all the privileges of it, he is not on the same footing with the Americans. In our own country, it is to be remembered, every county has a number of boroughs, which send their respective members to parliament. Every county has also its knights. The burgesses act for their respective places in the house, and the knights represent their respective counties at large. By this means the security of all is provided for, and the whole community is equally represented.

Ireland is a distinct community from Great Britain. It has a legislative body of its own, one part of which represents the people. It has a privy council, and a viceroy who personates the king. All acts of legislation are performed within itself, saving to the sovereign the power of refusing or giving his consent and the supreme execution of them as in Britain. The [p. 8] commons in Ireland, as the representatives of the people, grant their money and are the guardians of their rights. This puts the Irish upon the same footing with the people of England. But let us suppose the Irish parliament to be annihilated, and no representatives sent from that country to sit in our House of Commons. Would Mr. Wesley think in this case that the people of Ireland were equally represented with himself? Or that it was agreeable to the spirit of our constitution for our commons to grant their money? Certainly neither Mr. Wesley nor any man else could, who thought but two minutes upon the subject.

This gentleman's remark upon the majority's choosing members, in opposition to the minority's, and the latter of course having no representatives, is nothing more than raising a little dust to blind the eyes of the simple. And they must be simple indeed, who do not see through so flimsy a piece of sophistry. He could not seriously have proposed such an argument in this affair. Certainly it has not the least weight. It has been agreed upon by all societies formed on the plan of freedom, in respect of the choice of their magistrates, to be determined by the voice of the majority. And I wonder Mr. Wesley should have attempted to prove that the minority's submission to a general-agreed rule should be the least breach of their privileges. It could not be supposed that in large bodies of men every individual should fix in one point. And therefore the rule was adopted, to preserve the very being of society. It was a wise expedient, to bring affairs of moment to a speedier issue which might otherwise have been carried by debate to the most tedious and pernicious lengths. The good of society was consulted, and is in fact promoted by it.

Upon the foregoing view and train of reasoning, I would ask Mr. Wesley whether he in his conscience believes, in case the present plan succeeds, that the Americans will be on the same footing with himself? I dare answer in the negative. For every man knows that the Americans have not one single member from all their extensive communities in our House of [p. 9] Commons. Not one is deputed to act for them by whom they can give a representation of their circumstances, to lay the foundation of any law for their internal government. I appeal then to every man's reason and commonsense—I appeal in particular to Mr. Wesley's—whether there is not a wide difference between the state of that community which has five hundred and fifty-eight men deputed from itself, to grant its property and guard against all encroachments of the crown, and a community which haste not *one*? There is no occasion for metaphysical distinctions here. A little commonsense is quite sufficient. And the plain, the undeniable consequences of this state of the case are that the Americans ought to be left to the mode of government they have been all along under, or have representatives. While they are governed as usual, or in the

second form, they are free. For I look upon it that the next state of freedom to that of the state of nature is when communities of men are governed by their own consent. It does not for many reasons appear practicable for them to have members in our parliament. The Act of Navigation then, and their charters, seem to be the only mode. This mode they have consented to. They never once solicited a repeal of it. And while this is continued, they do acknowledge the sovereignty of the crown and the authority of parliament. For I'll venture to affirm, in opposition to the high and venerated authorities of Dean Tucker, Dr. Johnson, and the most *benevolent* and *humane* Dr. Shebbeare that there may be an acknowledgment of sovereignty, where submission is not absolute and unlimited.³ That these gentlemen seem to admit of no medium between a state of nature and absolute submission to the will of others demonstrates of what kind their political creed and attachments are. And that these men are retained by the ministry shows us too what ideas such ministers⁴ entertain of the [p. 10] nature of government—a consideration that should keep the eyes of the good people of England open.

With regard to the Americans, our parliament have it in their power to govern their trade, by which the revenue may be increased, without having recourse to a method so highly distasteful as that of an internal taxation. This seems to be the only scheme of sound policy that can be pursued. Here the advantage is manifest, and very great. The Americans are a growing people, and as they grow this kind of revenue will increase in proportion. That part of the world, with prudent and lenient measures, may become an inexhaustible fund of wealth. But it seems by no means reasonable to raise an internal tax upon a people which is not to be employed in their own necessary defence, to be expended among themselves, or with the application of which they are not made fully acquainted. In case an internal tax was to be raised in the colonies, they must certainly be allowed the best judges what to charge it upon, and in what particular mode to gather it. For whatever ideas we may form of the legislative body at home, it is not probable that at the distance of 2000 miles they should be able to judge with the same propriety as those who are upon the spot. This I profess appears to me equal to a demonstration that the Americans ought to be left to determine these affairs for themselves. So much for the point of prudence. But there is a consideration of greater weight—namely, the point of justice; which will, I hope, always influence Englishmen. The taking a people's money without their consent is treating them, I think, inconsistently with the spirit of the British constitution. If the Americans are to be deemed a part of the British subjects, they ought in all reason to enjoy the privileges of such; i.e., they ought to grant their own money and consent to their own laws. But if they are not allowed to do this, my reason tells me there is no difference between them and the subjects of the most despotic government in the world. And is not truly deplorable that, while the parent state is free, her children on [p. 11] the other side the water should be slaves! What generous Briton can bear the thought? Let the mother look to herself. This measure possibly may be meted out in another quarter of the globe. And suppose after all the present plan should succeed, what mighty advantages would accrue to us at home? Have we not reason to fear innumerable pensions would be granted upon the American establishments? Would not these greatly increase the dependants of the crown? Would not our House of Commons soon be filled with such? And does not every Englishman know this would be unfavourable to our liberties? Every pensioner is an additional weight on the side of

³Referring to Josiah Tucker, *An Humble Address and Earnest Appeal ... whether a connection with or a separation from the continental colonies of America, be most for the national advantage, and the lasting benefit of these kingdoms* (Gloucester: R. Raikes, 1775); Samuel Johnson, *Taxation no Tyranny* (London: T. Cadell, 1775); and John Shebbeare, *An Answer to the printed Speech of Edmund Burke ... in which ... the conduct of administration is fully defended* (London: Evans, 1775).

⁴Footnote in original: 'Is there not some chosen curse, some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven, red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man who owes his greatness to his country's ruin' [by Joseph Addison].

the crown, and tends to destroy that balance of power between the prince and people in which the great excellency of our constitution lies, and which has always been deemed the great bulwark of our rights. We might enjoy the appearance of liberty, in choosing our own representatives; but it would in fact only be a privilege of choosing five hundred men, in conjunction with a prince (if one so disposed should arise), to govern us in the most absolute manner. Nay, what is worse, a law enforcing so growing a people as the Americans to pay taxes, might enable our kings, in time, to bid defiance to parliaments and reign without them. I apprehend that those who are for coercive measures, and who preach up the doctrine of absolute submission, are blindly following the impulse of passion; are undermining the constitution; and are in fact the greatest enemies to the peace and prosperity of these kingdoms. And that those who wish matters may be compromised, and affairs put into the old course which was so much to the honour and advantage of both countries, are our best friends. There are indeed a great many people (who have more zeal than knowledge) that think it a great matter for England to give law as it were to all the world. These being totally ignorant of the merits of the cause, and confounding a mistaken principle of honour with that of justice, their cry is 'Fight them'. But it must appear a little surprising that a man who is the head of a people that have all along gloried in [p. 12] being the *persecuted*, that have run imprudently into trouble in order to be sure of the indelible mark of discipleship, should be an abettor of sanguinary measures. For to such measures the *Address* under consideration leads. *Errare humanum est*⁵—in spite of theorems. And in practice we see perfection is not to be found.

To prosecute the war certainly is a mad scheme, if ever there was one, because however it issues, it is sure in the end to be to our disadvantage. The loss of every subject, whether an American or a native, is a loss of our strength. The events of war are very uncertain: The number of men we ought to employ should be as three to one, because I apprehend there is that difference in the situation of the American army and our own. Every inhabitant is a friend to their army and will, from ties of nature, assist it all that lies in his power. Every inhabitant is an enemy to ours and, under the general enthusiasm for liberty, will distress our people all manner of ways. So that famine must ruin us, if we meet with no remarkable checks by force of arms. And I fear that our national virtue is not sufficiently great, nor the justice of the cause sufficiently clear, to hope for any remarkable interpositions of providence. And unless the God of armies go forth with us, our men are led but to certain destruction. Or suppose, after repeated battles, we should succeed. It will be but a poor ground of triumph to have destroyed many thousand subjects on both sides. To have squandered away an immense treasure, which can never be reimbursed. To have lost the confidence, and incurred the hatred, of two millions of men who, till this unhappy contest, were reckoned as loyal and affectionate subjects as any in the dominions of the crown. We need only to call to mind Cape Breton, Montreal, and Quebec; with the preservation of Nova Scotia, by their valour, to the British crown, to justify the above character. What affection will they, or can they in the nature of things, retain for us after what they deem so severe a treatment of them? And all the powder and ball in Great [p. 13] Britain will not alter their judgments. An Englishman, whom they always respected, will in future be an hated name. They will look upon their brethren, whom they used to consider as a part of the same family and descended from the same parent, as their enemies. And an house thus divided against itself cannot stand. With what heart can we suppose they will defend themselves, in case of an attack from our natural enemies, who are now laughing at our folly? Will it not, must it not, be a perfect matter of indifference to the Americans whether they are governed by the despotic power of England or France? Will they send their troops down to the water side to prevent the landing of the foe, to join our fleets and armies with that cheerfulness and courage as formerly? We cannot expect it. These are consequences which must follow the present ill-concerted plan. These are consequences foreseen by some of our ablest politicians and best patriots. Consequences of so tremendous a nature, so every way big with ruin, that they cannot but greatly

⁵'To err is human.'

alarm the fears of all who have any public virtue, any remains of love to their country, and who wish it to prosper.

Before the year 1763 the Americans were always willing to assist us when required, because they thought a proper regard was paid to their rights. And this will always be the case with generous minds, who breathe the sentiments of liberty. Let us remember, a love of freedom sent their ancestors into that distant part of the world; an event which has raised this nation to its present greatness, and opened a mine of wealth more valuable than the treasures of the Indies. And can it be wondered at that they should inherit the virtues of their forefathers? The love of liberty is a virtue we ought not to desire them to give up.

It is known to be the genius of the English people to do generous things while left to their liberty. But they never brook compulsion. And why should we be angry with the Americans for indulging a disposition they inherit by descent from us? A disposition we have [p. 14] always gloried in? Slavish principles have an immediate tendency to enervate the mind and stagnate its powers. But a love of liberty expands it, ennobles them, and adds a greatness and dignity to the soul. It is a stimulus to elevated sentiments. It is the parent of arts and sciences, and the cherisher of whatever is truly useful to societies and kingdoms. In short, it is one of the innate principles of the human soul. Why else do we approve sentiments of freedom so highly? And why admire the conduct, and venerate the characters, of such men as Phocion, Pelopidas, and Epaminodas?

We now stand on a precipice, from which we must look down with horror. May heaven prevent our fall! I cannot think there is any difficulty of striking out a medium between Dean Tucker's extremes of humbling the colonists or totally abandoning them. That he could find none only proves he took too narrow and contracted a view of the subject, and argues [with] the temper of a man full of resentment and chagrin. The good Doctor's mind was shackled with the fetters of despotism, which are sufficient to cramp that of any man. I am of the opinion that the Americans have clearly opened the way, by their petition from the Continental Congress. And I think there is neither wisdom nor candour in suspecting their sincerity. Let it be remembered, their situation is not desperate. They have powerful armies, and a sufficient superiority to drive our men off the continent whenever they please. That they have not done this, to me, is one of the strongest proofs they are anxious for a reconciliation. And under such a concurrence of circumstances, is it to be thought that anything but passion, inveterate prejudice, or a spirit of infatuation (which seems to prognosticate our downfall) can lead us to question the sincerity of their desire for peace? If I might presume to offer any advice in so important an affair, it should be to come to the most speedy agreement, by restoring all things to the state of the year 1763.

A connection between Great-Britain and America, [p. 15] and the dependence of the latter upon the former, must be established by a commercial interest. The Act of Navigation contains all the regulations and restrictions of trade that are necessary to secure it to us. But the language and the sentiments of many of the good people of England are that it is not practicable to admit representatives from America in our parliament, nor give the Americans the exact form of our constitution—therefore let us govern them by absolute power. Certainly the following language is more becoming Englishmen, and more worthy the wisdom of our legislators: 'As we cannot give them the complete model of our constitution, let us give them somewhat more than less of its freedom.'

There can be no doubt but America is of great importance to these kingdoms. And it is worth while to consider how it may be secured by interest and affection, rather than attempt to keep it in awe by the vain terror of arms. The trade to America is now immensely valuable. Certainly those minds must be affected with the torpedo⁶ to a strange degree, who do not feel for the sufferings of thousands of their fellow subjects, some who are already and others who soon must be thrown out of all employment. For

⁶I.e., the electric string-ray, whose shock left one disoriented.

supposing America to take only six millions worth of our manufactures annually, this export will employ, at eight shillings per head per week, more than 70,000 persons. As America is a growing country, its importance in a commercial view must every year considerably increase. Instead then of pursuing the present unhappy scheme, would it not be much better that the mother country should promote the trade of America in a manner at once beneficial to herself and the colonies? For instance, suppose our legislators were to encourage the growth of hemp and flax, felling their timbers, working iron, and providing all kinds of naval stores. Might not the trade from Russia, Sweden, and Norway all be diverted into this channel? We should have the same number of [p. 16] vessels; they would increase as our colonies increased in population and other improvements. We should have the same nursery for seamen, trained up for use against a time of war. The maritime force of the above powers would decrease with the loss of trade, and we should be entire masters of the ocean. America, on account of the cheapness of its lands, might to great advantage be turned into arable, where the soil and situation were agreeable, for growing corn. In a course of years it might, like Egypt to ancient Rome, become a common granary in time of need for the parent state. Further, there is a way of raising a revenue from America without the odious name of a tax. The whole British territories upon the continent, since the conclusion of the last peace, according to Mr. Salmon's account, must contain 3,499,520,000 statute acres.⁷ Now for the sake of round numbers we'll suppose there may be quite unoccupied 1,200,000,000 acres. This land is undoubtedly the property of the crown. In all future patents or grants of land, instead of two shillings per annum for every hundred acres, let a reserved quit-rent of two-pence per statute acre be made. This, upon a supposition that in process of time it should all be taken up, would make £10,000,000 per annum. Now the above schemes of trade, and this scheme for raising a quit-rent, appears objects of too great importance to make it prudent to abandon America. And the probability of their answering in any tolerable proportion to what the author expects they would, make the affair so interesting as to be worth the condescension even of a supplication for peace. But as it is clear that peace may be had, upon terms agreeable to all the authority and power we can in reason desire, with these pleasing prospects in view—if we do not grant it to those who now ask it, I will not express my apprehensions. They are melancholy enough God knows.

But it is time to return now to Mr. Wesley, and hear him upon the good people's ceding their rights, etc. Mr. Wesley affirms that when the people left the [p. 17] state of nature, they ceded to the king and parliament the power of disposing, without their consent, of their lives, liberties, and properties. A noble grant indeed! But suppose it should not be true, which I think is no hard matter to prove. If this can be made out, then all those inferences Mr. Wesley has drawn from his proposition will be good for just nothing at all.

Certainly when the people left the state of nature, and chose one more agreeable to their well-being as societies, they must have been infatuated to have given up life, liberty, and property to the absolute disposal of others—*Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim*.⁸ This would have been running from all the inconveniences they meant to avoid, by general agreement, into those of the same kind.

It certainly was with a view of securing their lives, liberties and properties from those they apprehended the stronger that the people agreed to fix upon magistrates, etc. by common consent to be their guardians. But in how ridiculous a light does Mr. Wesley's proposition place them, when to avoid the loss of life, liberty, etc. he supposes they made a solemn and explicit surrender of all together. *De fumo in flammam*!⁹ But I shall take the liberty to ask when, where, and in what form this was done? I

⁷Referring to Thomas Salmon, *A New Geographical and Historical Grammar* (London: William Johnston, 1749).

⁸'Wanting to avoid Charybdis, he runs into Scylla.' On the need to avoid paired dangers at sea in Virgil's *Aeneid*.

⁹'Out of the smoke and into the flame.'

affirm not in this nation, at any time, nor in any form whatever. The truth of the case is the people agreed to call the commons to secure their persons, rights, and properties, and to guard against all encroachments of the crown; but not to dispose of them and theirs, just as they pleased.

Let me ask, Can the king and parliament dispose of any man's property to others, according to mere will? Can they lay a restraint upon any man's person, or commit him to confinement, unless he is suspected of or charged with some crime, specified in the great national compact? It is well known they cannot—and that every man in the kingdom might, in such instances of violence, seek his remedy in our courts of justice. [p. 18]

As to our members of parliament, it is a known fact that in former times they were paid so much per day for sitting in the *House*—a plain proof they were looked upon as the proper deputed *servants* of the *people*. And did the people give up life, liberty, and property to their disposal, and pay them into the bargain? Did they thus submit their throats to be cut at their will and pleasure, and allow them a consideration for the kind, the humane office? An appeal to the commonsense of mankind is sufficient to point out the extreme futility of such reasoning. There is no occasion for man's going to Oxford, or commencing Master of Arts, to be filled with indignation at the glaring absurdity of it. And though the last-mentioned good custom of paying the representatives has been now dropped for an hundred years, I suppose the nature of their deputation is not for that reason altered. That the people still renew their choice every seven years shows it is not. And the constitutional right the people still enjoy of giving their members instructions demonstrates they have not made so extensive a grant as Mr. Wesley, with more confidence than truth, affirms.

But how strange and inconsistent a man this is. First, absolute power is granted to the king and parliament in conjunction, then he changes the nature of the subject and vests it all in the king; and that not by grant from the people neither, but he supposes (for I can find no other construction to his words) this power to reside in the king *a jure divino*.¹⁰ And that I may do him no injustice, I shall quote his own words. 'Every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects'; i.e., as he explains it, to grant their property with or without their consent. Nobly done indeed! Mr. Wesley has disenfranchised with his all-powerful pen no less than *three kingdoms* at one stroke. O how happy had good Bishop Neal been in so staunch a back friend, when that 'mirror of wisdom' James the First asked him, 'Whether he could not take his people's money without his parliament's leave'! And how happy that [p. 19] *sagacious monarch* in the united opinions of two such able statesmen! A point of this importance, established by two such witnesses, must have filled the *Solomon* of that age with rapture. Mr. Wesley would soon have been complimented with a good bishopric. It would not have been plain John, but *the Right Rev. Father in God John Lord Bishop*, etc. What a misfortune for a man sometimes to have his *nativity* cast a little too late! But however I would not have the good man despond. For I doubt not he is in the road to preferment, and that *his* is a doctrine which glows in the hearts of some men who will deign to smile upon him one time or other; and he may depend upon it his friends will meet with *peculiar grace*.

According to Mr. Wesley's doctrine the Long Parliament (which I alas have had the misfortune to look upon with a kind of enthusiastic veneration!) were a set of the wickedest wretches in the world, when they opposed the sovereign will of Charles the First. For it seems when he thought proper to take his people's money without the tedious formalities of parliament, he was exercising, according to *Mr. Wesley's political creed*, a right received from heaven. And though Mr. Wesley's creed has not been confirmed by any *General Council*, yet I doubt not it has passed the suffrages of such a sufficient *National Synod* as will secure him from all pains and penalties for teaching it [to] the *children in policy*. The opposition which the celebrated Hampden made to paying taxes, when the above *blessed martyr* thought proper to reign wholly without a parliament, must have been a most audacious piece of conduct.

¹⁰'By divine right.'

Under what a strange spirit of frenzy and infatuation were the parliament who voted in King William and Queen Mary, of *immortal memory*, to fill up the British throne, while James was living, whose sovereign despotic will they would not submit to as law? And how presumptuous an act, that which settled the British crown in the illustrious house of Hanover, to the exclusion of the whole race of *Stuarts*? Certainly [p. 20] the men concerned in the transactions above did not once dream of such a kind of sovereign as Mr. Wesley has found out. Upon this single principle kings in England may reign without parliaments; for if sovereigns have such a power as he supposes, parliaments are needless. The king may take on half, or even all Mr. Wesley's goods, and dispose of them at pleasure. Nor has he the least right to complain, because upon his own principles he owes him unlimited, i.e. passive, obedience.

Mr. Wesley undoubtedly did quite right in sending his *new creed* into this part of the world, because it is excellently calculated for this truly northern meridian. And I can assure him, for his consolation, that we have many bonny lads about us, 'wha think it a vastly gude thing'.¹¹ But notwithstanding this doctrine is accompanied with the sanction of his own name, to make it slip down glibly with his followers, I am of opinion, were it to come to the pinch, he would begin to think some resistance was lawful. Dr. Johnson has for the present converted him to the side of despotism. But his own feelings and interest would make him suspect this doctrine, which he says comes from *above*, in fact came from *beneath*, and convert him again to the side of liberty.

I remember, in reading over some old tales in the reign of Charles the Second, this doctrine rung changes all over the kingdom. It was a ruling topic in the pulpit, and we may charitably suppose the good folks were very devout over it. In short, it was the *bona dea*¹² of the times, and best rewarded and most happy were they, who paid their devotions with the warmest zeal. An altar was erected to *her* in the University of Oxford, and the learned professor's chair was prostituted to support *her worship*. The clouds of despotism gathered, and the genius of Britain fled from the hated, the frightful darkness. Poor Britannia sat weeping at the foot of the altar [over?] the fate of her sons. With indignation she cast her eye on an enormous chain, prepared to keep them in thralldom. On one link was written [p. 21] '*passive obedience*'; on a second, '*All resistance is rebellion*'; on a third, '*Reges regnantes a jure divino*';¹³ on a fourth, '*All who are not sound in this faith are without doubt in a state of condemnation*'.

When King James began effectually to apply this doctrine, those learned gentlemen were quite at their wit's end to explain their meaning so far as to justify the resistance they were resolved to make. For it is to be observed that this doctrine of passive obedience is so strong an *emetic* that it never continues a great while in an *English stomach*. Happily for the above gentlemen, light soon began to dawn at *Torbay*.¹⁴ They beheld with surprise the genius of Britain dispelling the clouds, and under the beams of an auspicious sun, the *glorious William* appeared to help them out of all their difficulties. Every link of the chain burst. The goddess fled to her proper region, and all her rights of worship were ordered to the flames. *Cursed by the man that raises their ashes*.

Mr. Wesley's is indeed a bold stroke, aimed not at a few *branches* that might stop the *career* of some aspiring prince—it is a blow aimed at the *root* of the constitution, which levels it with the ground. He adopts a language which the English laws are unacquainted with, a language utterly inconsistent with all the accounts of the transactions of parliament, time immemorial. We read instances enough of the parliaments granting the king subsidies; of their giving them so much upon every pack of wool or hides; so many twentieths, fifteenths, or tenths upon all moveables. But we never read of kings granting their

¹¹The (mis)spelling is intentional; to mimic a Scottish accent.

¹²'The good goddess.'

¹³'Kings rule by divine right.'

¹⁴The beach where William Prince of Orange landed in Brixham on Nov. 5, 1688.

people's property without their consent. When the grant is made, and the mode of collecting it receives the form of law, the king, as the supreme executive power, levies it upon the subject. But this cannot be done till it receives the full form of law.

It is to be remembered, as a matter of importance on the subject of English liberty, that all money bills [p. 22] originate in the *lower house*. That house will not suffer the peers to move one; and was any lord in the *upper house* to do it, the commons would directly impeach him for breach of privilege. A plain proof they think the people whom they represent make their own grants. The king always applies to the commons to provide for the exigencies of the state. They determine the quota to each department, and they may call the minister whose business it is to take care of the finances to an account for all his disbursements.¹⁵ Does not Mr. Wesley think, then, that the good people of England, and their representatives, *are infinitely obliged to him* for erasing all their privileges, with one dash of his *pen*?

Where is this *absolute sovereign* then, who can grant his people's property without their consent? Not at present in *this nation*, nor I hope ever will. Need a man of Mr. Wesley's sagacity be told that the word sovereign does not necessarily imply a right to exercise uncontrolled power? It is very certain with regard to a king of England it means no such thing. According to the fundamental principles of our constitution, it signifies no more than (in conjunction with certain prerogatives inherent in the crown) *the supreme executive power of the law*. If it will not be thought too bold an expression, I would say the *fundamental principles of our constitution contain the highest authority*. For my reason tells me that *when* both rulers and people swear to some *common agreed principles* as the bounds of power and [p. 23] submission. *All sides* are in fact bound by *them*. A voice may be heard, which with authority says to all parts of the legislative body, '*Hitherto come, but no further*'. This voice was heard, and overruled in the affair of the Devonshire cider tax.

There is a passage in Coke's *Institutes*, the second [vol.] at page 525, concerning Magna Charta, and it is as follows: '*No tallage or aid shall be imposed by us or our heirs in our kingdom, without the will and consent of the archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, knights, burgesses, and other freeholders.*' See Rapin's *History*, at Edward the First, under the Year 1297.

I have referred you, my countrymen, to one of the fundamental laws of the constitution, a law which *all our kings* swear to observe, a law *in perpetuum*. Where then, I ask with astonishment, is Mr. John Wesley's *absolute sovereign*? Excellent doctrine in the mouth of an Englishman! It is greatly to be hoped this bundle of combustible reasoning will soon be transmitted to its proper element. And is this indeed the doctrine with which Mr. Wesley hopes to reconcile the people of America? *Impossible!* There is not a man amongst *them*, nor a friend of the constitution at *home*, but must heartily despise him for the attempt. A *reconciliation was not his design*, for he well knew these principles were not calculated to bring it about. Does he think the Americans are not acquainted with the law above mentioned? Certainly they are. And if so, is it at all to be wondered at they should be uneasy, and complain of an infringement of their rights? Would not the inhabitants of Middlesex think themselves, according to the spirit of the above law, excused from paying taxes if they had *no members in the house*? Would they think the members of all the remaining counties in this kingdom sufficiently authorized to make laws *for them*, and grant *their money*, without the *concurrence of their own*? And is it not then amazing that so many of *them* should avow principles in [p. 24] respect to the Americans which would be deemed arbitrary and illegal at

¹⁵Footnote in original: 'The present minister has been in vain called upon by the deputies of the people to change measures. *But let him hear and tremble*; for in his instance the *vox populi* [voice of the people] is most certainly *vox dei* [voice of God]. Our ministers (who in fact are nothing more than the stewards of the *nation*, and to whose salaries we all contribute our portions) seem to be deaf to the calls of reason, honour, and humanity, and willing to give up every public and private right, provided they may *keep their places*.'

home? For shame! Let us think and act more consistently.

It is time now to proceed to Mr. Wesley's question, 'Did ever a people make their sovereign?' The manner in which this gentleman has stated his question shows that he consider the negative as an axiom, which no man ever yet disputed. But this is a proposition which I do not admit. Mr. Wesley's question carries in the very face of it an affected or real ignorance of history, the plainest matters of fact, and the origin of all civil power. Need he be told that *the Romans did this* before they were enslaved by their *emperors*? That this was done by the *Grecian states*, which were all formed upon the plan of *liberty*. That this was in a peculiar manner the genius of the *Spartan government*, in which there were *two kings* at the same time, and both chosen by the *people*. Need he be referred to instances in his own nation? Has he never heard of the manner of deposing Richard the Second, and adjudging the crown to Henry of Lancaster? Did he never read the solemn form of deposition used by Judge Trussel, when Edward the Second was set aside and his son placed on the throne while the father was living? And was there not a most remarkable instance of it when the British throne was filled with the illustrious William and Mary? Was not that done while James was living? Done with the greatest possible deliberation, by the *grand convention of the states*. That was a *glorious event*, in which every friend of the constitution heartily rejoiced. It was the *resurrection* of all the English privileges, as it were *from the dead*. And to it we owe all the liberties we now enjoy. *May we never lose them!* To that memorable event we owe the *Act of Toleration*, which secures to us and our fellow subjects the free and undisturbed exercise of our religion. And pray what was the above conduct of the nation but giving *those princes* the supreme executive power in these kingdoms; i.e. (let not Mr. Wesley's delicacy [p. 25] be shocked) *making them sovereigns*? Was it not by the suffrages of the representative body of the *people*, in conjunction with the two other estates, that the *present royal family* were called to sit on the throne of Great Britain, to the exclusion of those nearer in blood, because *popishly inclined*? But according to Mr. Wesley's doctrine, all the above steps were not only irregular but illegal, and in consequence every succeeding prince to King James has been an usurper, and these three kingdoms in a state of rebellion to this hour. He is an excellent hand indeed to undertake the defence of *his prince's rights*, when the principles by which he does it, in their natural and direct consequences, prove *him* to have *none at all!* I hope his Majesty has better friends than this gentleman. Amazing that a man of Mr. Wesley's penetration should have been able to find but one *sovereign* made by the people; and that he should be forced to seek this wonderful phenomenon in a little paltry state of Italy! And that his genius should at last so luckily hit upon Masaniello of Naples! Certainly the old proverb was never more remarkably verified: *none so blind as those that will not see.*

If the principles of Algernon Sidney, the great Mr. Locke, the most excellent Bishop Hoadley, and the present honourable Judge Blackstone are examined, they will tell us *all power originated from the people*. And their principles have never yet been refuted, nor *ever will*. I defy Mr. Wesley, with all his *chicanery*, to do it.

Now if all power originated from the people, then by indisputable consequence all sovereigns must have been made by *them*; and that any who have arisen to absolute power must have effected it by means imperceptible to the people, promoted by the secret cabals of *interested and wicked men*, and established at last by force and violence. And it must from the nature of things have been considered as a violation of the first principles of government, and a breach of the trust reposed in them.

Civil government seems to have taken its rise from principles of prudence, convenience, and self-defence. [p. 26] Mankind are sociable creatures, have capacities that fit them for society, and which cannot be exerted to advantage but as they are formed into communities. Upon the increase of their species in the world, they naturally formed little bodies and combination, as inclination, interest, and affection led them. Laws were made for their several communities, and *one* or more person or persons of distinguished abilities and merit were called to preside at the head of their infant states, to whom they committed the supreme executive power of their laws. Those laws doubtless marked the bounds of power in the supreme governor, and the bounds of submission to all the members of the community. This

appears to me to be the most rational account of the rise of civil governments. It is absurd to suppose that the people should so far have divested themselves of the rights of human nature as to have left themselves wholly at the mercy of one ambitious man. The very reasons which induced them to fix upon a form of government would effectually guard them against *tyranny*. Nor does it appear agreeable to the intention of the great and wise Creator that any one man should have the absolute disposal of the lives and fortunes of many millions.

The powers that be I know are said to be of God, and submission to them is enjoined by the *highest authority*. But nothing more seems to be meant by it than that it was agreeable to the will of the deity that there should be order and government in the world; and as he did not think fit to determine of what kind it should be, it is clear that he left his creatures to choose for themselves.

Of course therefore, neither the divine precept nor the civil power can claim any other submission than that which has been agreed upon by the different communities of which men are members. Besides, it is asserted that the supreme magistrate is the minister of God, for good. But surely it can never be thought for the good of society that everyone's life, liberty, and property should lie at the mercy of an individual. If this were indeed the case, we [p. 27] had need pray God to send an angel down from heaven, to undertake the arduous task of chief magistrate, for one clothed in flesh and blood must always make men fearful. And it is worthy of observation that as much is said in the sacred writings against tyranny in magistrates as against rebellion in subjects. So that we may fairly suppose, without the least treason, that one is quite as offensive to the supreme Ruler of the universe as the other. I have been travelling a long way in this political road with Mr. Wesley, and am necessitated to follow him, or rather go with him, a little further; i.e., to his *opinion*. But by the bye, it is a most intolerable dirty way.

He tells us there are a *few men* in this kingdom who are determined enemies to monarchy. And he is so abundantly charitable as to leave it doubtful whether they hate *his present Majesty* for any other reason than that of his office. But he is certain they cordially hate *that*—that they want to overturn the constitution, and erect their idol of a *commonwealth* upon its ruins. To these men he ascribes it that the Americans are up in arms, and that thousands are running mad at *home*, without knowing anything at all of *their main design*. This is the whole of the story. *Ridiculus mus Parturiunt Montes, Nascetur!*¹⁶ It is wonderful indeed that a *few men*, at the Distance of more than 2000 miles, should have been capable of raising a general spirit of discontent in so many colonies. That they should have armed an hundred thousand men on the other side of the Atlantic, and have stirred up many thousands at *home*, even to madness. That they should be using them as their tools, to change the whole system of government, and that not one of their deluded followers, either in America or England, should have been able to penetrate their grand design! *Credet Judeus Apella!*¹⁷ I would by all means advise this wonder-working gentleman to add a few embellishments to his story, and send it as a curious manuscript to the Vatican. It will cut a glorious figure amongst the *numerous legends* already laid up in that *precious treasury*. It [p. 28] will be a most excellent appendix to the stories of St. Dunstan's taking the devil by the nose with his red hot pincers in Glastonbury Abbey, St. Anthony's preaching his heavenly doctrine to the most attentive and intelligent auditory of *fish*, St. Dennis's taking his head under his arm after it had been cut off and carrying it so philosophically three miles to Paris and getting it set on again. But I am afraid, as people have long had their eyes opened, and besides have contracted an incorrigible spirit of infidelity, it is a great deal too marvellous for their belief. Nay, I'll venture to affirm that, remarkable as Mr. Wesley sometimes is for a strong faith, he has not one sufficiently strong to believe this tale himself. His faith here (if he has any) must be built upon a prior act of faith, and that will be like the fabulous account we

¹⁶Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 139; 'The mountains will go into labour, and give birth to a ridiculous mouse.'

¹⁷'Let Apella the Jew believe it, [not I].'

have of the elephant's supporting the world, a tortoise supporting the elephant, and nothing supporting them all together. I was a long while endeavouring to account for this gentleman's knowledge of this deep laid scheme. At last my good genius recollected that, as the author of a certain book called a *Journal*, sometimes he must have received his information of this plot by the same extraordinary means. For I dare venture to affirm there is not one of the party sufficiently prejudiced in favour of *his integrity*¹⁸ to trust him with so important a secret. Mr. Wesley must have a face of brass, to offer to obtrude such a *felo de se*¹⁹ story upon the credulity of the public. For once let him be an *honest man*, come out of the clouds, and tell us plainly who he means. Instead of reconciling matters with the Americans, he turns direct *incendiary*, and endeavours to sow discord and jealousies among brethren *at home*. And notwithstanding all his solemn grimace, he is in fact no friend to the *people on either side of the water*. He must be a base man, to throw out malicious insinuations and aspersions against some of our *greatest men*. Men who have appeared with the highest lustre and dignity in the *British Senate*. Men who have endeared themselves to all the friends of the *constitution*. Men who have rendered their names immortal by standing forth in a corrupt and venal age²⁰ in defence of the common rights of mankind. Men whose enlarged and generous principles are infinitely surer supports of the British constitution than the principles Mr. Wesley has thought proper to advance.

I cannot but think this very *submissive loyal gentleman* has some sinister end in view, in the devotion he is paying to the establishment: He is preparing the [p. 30] way for a good birth in it. It is very well known that some time ago, both in the towns of Wigan and Liverpool, he expatiated largely on the excellency of its *constitution*. This conduct must appear perfectly ridiculous, when it is considered that at that very instant he was keeping up a separation from the Church. But perhaps the good man might be under some qualms of conscience for having lived thirty years in mortal sin, and we are now to look upon his famous *Address* as a *penitential*. St. Au[gu]stin[e] and other great men have written *penitentials*, and why may not this *great saint* do the same? It is to be hoped he'll meet with acceptance. No doubt but he has some expectation of it. Perhaps by a certain prophetic spirit he has foreseen the downfall of the *American constitution*, and fixed his aspiring eye upon the *bishopric of Boston*. That is an object of so great importance that we may easily imagine it to have some weight, even with so mortified a man. It is true, this will be called mere conjecture, but I do not care a farthing for that. It is a child of my own and, like other parents, I have a right to be fond of it. Nor do I think (considering the complexion of the man) that this is a very improbable scheme. It is well known that he has a pretty long reach, and a good deal of

¹⁸Footnote in original: 'Advertisement: The principal arguments of Mr. John Wesley in his *Calm Address to our American Colonies*, are taken verbatim, without acknowledgment, from Dr. Samuel Johnson's pamphlet entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*. The following extracts from a pamphlet entitled *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*, published in 1770, by Mr. John Wesley may suffice to show the inconsistency of that gentleman's character. In page 1 of that treatise he says "I am no politician. Politics lies quite out of my province." And on page 14, "I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America. I doubt whether any man *can defend them* either on the foot of *law, equity or prudence*." How comes Mr. John Wesley, who was then no politician, to commence one now? How comes he now to appear a defender of such measures as he before admitted to be indefensible? See *An Answer to Mr. Wesley's Calm Address* by Caleb Evans, M.A.'

¹⁹'Felon against himself'; the legal term for suicide.

²⁰Footnote in original: 'Had not those noble spirits in each house of parliament exerted themselves in the cause of liberty, we might before this time have sunk from the height of human glory to its opposite extreme. Our highest regards are due to those lords and commoners. Our regards are also justly due to the patriotic members of the Irish parliament, to the livery of London with their present and late chief magistrates, and to the patriotic freeholders of Middlesex.'

the cast of that society of men who, from their first institution, have been remarkable for *intrigues*, and who were always much more noticed for pious frauds than a regard to honour, honesty, or truth.

Mr. Wesley cannot it seems help trembling at the prospect of a civil war—a war that is big with the fate of this once-envied and flourishing Empire; and especially as it is in support of measures which he, as well as many thousands more of his Majesty's most faithful and affectionate subjects, humbly acknowledge they do not clearly discern the *justice* and *propriety* of.

The author of this little piece claims no merit in having advanced anything peculiarly new on this interesting subject—a subject which has employed the pens of much abler hands. Though he professes to have set the affair of an *equal representation* in a [p. 31] light that he does not remember to have seen it. And if that is allowed to be just, his inferences in favour of the Americans will of course be fully conclusive. He would not have entered upon a subject of this nature but that he found Mr. Wesley's *Address* did hurt, in poisoning the minds of many honest well-meaning people; and from a conviction that it is the duty of every man in this alarming crisis to call forth what ability he has to prevent the ruin of his country.

With regard to Mr. Wesley's *notion* of the rights of sovereigns, and the people's having ceded *theirs*, he trusts he has fully demonstrated the futility of his reasoning, and shown his principles in general to be subversive of the *British constitution*. And with regard to his base insinuations of the designs of a part of his Majesty's good subjects, he trusts he has recriminated with justice. He really thinks when a man, under the solemn sanction of religion, endeavours to serve such malevolent purposes, he cannot possibly be held up in too contemptible a light.

With respect to the public, he builds his hopes of a favourable reception solely on the *cause of liberty*, which he has espoused and honestly intended to serve. He desires no greater honour than to approve himself the friend of mankind; and with this, to caution them against too hasty and precipitate a way of signing addresses,²¹ without considering the principles avowed by them. He knows an address from a very great trading town which was signed by people that never read it, nay to which the hands of some were set without their privity. *Those men* [p. 32] will be considered as avowing principles which he is sure they *abhor*, and doubtless there are more instances of the same sort. He wishes none may have cause to repent of their implicit faith. He would recommend no measures but what are consistent with duty and the constitution; namely, humble petitions to the throne of a prince deservedly esteemed for his many private virtues, that he would indulge his natural propensity and put a speedy issue to a most unnatural war. Those who pursue these methods are the truest friends to their king and country, and certainly act the most humane and consistent part.

He flatters himself he has been pleading the cause of the prince and the people. And he is fully persuaded that while *all the regards* due to the *king* upon the principles of the *constitution* are paid he cannot fail of being great and happy; and those who wish him to have more, are the disturbers of his peace and the enemies of his *crown and dignity*.

This is an axiom which the author has laid down, and he wishes it to be engraven in the heart of every sovereign: *If there is any dignity or glory in the possession of power, it must be to exercise it for the protection and happiness of a free and affectionate people.*

²¹Footnote in original [referring to the numerous addresses to the king and parliament criticizing (or in some cases supporting) the American colonists that were soliciting signatures around England]: 'I doubt not many honest men, both of low and high rank, have signed addresses on the present occasion. But prejudice itself must allow that the greater part of those who have signed *them* are persons one way or other dependent upon the court, or connected with those who are—men of narrow and arbitrary principles, or men aiming at preferment. One thing is certain—that the people in general execrate the *present measures*.'

The author dare appeal to the great Searcher of all hearts that he has an unshaken attachment to the British constitution, and the warmest affection to the person and family of George the Third. Nor is there anything he more ardently wishes than that he may long live to sway the British sceptre; that the crown may appear with *peculiar brilliancy* upon his head; that while living he may reign in the hearts of all his subjects, which, under God, will be the best support and surest stability of his throne; and that when, in some very distant period, he (like all other mortals) shall sink in the grave, their affectionate tears may mingle with his royal dust; and that he may shine in the future annals of Britain as a pattern worthy the imitation of a prince of his own [p. 33] race, and be celebrated as the *once honoured and beloved father of a loyal, affectionate, and grateful people*.

[The remainder of the tract (through p. 36) is devoted to reproducing and discussing the charters of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.]

Source: Friend of the People and Their Liberties. A Full and Impartial Examination of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's 'Address to the Americans'; in which that Gentleman's Inconsistencies are remarked; his Assertions proved groundless; and his Principles in general demonstrated to be subversive of the British Constitution. The whole interspersed with Remarks upon American Affairs. Manchester [n.p., 1775].

From Caleb Evans

Bristol
December 16, 1775

Reverend Sir,

As you have at length favoured me with your *public acknowledgement* our controversy is at an end,¹ to triumph over the vanquished would be ungenerous.

It is however necessary for me to observe that your insinuating that I have taken *as much* from Mr. Parker (the author of the *Argument in Defence of the Colonies*²) as you have from Dr. Johnson is an artifice to cover your own plagiarism, too thin not to be seen through by the most superficial. It is not *fact*. And if it were, it is totally besides the purpose. I have not taken a line from that or any other author without acknowledging it. But when you published your *Address*, you gave not even a *hint* of having taken any part of it from Dr. Johnson, or any other writer.

To the last edition of your *Address to the Colonies*, there is an address to Americanus added by one who styles himself 'a native of America'.³ He makes several quotations from my letter to you, and then very quietly observes in a note 'All this is taken from a tract entitled *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right claimed by the Colonies to tax Themselves*.' And yet it happens, not *one sentence* of the quotations he refers to was taken from that writer. When you or your assistants may again aim at *retorting*, keep to TRUTH, or you will only wound yourselves.

But you intimate my *personal* charges against you are foreign to the argument. I am of a different opinion. In all logical treatises there is one topic of argument called *authority*. Your authority sir, with multitudes of your followers, you are too sensible to need to be informed of it, is *great*. My representation to the public of your amazing political *versatility* was calculated to *weaken* that authority. And with all impartial people it has absolutely *destroyed* it. For it now appears that it is not only *possible*, but *probable*, that in a few months you may totally forget that you ever read a tract entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*, and having extracted the chief arguments from it, gave them to the public under the form of a *Calm Address to our American Colonies*, by John Wesley, M. A. And when you have *totally forgotten* this, who knows in what style you may write next?

If you perfectly knew I was the author of 'Americanus', where was your *candour* or *integrity* in making the public believe Americanus's letter was wrote by 'two Anabaptist ministers assisted by a gentleman and a tradesman of the Church of England'?

I will only add, when you have answered the arguments I have already produced, it will be time enough to think of advancing *new* ones. But till you have done this, you will not I believe hear again from

Your humble servant,

Caleb Evans

Source: published transcription; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 23, 1775), p. 3; *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 23, 1775), p. 2 Evans, *Reply*, 20–22.

¹Referring to JW's letter of Dec. 9, 1775, published in *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Dec. 13, 1775), p. 1; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 3; and *Bonner & Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Dec. 16, 1775), p. 3.

²[Thomas Parker], *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves* (London: Brotherton and Sewell, 1774).

³See above, dated Dec. 15, 1775.

'An Old Correspondent' to the *Northampton Mercury*¹

December 18, 1775

Sir,

Seeing the other day a pamphlet containing Mr. Wesley's *Address to the American Colonies*, it brought to my memory what happened in Switzerland in 1528. The magistracy of Berne had invited to a general assembly not only the ecclesiastics of their jurisdiction but also those of the neighbouring states, to discuss the points then controverted. On the day appointed there was at Berne a great concourse of ecclesiastics of all ranks, and of every order, but not one had the courage to enter excepting a physician named Faber. On which William Favel, one of the reformers, said with his usual liveliness, 'Truly gentlemen, the cause of the Romish church must be in a very ill state, seeing she is in the hands of a physician.' May we not, with as much justice, say that Great Britain must be at her last, when her cause is in the hands of a Methodist preacher?

An Old Correspondent

Source: published transcription; *Northampton Mercury* (Dec. 18, 1775), p. 4.

¹Compare this letter to that to the *Kentish Gazette* dated Nov. 17, 1775 above.

From 'Philarchaius'

Halifax
December 19, 1775

Sir,

I have seen your *Calm Address*, and also your late epistle in justification of it. But from neither can I perceive that your principles are at all calculated for the meridian of Great Britain. What were your motives and what your expectations it is not my business to enquire. Had such an address however appeared while the Stuarts filled the throne, you would probably have received *mitred* consolation. But I think too well of the *powers that now are* to imagine they will ever thank you for the *unconstitutional* compliment you have paid them. The instance of Masaniello is to me a striking proof that you are far gone in the *jure divino* distemper, and of course that the Revolution and all that followed upon it you consider as *usurpation*.

Throughout your whole *Address* you have confounded two ideas that are essentially different, I mean 'sovereignty' and 'government'. The former is lodged in the people at large; the latter is only a delegated power, always limited by the constitution and revocable at pleasure. You pay yourself too great a compliment in believing your *Address* has been much attended to. Bad and corrupt as we are, I hope there are but few who will either admire the sense, or adopt the sentiments of it. If you have not poured oil into the flames, you have certainly poured in no water.

You tell us the Americans have not been injured. That they enjoy both their civil and religious liberties, etc., thanks to God and their swords, but none to the parent state! Their *civil liberty* is at this very time attempted to be wrestled from them, and if the attempt should succeed, their religious liberty will not long survive. They are not, you say, 'contending for liberty'. Pray what then are they contending for? Why, the illegal privilege of exemption from parliamentary taxation. Illegal! And why illegal? It is a maxim in our law that *nemo potest quod jure non potest*: what cannot be done legally, ought not to be done at all. Now this being the point in dispute, a few queries on the subject I would willingly hope may throw some light upon it. I would then in the first place seriously ask you, On what the right of Great Britain to tax the colonies is founded? Is it founded on compact? No! The Americans, though they agree to the Navigation Act, whence England has reaped immense profit, they never agreed to submit implicitly to whatever taxes should be imposed upon them. No such compact ever existed.

Is the right of taxation founded upon charters? The original charters granted them the power of legislation and of disposing as they thought proper of their own money. 'But the original charters were revoked.' True, they were so; and can you assign any reason for it beside the caprice and tyranny that then rose into the seat of empire? 'If the American choose to be governed upon the British plan of policy which they have hitherto submitted to, ought they not', think you, 'to enjoy all the rights and privileges of English subjects? Most certainly!' Is the right of taxation founded upon a purchase England made of the country now occupied by the colonists? I never heard of any such purchase, nor is it so much as pretended. Is it founded in conquest? No, nor that neither. Canada indeed was conquered, but none of the twelve colonies now in arms. And though conquest does not always give a good title, I do nevertheless allow that our right to that province is unexceptionable, as no injustice preceded or attended the taking of it. *There* sir, you may see the operation of your principles in all their despotical and papistical glory.

Lastly, is the right of taxation founded upon services done the Americans? No. These do indeed give us a claim upon their gratitude, which they have not been deficient in, but none at all upon their property. Their exclusive trade is surely more than an equivalent for all the services done them. How many millions have been expended in support of Austria, Prussia, and Portugal since the commencement of the present century. Will it therefore follow that Britain has a right to tax those countries? O but you will say those countries are not ours. And pray sir, Is America ours? With what propriety can we be said to be sovereigns of a country which we neither bought nor conquered? The right of granting charters to a

tract of country that never belonged to us is surely a disputable right, and may fairly be denied. Whereas the colonies have a prescriptive right which to me appears more valid than all the charters in the world.

I would only add, as a corollary, did the Americans ever make a formal cession of their country, or surrender of their liberties to England? These few queries and remarks are submitted to your consideration, by

Philarchaius

Source: published transcription; *Leeds Intelligencer* (Dec. 19, 1775), p. 4.

From 'Jack Backstay'

c. December 20, 1775

Sir,

I could not help observing your *feeble* reply in the *Gazetteer* a few days since without an unusual degree of amazement, since perhaps the depravity of human nature can nowhere furnish a more striking and lamentable instance of instability, duplicity, and folly than is to be found in your aforesaid *feeble* reply.² Since you have thought fit to quite the haven of your province (the pulpit) and have *embarked* on the *ocean* of politics, on the questionable and uncertain *bottom* of a *Calm Address*, you must not be surprised (more than any other land-lubber) if you find yourself *becalmed* even when you ought to make the best of your way. And however you may affect *traverse* sailing, by departing from fair argument, depend upon it you must come to the point, as there are enough to *look out* for you in a *direct course*, when neither your Jesuitical shuffling or ministerial cunning can screen you from a fair *broadside*.

Dear Jack, you seem to be upon *high ropes*, but take care of a fall. You publicly tell us that you have changed your political sentiments within these *five years*, nay, *five months*. And now forsooth, John Wesley (erewhile a preacher of that gospel which recommends peace and love) is become a furious advocate for war and bloodshed. But *query*, how are we sure, political sir, but that five years, nay five months hence (should heaven permit your longevity) you may not then exhibit as deplorable an instance of religious, as you now do of constitutional, apostasy? I repeat it, how are we sure? Since you have been careful enough to betray your defection in the first instance, and consequently it behoves us to beware of you in the second, as once one of your crew, satisfy me, as I am fearful the captain who deserted his post and went over to the enemy on the first attack may likewise forsake me in the second, as caprice, cowardice, or worldly interest may incline him.

Captain John, I am to tell you a sinful layman is as capable, or more so, of judging, determining, and discussing any lay subject, whether historical, political, or commercial, as the proudest hireling be of your cloth. I say, inconsistent captain, that truth is of so inestimable a nature that all the knowledge we have, or can have, bears no proportion to it—a circumstance so notorious to all but yourself that (I think) Glanville somewhere tells us that the very devil was once so well convinced of the superiority of truth that, in a dialogue between him and one of the saints, he makes him quote a number of places from Scripture to back his opinion. Who in short appeared better versed in the sacred text than you have proved yourself in any part of the American question, or on the natural indubitable rights of mankind.

Farewell!

Jack Backstay

P.S. The Rev. Mr. Evans appears, on the face of the dispute, to be a gentleman who has a religious regard for his word and honour. And your feeble reply, so far from having the smallest appearance of a refutation from your own prevarications, evidently operates as a confirmation of every thing he has advanced.

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Dec. 26, 1775), p. 2.

²JW's letter dated Dec. 9, 1775, appeared in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Dec. 13, 1775), p. 1.

From 'Antidote' [1]

December 25, 1775

Reverend Sir,

Happening to look into your pamphlet called *Primitive Physic*, one of the first remedies that I cast my eye upon was, 'To one poisoned, *give one or two drams* of distilled verdigris.' Everyone who has the least acquaintance with the powers of medicine will, I believe, be equally startled with myself at reading such a prescription. I could scarce believe my eyesight for some time, nor can at present by any means account for the ignorance and presumption of a man who deals out as an antidote one of the most active poisons in nature in such an enormous dose, and this in such an undetermined quantity as if the exact dose were immaterial.

But not to prejudice the reader by my own opinion, who have no connection with nor much knowledge of any branch of medicine, let us see what Dr. Lewis says concerning verdigris.

Verdigris (says he) is rarely or never given internally. Some recommend it indeed in the dose of *a grain or two*, as an emetic, which operates almost as soon as received into the stomach, and which may therefore be of use where poisonous substances have been taken, to procure their immediate rejection. It appears, however, highly imprudent to have recourse on such occasions to a remedy in itself so dangerous and so virulent; and more especially as a speedy evacuation may be obtained by means of substances that are not only innocent, but at the same time weaken the force of the poison, by diluting and obtunding it—as warm water, milk, oils.¹

Thus you see, sir, Dr. Lewis calls the giving of verdigris, even in the *one hundred and twentieth part* of your dose, highly imprudent. Nay, it is very probable that your dose of two drams would effectually poison 20 or 30 people, or operate very sensibly on every man, woman, and child in one of your largest congregations. Far be it from me to suppose that you had any bad design in publishing this prescription. To the honour of our country, wilful poisoning is but rare, and antidotes would be seldom wanted, were it not that, during every winter, there are many of the common people who are poisoned, as it is called, by eating mussels.²

Your book, sir, which I have before me, is the 16th edition; so that it is probable near twenty thousand have been sold and dispersed amongst people of inferior rank. Give me leave to put a case, which, if it has not already happened, is extremely likely to happen every day. A person is poisoned by eating mussels; get Mr. Wesley's book and see what he recommends; the first remedy for one poisoned is one or two drams of distilled verdigris,³ as it is an antidote, and recommended by *him*, be sure to get enough of it; if, or rather when, the patient dies, his death is laid to the mussels, and under the sanction of your name, verdigris is given again when the same occasion offers.

I leave it to your own judgment, to find out by what method you can recall these *firebrands of death* that you have scattered so plentifully through the land. But I hope you will be speedy and not wait for the interposition of the censors of the College of Physicians, who, as guardians of the public health, have a right to and I doubt not will, if necessary, interfere in a case which calls so loudly for immediate redress.

Antidote

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Dec. 25, 1775), p. 1; *London Chronicle*, 38 (Dec. 23–26, 1775), p. 612.

¹William Lewis, *An Experimental History of the Materia Medica* (London: Baldwin, 1761), 19.

²Orig., here and in next paragraph, 'muscles'.

³Note provided in original: 'Distilled verdigris is full as acrid as the common sort.'

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Chesterfield Street [London]
December 29, 1775

I must continue to plead for my namesake, till you grant my request, by omitting your 'but'.¹ 'He was rigorously just—but wanting in sincerity'; just—but false. You mention it indeed as a supposition only, therefore you may more easily give it up. Such a drawback from his good character will exceedingly grieve more than me—as much as it will please the patriots and republicans.² At such a time as this especially when it is the fashion to 'blacken the tyrant', you and I should not join in the popular cry, but rather go *contra torrentem*.³ Let Macaulay and company call the king's murder 'this great act of national justice'.⁴ Let [Oliver] Cromwell declare, 'He could not be trusted', to palliate his own villainy. Let not your hand be upon him or mine. *Sine te exorem*.⁵ And in a line of answer, *optata loquere*,⁶ to oblige

Your friend and brother,

C. W.

Chesterfield Street [London]
Sunday night [December 31, 1775]

Dear Brother,

I am not such a corrector as Nicholas Norton or Charles Perronet, to put in or out and give you no notice of it. Believing you have obliged me by granting my request, I have drawn a line over the Oliverian reflection,⁷ and accept of your omitting it as the greatest favour and kindness you can do me.

C. W.

[Next appears CW's suggested change – shown by copying the whole paragraph in shorthand, *except* using longhand for the section he wanted JW to omit.]

[[All agree that King Charles was a pattern of piety, sobriety, temperance, and charity. He could not endure any obscene or profane word. He was p[unctual] in his devotion, both public

¹CW is protesting a characterization of Charles I he found while proof-reading an abridgement JW was preparing of Oliver Goldsmith, *The History of England, from the Earliest Times to the Death of George II* (4 vols., 1771). The characterization was one of JW's additions to the text of Goldsmith. See below JW's paragraph and the change CW hoped he would make.

²I.e., those seeking to replace the monarchy with a republic.

³'Against the stream.'

⁴Catharine Macaulay (1731–91), an eighteenth-century English historian, condemned the seventeenth-century British monarchy and justified the execution of Charles I. Her eight-volume *History of England from the Accession of James I to that of the Brunswick Line* (1763–83) was the first republican account of British history.

⁵Terence, *The Brothers*, l. 937; 'Let me persuade you' (Loeb).

⁶Terence, *The Self-Tormentor*, l. 611; '[say] just what I wanted to hear' (Loeb).

⁷Referring again to Oliver Cromwell.

and private. He was rigorously just]] but is supposed to have been sometimes wanting in sincerity. [[He was a good father, a good master, and a good husband—yea a fond one, which was the chief source of his troubles, together with a wrong bias towards arbitrary power, which had been instilled into him from his infancy. But for this he would have been one of the most complete princes that ever sat upon the English throne.]]⁸

[At the bottom of the page is added in CW's hand, but in different ink and at a later date:]

His final answer was 'He could [not?] in conscience say less evil of him'.
'With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.'⁹
Observe ye who survive us!

Endorsement: by CW, 'C. W. for / J. W. ag[ains]t / Charles the Martyr / Dec. 29, 1775'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 4/93.

⁸JW did not make the change CW suggested. The entire paragraph given appears in JW's *Concise History of England* (4 vols., 1771), 3:221.

⁹Matt. 7:2.

From Jane Catherine March

[Bristol]

December 30, 1775

Reverend Sir,

It is very long since I addressed you, my much-respected friend, though my sublimest thoughts have often arose from a secret conversation I held in my mind with you. I find much union of sentiment with you, and my experience often reminds me of the truth of your observations on various occasions. When you were given back to us from the dead,¹ I longed to be one of the first who should congratulate your recovery. But want of a direction, and other things intervening, made me delay till the subject would have been out of season. And ever since I have scarce had anything important enough to write.

We are called at present to endure discouragement, by the withdrawalment of some of our brethren.² It is a cause to me of heaviness. Though it does not tempt me to follow their example, as I am not disposed to listen to the cry of, 'Lo! Christ is here', or 'Lo! Christ is there'.³ Yet I am not always satisfied with the portions of meat I receive. I wish to find my teachers more truly answer the description of the promised pastors of whom it is said, 'They shall feed you with knowledge and understanding'.⁴ I too seldom reap this desirable blessing, and am therefore in great danger of despising prophesyings.

My chief good is gained by communing with my own heart, and by searching out my own spirit. My gracious Lord warns and admonishes me, and points out to me the necessity of simply obeying the word of God as the best and only way to gain or preserve a mind in health and a heart at rest. I wish to have the whole of my conversation in this world by the grace of God; but I feel my own extreme helplessness. I do not always find such a measure of the unction of the Holy One as helps me to steer my course aright. I feel my want of spiritual help, yet can scarce explain myself to you so as to obtain your direction. Only anything you can say on the way and means of close walking with God, and deep piety, must be a word in season. I want the reviving influences of grace, and my soul to be more abundantly raised by divine power.

I live too much without experience, except that which arises from the motions of grace or from the sensibility of my own defects; and am not always conscious of the sensible workings of God's Spirit effecting my farther sanctification as I could wish.

You once described my state to be that of a person on the threshold of Christian perfection. I think since then the Lord brought me a little farther into the good land. But I fear I have crept back to the threshold again!

Since I begun this I have heard the welcome tidings that you design Bristol a visit. Our necessities cry, 'Come and help us!' Till then, I remain, reverend sir, with gratitude and respect,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

J. C. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 331–33.

¹Referring to his illness in June 1775.

²Likely due to the heated debate over JW's *Calm Address*.

³Cf. Matt. 24:23 and Luke 17:21.

⁴Jer. 3:15.