

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1776–80)

Table of Contents (Update: June 20, 2024)

1776 Jan. 01	‘Fly-flap’	1
1776 Jan. 02	‘Civis’	2–3
1776 Jan. 02	‘Friend to Truth’ to the <i>Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser</i>	4
1776 c. Jan. 06	‘C. D.’ to the Editor of <i>Lloyd’s Evening Post</i>	5
1776 c. Jan. 08	‘Antidote’ [2]	6
1776 Jan. 08	‘W. S.’ to the Printer of the <i>Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser</i>	7
1776 Jan. 09	Rev. John Fletcher	8
1776 Jan. 19	‘Another Americanus’ to the Printer of the <i>Gazetteer</i>	9–10
1776 c. Jan. 20	XXX’ to the Printer of the <i>Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser</i>	11–12
1776 Jan. 22	‘Brunswick’ to the Printer of the <i>London Packet</i>	13
1776 Jan. 22	‘A Churchman’ to the <i>London Packet</i>	14
1776 Jan. 22	‘A Despiser of Hypocrites’ to the <i>London Packet</i>	15–16
1776 c. Jan. 23	‘Antidote’ [1]	17
1776 c. Jan. 24	Joshua Armstrong to Evans	18
1776 Jan. 24	Matthew Mayer	19–20
1776 Feb. 06	Dr. Samuel Johnson	21
1776 Feb. 07	Mary Bosanquet	22
1776 Feb. 08	Richard Condy	23
1776 Feb. 09	Ann Bolton	24
1776 c. Feb. 29	‘A Whig’	25–27
1776 Mar. 01	J[oseph] Chambers	28
1776 Mar. 01	John Ryley	29–30
1776 Mar. 04	‘Philo-Veritas’ to ‘A Whig’	31–33
1776 Mar. 05	unnamed correspondent	34
1776 c. Mar. 10	‘Casca’ [William Moore]	35–40
1776 c. Mar. 20	anonymous writer	41–50
1776 c. Apr. 01	unnamed correspondent	51–52
1776 Apr. 02	Elizabeth Ritchie	53–54
1776 May 17	Elizabeth Ritchie	55–56
1776 c. May 25	William Moore	57–59
1776 c. June 05	‘Public Applause’ to the <i>Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser</i>	60–61
1776 July 13	Sarah (Ward) Nind	62
1776 July 24	John Crook (part 1)	63–65
1776 July 24	John Crook (part 2)	66–69
1776 July 24	Dr. William Hawes	70
1776 c. Aug. 01	‘Talus’	71
1776 Aug. 06	Dr. William Hawes	72–74
1776 Aug. 09	Elizabeth Ritchie	75–76
1776 Aug. 23	Charles Boone (good death account)	77
1776 Aug. 26	Hannah Ball	78–79
1776 Sept	Damaris Perronet	80
1776 Sept. 02	Mulso (excise)	81
1776 Sept. 06	Elizabeth Ritchie	82–83
1776 Sept. 08	Selina, Countess of Huntingdon	84
1776 Sept. 24	Hannah Ball	85
1776 Sept. 30	John Undrell	86
1776 Oct. 28	Cornelius Bayley	87–88
1776 Oct. 29	Elizabeth Ritchie	89–90
1776 Nov.	unnamed reviewer of <i>Some Observations on Liberty</i>	91
1776 Nov. 23	Hannah Ball	92–93

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1776–80)

Table of Contents (Update: June 20, 2024)

1776 Nov. 30	Thomas Rutherford	94–95
1776 c. Dec.	unidentified correspondent (good death account)	96
1776 Dec. 06	Cornelius Bayley	97–98
1776 Dec. 17	Joseph Benson	99–100
1776 by Dec. 30	Rev. James Murray	100–14
1777 c. Jan. 1	Dr. William Hawes	115
1777 Jan. 13	Thomas Wride	116
1777 Feb. 03	Thomas Wride	117
1777 Feb. 06	Elizabeth Ritchie	118–19
1777 Feb. 18	Elizabeth Ritchie	120–21
1777 Mar. 04	Mary Bishop	122–23
1777 c. Mar. 11	‘Erasmus’ to the Printer of the <i>London Evening Post</i>	124
1777 Mar. 14	Elizabeth Ritchie	125–26
1777 c. Apr. 07	‘An Enemy to Hypocrisy’ to the Printer of <i>St. James’s Chronicle</i>	127
1777 Apr. 07	W. Jordan	128–29
1777 c. Apr. 10	‘Sting’ to the Editor of the <i>Morning Post</i>	130–31
1777 Apr. 11	A. B. (good death account)	132
1777 Apr. 14	W. Jordan	133
1777 Apr. 15	W. Jordan	134–35
1777 Apr. 24	Elizabeth Ritchie	136
1777 Apr. 28	Rev. Richard Moss	137
1777 May 10	Thomas Wride	138–40
1777 c. May 20	Capel Lofft	141–68
1777 May 24	Thomas Wride	169–70
1777 c. June	unidentified correspondent (good death account)	171
1777 June 24	Elizabeth Ritchie	172
1777 June 29	Sarah (Ward) Nind	173
1777 June 30	Elizabeth Mary Morgan	174
1777 June 31	[Darcy (Brisbane) Maxwell]	175
1777 July 02	Joseph Whittingham Salmon	176
1777 July 03	Richard Condry	177–78
1777 July 10	Ann Chapman	179
1777 July 10	William Perronet	180
1777 July 12	Miss E. A.	181
1777 Aug.	Isaac Billings, etc.	182–83
1777 Aug. 01	Elizabeth Ritchie	184–85
1777 c. Aug. 17	‘An Enquirer’ to the <i>London Evening Post</i>	186
1777 Sept. 01	Elizabeth Ritchie	187–88
1777 c. Sept. 10	John Hough	189–199
1777 Sept. 17	Thomas Rankin	200
1777 Oct. 07	Joseph Benson	201–02
1777 Oct. 10	Elizabeth Ritchie	203–04
1777 Oct. 16	Richard Sause	205
1777 Oct. 28	Rev. John Abraham	206
1777 Dec. 20	‘Mentor’	207
1777 Dec. 31	‘Sydney’	208
[c. 1778]	Catherine Corlett	209–10
[c. 1778]	John Francis Valton	211

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1776–80)

Table of Contents (Update: June 20, 2024)

1778 c. Jan. 01	Rev. James Murray	212–19
1778 c. Jan. 05	‘Poplicola’	220
1778 Jan. 08	Thomas Hastings to ‘Poplicola’	221
1778 c. Jan. 10	‘Hipponactes’ to ‘Poplicola’	222–23
1778 c. Jan. 15	‘Poplicola’ to Tho. Hastings	224–25
1778 Jan. 17	Mrs. Martha Ward	226
1778 c. Jan. 30	‘Poplicola’ to ‘Hipponactes’	227–28
1778 Feb. 07	[James Rogers?] (good death account)	229
1778 Feb. 16	Gaton Priest	230
1778 Feb. 17	Mary Bosanquet	231–32
1778 Mar. 18	Ambrose Foley	233
1778 Mar. 21	Thomas Wride	234–35
1778 Apr. 16	John Baxter	236
1778 May 09	Thomas Wride	237–38
1778 May 17	John Fletcher	230–40
1778 May 19	Ann Bolton	241
1778 May 28	John Helton	242–66
1778 June 01	John Haime	267
1778 June 24	Thomas Rankin	268–69
1778 June 28	Peter Jaco (good death account)	270
1778 July 04	John Francis Valton	271
1778 July 06	Damaris Perronet	272
1778 July 22	Rev. Augustus Toplady	273–74
1778 July 29	Rev. Peter Lièvre	275
1778 Aug. 29	Mrs. Martha Ward	276
1778 Sept. 24	Dorothea (Garret) King	277
1778 Sept. 25	Elizabeth Ritchie	278–79
1778 Sept. 26	Elizabeth Mary Morgan	280
1778 Sept. 30	Samuel Wells	281–82
1778 Oct. 04	Peter Jaco (autobiography)	283–84
1778 Oct. 09	‘Amicus’	285
1778 Oct. 26	Rev. James Creighton	286
1778 Oct. 28	[Darcy (Brisbane) Maxwell]	287
1778 Oct. 30	John Atlay (autobiography)	288–89
1778 Oct. 30	Ann Bolton	290
1778 c. Nov.	John Pawson (autobiography)	291–97
1778 Nov. 01	Dorothy (Furly) Downes	298
1778 Nov. 16	Thomas Rankin (autobiography)	299–306
1778 Nov. 17	Miss E. A.	307
1778 Nov. 25	Ann Bolton	308
1778 Nov. 27	Sarah Crosby	309
1778 Dec.	Rev. John Fletcher	310
1778 Dec. 05	Elizabeth Ritchie	311–12
1778 Dec. 19	John Francis Valton	313
1778 Dec. 28	Joseph Pilmore (good death account)	314
1779 c. Jan.	Thomas Olivers (autobiography).	315–27
1779 Jan. 10	Richard Williams	328
1779 Jan. 13	Elizabeth Mary Morgan	329
1779 Jan. 15	William Hey, Esq.	330

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1776–80)

Table of Contents (Update: June 20, 2024)

1779 Jan. 15	Elizabeth Ritchie	331
1779 Jan. 30	Elizabeth Ritchie	332–33
1779 Feb. 02	Charles Delamotte	334
1779 Feb. 04	‘Orthodox’	335
1779 Feb. 04	John Francis Valton	336
1779 Feb. 05	Hannah Frances Owen	337–38
1779 Feb. 09	‘Justice’ to the Printer of the <i>Morning Chronicle</i>	339–40
1779 Feb. 10	James Ireland (good death account).	341–43
1779 Feb. 13	Rev. Peter Lièvre	344
1779 Feb. 20	Rev. John Kennedy	345–46
1779 Mar. 01	Alexander M’Nab (autobiography)	347–51
1779 Mar. 06	Rev. J. B.	352
1779 Mar. 20	Mr. A. B.	353
1779 Mar. 26	John Furz	354
1779 Apr. 02	Rev. Charles Wesley	355
1779 Apr. 03	Thomas Payne	356
1779 Apr. 20	Benjamin Rhodes (autobiography)	357–60
1779 Apr. 23	Rev. Charles Wesley	361–62
1779 Apr. 27	John Francis Valton	363
1779 May 03	Dr. Samuel Johnson	364
[1779] May 04	Rev. Charles Wesley	365
1779 May 20	John Francis Valton (good death account)	366–68
1779 June 01	John Oliver (autobiography)	369–75
1779 June 10	John Baxter	376
1779 June 16	Mrs. Martha Ward	377
1779 June 16	Rev. Charles Wesley	378–79
1779 June 20	Ann Bolton (good death account)	380
1779 June 24	Hester Ann Roe	381
1779 June 30	Elizabeth Ritchie	382–83
1779 July 01	Thomas Tennant (autobiography)	384–86
1779 July 06	William Mawer	387
1779 July 07	Robert Roberts (autobiography)	388–92
1779 July 22	Andrew Blair	393
1779 July 27	Thomas Payne	394
1779 July 30	Ann Bolton	395
1779 July 30	Dr. James Hamilton	396
1779 Aug. 01	Richard Freeman	397–98
1779 Aug. 01	John Murlin (autobiography)	399–401
1779 Aug. 06	Sarah James	402
1779 Aug. 07	Hester Ann Roe	403
1779 Aug. 18	William Hunter (autobiography)	404–08
1779 Sept.	John Allen (autobiography)	409–12
1779 Sept. 15	Rev. Brian Bury Collins	413
1779 Oct. 08	‘Veritas’ (i.e., Richard Hill)	414
1779 Oct. 15	Hester Ann Roe	415
1779 Oct. 16	Francis Okeley	416–17
1779 Oct. 21	‘Maria’	418
1779 Oct. 23	Thomas Wride	419–20
1779 Oct. 24	Thomas Webb’s proposal for a Methodist militia	421–22
1779 Oct. 27	John Bredin	423

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1776–80)

Table of Contents (Update: June 20, 2024)

1779 Oct. 28	Samuel Wells	424
177[9] Oct. 29	[Darcy (Brisbane) Maxwell]	425
1779 Oct. 30	Thomas Lee (autobiography)	426–31
1779 Nov. 01	Thomas Taylor (autobiography)	432–49
1779 Nov. 04	Mr. J. G.	450–51
1779 Nov. 09	Henry Moore	452
1779 Nov. 10	Charles Jenkinson	453
1779 Nov. 12	Thomas Hanby (autobiography)	454–60
1779 Nov. 28	Rev. Charles Wesley	461–63
1779 Nov. 29	Richard Hill	464–67
1779 c. Dec.	Alexander Mather (autobiography)	468–79
1779 Dec. 01	Rev. Charles Wesley	480–82
1779 Dec. 05	Sarah (Ward) Nind	483
1779 Dec. 06	Rev. Charles Wesley	484–87
1779 Dec. 11	Hester Ann Roe	488
1779 Dec. 15	Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke	489
1779 Dec. 18	Thomas Austen	490–96
1779 Dec. 21	Elizabeth Ritchie	497–98
1779 c. Dec. 30	Thomas Hanby	499
1780 c. Jan.	unidentified correspondent (good death account)	500–04
1780 c. Jan.	John Haime (autobiography)	505–21
1780 Jan. 04	Elizabeth Ritchie	522–23
1780 Jan. 05	Alexander Mather (autobiography supplement)	524–26
1780 c. Feb.	Thomas Mitchell (autobiography)	527–32
1780 c. Feb. 01	Joseph Berington	533
1780 Feb. 26	unidentified correspondent (good death account)	534–35
1780 Feb. 28	Arthur O'Leary	536–42
1780 c. Mar. 10	Arthur O'Leary	543–59
1780 Mar. 11	Thomas Hanson (autobiography)	560–63
1780 Apr. 22	Rev. Samuel Badcock	564
1780 May 12	Francis Asbury	565
1780 May 20	Christopher Hopper (autobiography)	566–82
1780 May 20	Elizabeth Ritchie	583–85
1780 May 29	Cornelius Bayley	586
1780 June 04–05	Rev. Charles Wesley	587–89
1780 c. June 30	John Whittingham	590–91
1780 July	John Walsh	592
1880 July	Rev. Charles Wesley	593
1780 July 04	Elizabeth Ritchie	594–95
1780 July 06	'Anti-Enthusiast' to the Printer of the <i>Reading Mercury</i>	596
1780 c. Aug.	Barnabas Brough (good death account)	597–601
[1780 c. Aug.]	Bishop Beilby Porteus	602–03
1780 c. Aug. 10	Rev. Charles Wesley	604
1780 Aug. 31	John Mason (autobiography)	605–07
1780 c. Sept.	Richard Whatcoat (autobiography)	608–10
1780 Sept. 03	Francis Asbury	611–12
1780 Sept. 25	John Henderson	613
1780 c. Oct.	William Green (autobiography)	614–19
1780 Nov. 11	Elizabeth Ritchie	620–21

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1776–80)

Table of Contents **(Update: June 20, 2024)**

1780 Nov. 20	William Black	622
1780 Dec. 08	Thomas Wride	623–25

From 'Fly-flap'

January 1, 1776

To the Reverend Mr. Wesley,

Instead of making such an apology as the public had a right to expect, from the nature and extreme danger of the blunder contained in your *Primitive Physic* relative to taking so destructive a quantity of distilled verdigris in the case of poison, I cannot help considering your answer as a most crafty piece of evasion and only worthy of an unfeeling quack, regardless of and sporting with the health and lives of his fellow creatures.

In the true style of such a person, you begin your answer by mentioning what you call your *Primitive Physic*'s having passed through between twenty and thirty editions. Had you not been lost to shame, as well as humanity, on this occasion, it must have occurred to you that this circumstance must be an exaggeration of your fault, as a book, which has been greedily bought by the ignorant in the nature and principles of medicine for whom it is declaredly intended, ought to have been corrected with the utmost care. But it seems as if you designed to balance the number of its editions in exultation, against the most evident and most dreadful consequences.

The weak attempt to throw blame upon the printer is as uncandid as it appears improbable. The words 'drams' and 'grains', are so unlike that it is almost impossible to mistake the one for the other. At least, it argues an unpardonable carelessness to have suffered so dangerous an error to have appeared not only in one but, as yourself owns, perhaps in more, which probably means in most of the editions. However, it is a debt required of you by the public, to point out *that* edition of your work which may be used *without* the hazard of losing their lives, by following yours or your printer's prescriptions.

Yours, etc.,

Fly-Flap

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 4, 1776), p. 2.

From 'Civis'

Soho [London]
January 2, 1776

To the Reverend Mr. Wesley,

When an honest man is convinced of his error, he immediately repairs it by an ingenuous confession. But if it has been attended with consequences dangerous to society, he will do more; he will earnestly endeavour by all possible means to amend the past, or at least to prevent the like consequences in the future; and the integrity of his heart will plead strongly in his favour. Had you, reverend sir, acted thus discreetly in a recent instance, you would have had a claim to the indulgence of the public. But the despicable apology you have had the effrontery to offer in print renders you totally inexcusable in the mind of every unprejudiced person.

A writer in this paper of the 25th of last month has detected an error of the most pernicious tendency in your *Primitive Physic*. You begin your apology by telling us that between twenty and thirty editions have been published in England and Ireland. What has Ireland to do with this matter, unless it be to make us conclude that your work has done havoc in other countries besides this? Those *numerous* editions of which you boast ought to have been so many motives to care and circumspection. Is it not the constant practice of every writer (the most slovenly excepted) to revise each sheet before it is committed to the press? Was it not a duty highly incumbent upon you sir, in return for the very generous encouragement you have met with from the public, to examine every page with a watchful eye, and to correct with the most scrupulous caution any error therein before it was printed? Or, when you had not done so, one would think any regard for the safety of your fellow-creatures would have induced you to take a review of the pamphlet, when finished, in order to discover whether any material error had crept in, and in such case to print a fresh leaf, or an *erratum* at least with every copy. But was your thirst of gain too ardent to suffer a moment's delay? Or did more important avocations (political ones perhaps) render you totally forgetful of your duty in this particular?

With an air of conscious dignity you say, 'The gentleman might have taken notice of this in a more obliging manner.' Undoubtedly, an uncommon degree of respect is due to the *reverend* Mr. Wesley, even when publishing a book containing a *prescription of poison* by way of *antidote*! I truly declare that I am entirely a stranger to the writer who has detected that egregious blunder. In my humble opinion, he has delivered his sentiments like a man of sense and a gentleman; and what is more, like a man who has a due concern for the welfare of society—in which point you, reverend sir, appear miserably defective!

'Could he possibly have been ignorant (had he not been willingly so), that this is a *mere* blunder of the printer?' Nothing like a good assurance; *hic murus aheneus esto*.¹ But how comes it, worthy sir, that *you* could possibly have been ignorant of this so long? The printer's blunder cannot save you credit, for I believe every impartial reader will agree with me that had not the writer, who so unfortunately galls you, detected this fatal prescription, it would have remained undiscovered by *you*.

But supposing, as you say, that person to have been *willingly* ignorant of the printer's blunder, could your numerous readers have been aware of it, especially the lower, uninformed classes of people, who have purchased your book? I will appeal to your own congregations. I will venture to say there is not one person in fifty who would not place an unlimited confidence in a recipe that has the sanction of your name. And do you weakly imagine that your caution, inserted in a few newspapers of a day, will be sufficient to counteract the poisonous prescription in your books dispersed over the three kingdoms? How will you answer it to your own conscience? How will you answer it to your country?

I have the 16th edition of your book now before me (printed in London) in which I observe a postscript dated indeed so long ago as 1755, but which you have thought proper to subjoin to the preface in this edition. Your postscript begins thus: 'It was a great surprise to the editor of the following collection that there was so swift and large a demand for it. This encouraged him *carefully to revise the*

¹ Horace, *Epistles*, I.i.60; 'let this be your brazen wall of defense'.

whole, with several alterations, which it is hoped may make it of greater use to those who love common sense and common honesty.’²

Now sir, who would not have reason to conclude from hence that this *last edition* had undergone the same *careful revisal* as any former one? Else to what purpose, I ask, is that paragraph made to strike the reader’s eye in the name of *common sense* and *common honesty*!

I am persuaded you cannot answer these plain truths to the satisfaction of the public, and in charity I will believe not to your own. You preach repentance to others; be penitent yourself. Make, if possible, amends for the mischief your book has occasioned, by using all the means in your power to prevent the like mischief in future. Need I point out to you these means?

You will immediately advertise an *erratum*, not once, but repeatedly from time to time, in the several London papers and in all the country papers throughout the kingdom, as well as in those of Scotland and Ireland. You will give particular charge to your deacons and other superintendents of every one of your congregations to make known this caution to *all* your people. You will suppress the sale of your pamphlet in its present state, and without further delay apply yourself to a careful, diligent revisal of the whole. Believe me, there is more than *one* blunder to be found in it. But future animadversion, I hope, will be precluded.

I now take my leave of you, reverend sir, with a word of advice. If ever hereafter you should give occasion to be set right in any matter that concerns the public, assume less importance. Have a more humble opinion of yourself, and less indifference when the life of your neighbour is in danger.

Civis

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 4, 1776), pp. 1–2.

²See *Works*, 32:119.

‘A Friend to Truth’ to the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*

January 2, 1776

*Pro bono publico*¹

One *drachm* of ‘*distilled verdigris*’, according to an experienced apothecary, contains *sixty* grains. And according to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley’s letter or card in the *Gazetteer* of the first instant, ‘one or more’ editions of his pamphlet on that subject, through the ‘blunder of his printer’, have been published containing a confession of the *fatal blunder*! This the reverend gentleman, with his *usual levity*, treats so lightly as only to thank his corrector, or the gentleman that took notice of it, without humanely or candidly expressing any *sorrow* for this sad *blunder*, or marking how many *more* than *one* edition contains this fatal mistake. But was it not the blunder or fault of the editor or publisher, as well as of the printer, who should surely have revised and corrected the press, and not let so fatal a blunder or mistake go forth to the public?

How many thousands may have fallen by it is not easily estimated. But [it] is hoped this, with other *fatal* blunders and mistakes in politics, will at last teach this reverend Methodist gentleman, scholar, Christian, physician, and politician, to be more serious, and remember in his next *Calm Address*² the adage of ‘*ne sutor ultra crepidam*’,³ that

One science only will one genius fit,
So vast is human knowledge, so narrow human wit.⁴

He will therefore for the future *to his pulpit and text*, as the cobbler should to his stall and last,⁵ lest by his pamphlets, sermons, and prescriptions he brings his other foot and ‘grey hair, with sorrow to the grave’.⁶

A Friend to Truth

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 13, 1776), p. 2.

¹‘For the public good.’

²Referring to JW’s *Calm Address to Our American Colonies* (1775).

³Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, xxxv.81; ‘shoemaker, stick to your shoes’.

⁴Alexander Pope, ‘Essay on Criticism’, ll. 60–61.

⁵The form used in making shoes.

⁶Gen. 42:38.

‘C. D.’ to the Editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post*

c. January 6, 1776

Sir,

I do not find that anything has given more offence to the American partisans than Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address*. It is wrote in a plain, concise manner, and at the same time the reasoning is close. And they are not able to produce anything of the same bulk that can be called an answer to it. They are obliged therefore to attack the man, not his arguments, which has no effect on those who have read his little pamphlet. It must be obvious now to everyone that the Americans have carried their rebellion beyond all the bounds of resistance, and therefore it may be supposed by some that they cannot think we will forgive them. From one step to another, they are at length arrived at that crisis which makes it necessary for the nation to rouse, and not to slumber over the idle tales related by the friends and advocates for America. It is true they have, for some time, so blinded many people that they could not foresee that this affair would come to a trial of skill—that is, which shall be masters. And now that is plainly seen to be unavoidable, they extol the power of the American colonies, and trumpet forth their hostilities, to frighten us from attempting to cope with such adversaries. Forgetting that they cannot make use of stronger arguments to incite us to chastise them. As yet we have had no force there, the whole not amounting to a number sufficient to garrison Lisle or Tournay, in Flanders, in time of war. Our forts in the state of Carlisle, between friends, [are] not in that state of defence, as barriers between foreign powers. Therefore it is less wonderful that they should be able to overrun a neighbouring province than that they should attempt it, for it must appear to all Europe as a defiance.

While they stood on the defensive, they had a plea. And we might suppose they acted with some degree of sincerity in the representations of their grievances. But now they have justified what has been often asserted, that their design has always been to be independent. This scheme of theirs has long been foreseen to have been hatching. It is therefore the time now to draw the line, and give them an epoch. The rising of the people seldom or ever produces liberty to themselves. But particularly in this case it cannot produce anything equal to what they enjoyed, or may yet enjoy, if they return to their duty as good subjects. That great numbers will do so, if we have an army of force there in the spring, is most certain. And America is to be brought back to her duty without the effusion of blood that their friends prophesy will be spilled in the contest. The more numerous the army, the sooner it will be accomplished and with less fighting.

I have observed, sir, people are fond of propagating accounts of the hardships the officers and soldiers have undergone at Boston for want of fresh provision. Such hardships are certainly disagreeable to suffer. Yet I have heard officers relate, amongst other circumstances of their warfare, with a kind of exulting over younger men, how they had the last war subsisted in the woods of America on raw salt pork for three weeks, not venturing to kindle a fire lest it might have discovered them to the Indians.

Mr. Wesley has certainly an opportunity of knowing how much the multitude, both at home and in America, have been imposed on by the artful management of designing men; and has acted a very good part, by cautioning people against them. He has been accused by some for having given, as his own, the arguments of another writer. It is very probably their thoughts were the same on the subject, but he has reduced them to the level of the capacities of those who have not an opportunity of seeing a larger pamphlet, which cannot be so easily purchased or understood by them. I hope, therefore, for the good of his country in particular, and mankind in general, he will give them from time to time salutary warnings, and point out to them where the snakes lie hid in the grass.

I am, sir, yours,

C. D.

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Jan. 8–10, 1776), p. 4.

From 'Antidote' [#2]¹

c. January 8, 1776

To the Reverend Mr. John Wesley,

Being possessed of the *eighth* edition of your *Primitive Physic*, printed in 1759, I looked for your famous poisonous recipe, and there it stands, sure enough, though the *title page* declares that this edition is *corrected*, and the *postscript* that you have been encouraged carefully to *revise* it. Notwithstanding, therefore, your *correctness* and *care*, I am afraid that the recipe, instead of having escaped in *one or more editions*, as you artfully insinuate, stands unmolested in more than twenty editions. This you are better convinced of than disposed to acknowledge.

Antidote

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 10, 1776), p. 2.

¹In a letter on January 25, the original 'Antidote' indicated that this letter was not from him.

‘W. S.’ to the Printer of the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*

Bristol
January 8, 1776

The Rev. John Wesley is charged home by the Rev. Caleb Evans with a double falsehood published to the world in his preface to the second edition of his *Calm Address to the Americans*. The Rev. Dr. [Josiah] Tucker is charged home by another person with prevarication and misrepresentation. When *such* characters are publicly assaulted, we expect, for the honour of the religion they profess, that they should defend themselves. But if they do not attempt it in as public a manner as they are accused, I shall think these reverend gentleman have as little of what is sacred about them as the *most sacred* Charles I had when the nation could not believe a word he said. I have every post this month been expecting Mr. Wesley's reply, and cannot but wish he would attempt his justification very shortly (as the truth needs no study), or else publicly to acknowledge his fault.

W. S.

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 20, 1776), p. 2.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
January 9, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received last night the favour of yours from Bristol.¹ My grand desire is to be just what the Lord would have me be. I could, if you wanted a travelling assistant, accompany you, as my little strength would admit, in some of your excursions. But your recommending me to the societies as one who might succeed you (should the Lord call you hence before me) is a step to which I could by no means consent; it would make me take my horse and gallop away. Besides, such a step would at this juncture be (I think) peculiarly improper, and would cast upon my vindication of your *Minutes* and *Address*² such an odium as the Calvinists have endeavoured to cast upon your *Address*. It would make people suspect that what I have done for truth and conscience sake, I have done it with a view of being what Mr. [Augustus] Toplady calls the 'Bishop of Moorfields'.³ We ought to give as little hold to the evil surmisings and rash judgments of our opponents as may be. If, nevertheless, providence throws in your way a clergyman willing to assist us, it would be well to fall in with that circumstance.

I sent to you in London by the last post a manuscript entitled 'A Second Check to Civil Antinomianism; being an extract from the Homily against Rebellion',⁴ which I think might be spread at this time to shame Mr. [James] Roquet and to calm the people's minds. Whether it is worth publishing you will see—I suppose it will make a three [page?] tract.

What has made me glut our friends with my books is not any love to such publications, but a desire to make an end of the controversy. But it is probable that my design has miscarried and that I have disgusted rather than convinced the people. I agree with you, sir, that now is the time to pray—both for ourselves and for our king; for the Church of England and that part of it which is called the Methodists. I cast my mite of supplication into the general treasure. The Lord guide, support, and strengthen you more and more, unto the end! I am reverend and dear sir,

Your affectionate son and servant in the gospel,

J. Fletcher

Address: 'Rev. Mr. J. Wesley / Foundery / London'.⁵

Postmarks: 'Shifnal' and 'Bristol'.

Annotation: by JW; 'Mr Fl. Jan. 9. 1776 / a[nswere]d Jan. 21 1776'.⁶

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/103; MARC, MA 1977/461 (copy).⁷

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Fletcher, *Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Last Minutes* (Bristol: Pine, 1771); and *Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's "Calm Address to our American Colonies"* (London: Hawes, 1776).

³Augustus Toplady, *The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted* (London: Vallance and Simmons, 1775), 34.

⁴No evidence of a separate tract has been located; but there is a brief extract from the Homily on Rebellion in John Fletcher, *American Patriotism farther confronted with Reason, Scripture, and the Constitution* (Shrewsbury: J. Eddowes, and sold at New Chapel, 1776), 12–13.

⁵Originally addressed to 'Horsefair / Bristol' which is struck out and London address added.

⁶JW's reply is not known to survive.

⁷A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 335–36.

‘Another Americanus’ to the Printer of the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*

January 19, 1776

To Mr [Thomas] Olivers

‘What cracker is this same, that deafs our ears
With this abundance of superfluous stuff?’ Shakespeare¹

Sir,

With much ado I have read your *Full Defence* of Mr. Wesley.² and surely (though by no *panic* terror) I am struck with amazement at your frontless impudence. Well fare Olivers, for a punctual vindication! Yet I am persuaded your *Full Defence*, or rather *futile* and *contemptible defence*, so far exceeds all the common lengths of credulity that its readers (who know your meaning, and apprehend how little hope there could be of *you*) will imagine that its invention must not only have put your exquisite fancy to the stretch, but even fraud itself to the blush. But nobody, I trust, will be misled by it. For I know many who have read it have immediately stamped on it the marks of *reprobation*.

Nevertheless sir (for I would by no means decry its merit), in some respects it is *full enough*. *Full enough* of audacity and assurance. *Full enough* of petty glosses and conceits, for such are those on the political character of our Lord and his apostle. It is *full enough* too of the boldness of unwarrantable commenting, yet withal so weak and shallow, and so like the quibbles of your *sophistical* priest, that we may safely conclude whose hand foisted it in. But these new-fangled notions, with all that remains of your wild goose chase, I leave to the gentleman whose business (should he think it worth his while) it is more particularly to answer.

Therefore sir, as a dependent, a follower, and a profound admirer of Mr. Wesley, I perceive you are not inclined to report anything to his dishonour. But to evade the force of conviction against him, gravely prescribe what qualities should be expected in so *faultless* a person. Alas, poor man! Then I find he has reached indeed his *ne plus ultra*;³ all his most eminent talents and merit, and that superiority which once so conspicuously distinguished him among his fellow-mortals, lie entombed in Oliver's *Full Defence*.

Your infinite deal of *nothing*—loquacity, I mean, sir—has brought disgrace upon him, has confessed the hand by which he was overcome. But so it is when excessive and vicious self-esteem, ignorance, obscurity, and confusion of tongue, attempt to vindicate the graceless shame of an impenitent offender.

Go, therefore; and when you write again,

... Get thee glass eyes,
And like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not.⁴

Thus much to you, sir. The remaining part of this letter will more immediately appertain to Mr. Wesley.

¹Cf. Shakespeare, *King John*, Act. 2, Scene 1 (original ends with ‘breath’ instead of ‘stuff’).

²Thomas Olivers, *A Full Defense of the Rev. John Wesley, in answer to the several personal reflections cast on that gentleman by the Rev. Caleb Evans in his observations on Mr. Wesley's late reply prefixed to his Calm Address* (London: s.n., 1776).

³‘No more better’; i.e., his ultimate.

⁴Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Act. 4, Scene 6.

In the first edition of the *Calm Address*, pages 20–21, I read the following violent, merciless, wicked, and unconstitutional sentence: ‘Every sovereign under heaven has a *right* to tax his subjects; that is, to grant their property, with or *without their consent*.’

Perhaps Mr. Wesley knew not, when he was writing this ungracious sentence, that he was prophesying the death and burial of a *Turkish tyranny* in England, as well as in America. For I do not know a more unlucky and inauspicious foreshowing of the like fatal awe that once hung so ominously over Charles the First. But should the pulpits resound again, as they did in his reign, with no other doctrine than that which impiously gives all property to the king, and passive obedience to the subject, what is left for the people to do but boldly to lift their hands and expose their lives to unestablish that *prelatical* government which, without Scripture, Mr. Wesley and his coadjutor,⁵ would usurp over us?

Preach up therefore, sirs, as much and as long as you dare, that the liberty of the subject concerns the king and the subsistence of his own regal power in the first place, and before the consideration of any right belonging to the subject. Let it, I say, go forward, and be preached and pleaded without control or check, that the subject has no property of his own goods, but that all is the king’s right. Only allowing us at present to believe that so far Turkish vassals enjoy as much liberty under Mahomet, and the Grand Signior. The time, I am persuaded, is not far distant when we shall not only expect, nor expect in vain, but possess something more, that must distinguish *free* government from *slavish*.

Another Americanus

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 23, 1776), p. 2.

⁵Footnote in original, ‘Mr. Olivers.’

'XXX' to the Printer of the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*

c. January 20, 1776

I find that Mr. Wesley is too proud, too self-sufficient, and too much wrapped up in his present supposed state of self-importance to vouchsafe either Mr. Caleb Evans, or any other correspondent, any thing in the shape of an answer.

I cannot help thinking that he hath not yet pleaded the true and genuine apology for his blundering prescription of distilled verdigris. If he had spoke out, he would have owned, 'that not being an adept in *weights and measures*, he really mistook a *dram* for a *grain*'.

Every person who has only passed the threshold of arithmetic knows the difference between averdupoize and troy weights. And everybody knows that medicines are weighed by troy weights. But I have often thought that many arithmetical books are herein very faulty; that in hasty arrangement of such articles as are weighed by troy weight *in general*, you find *medicines*, without the least hint, till two or three pages forward, that *apothecary's troy* is a particular specific kind of troy weight, different in the intermediate divisions from troy weight *in genere*. Thus it often happens that people who (according to a *favourite* misapplication of a text in Scripture) generally 'run as they read',¹ and fling books aside as soon as they fancy themselves possessed of what they were *prepossessed* in favour of *before*, are perpetually falling into great errors. Mr. Wesley's whole progress in life stands as a proof that he is one of that species of readers. In that mode he has read the Scriptures, and in that mode (it is probable) doth he read every book, from the Pentateuch of Moses down to [Edmund] Wingate's *Arithmetic*.

I have often met with many persons (who either never did know, or have forgot what they once knew) who have insisted in conversation that apothecary's weights were *exactly* the same with common troy weights. But being reminded that they never heard the term 'penny weight' used in medicine, nor the two terms 'scruple' and 'drachm' (or 'dram') in common troy, they will immediately correct themselves and reply that the terms are indeed different, but in quantity and effect it is the same thing whether you say 'ounce', 'penny weight', and 'grain', as the common troy; or 'ounce', 'scruple', and 'dram', as the apothecary's troy. And here, unless they are so lucky as to be corrected again, it is odds but they go off, *full gallop*, with the idea that a scruple is the 20th part of an *ounce*, and a dram the 24th part of a scruple. And if this had been the case, Mr. Wesley's *dram* of distilled verdigris would have been only equal to a *grain*, and might have been innocent. But every intelligent person knows that the apothecary's ounce is first divided into 8 *drams*, each dram subdivided into three *scruples*, and each scruple into 20 *grains*; and that the term 'grain' is common to both modes, and in both is the 480th part of an ounce.

If Mr. Wesley has a desire that the world should not estimate his abilities so lightly as to conceive *him* capable of a mistake of that nature, I think he would do well, and it is incumbent on him, to answer the two following queries:

First, can he name to us any one edition of his book (published previously to the detection of this error in the *Gazetteer*) where the *supposed misprinting* of 'dram' for 'grain' stands corrected?

Second, is it corrected in the body of the work, as it ought to be? Or is it only slightly referred to in the errata, with a '*Vide page ditto, line ditto, pro dram, lege grain*'?

I hope he will be able to answer both these queries in the affirmative, especially the last. For (as Mr. Wesley knows very well) few people ever look in the errata, unless they happen to be gruelled in the construction of some confused sentence; and it would be very hard upon Mr. Wesley's *patient readers* to have so many chances against their lives as (according to the following calculation) they would stand subject to: First, *twenty* to *one*, that they never cast an eye upon the errata; and next, *forty* to *one*, that they

¹Cf. Hab. 2:2.

do not understand a syllable of Latin.
I am, sir, etc.,

XXX

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 24, 1776), pp. 1–2.

‘Brunswick’ to the Printer of the *London Packet*

January 22, 1776

Sir,

It is unfortunate for Mr. Wesley that not only his own memory, but that of his bungling defenders, should be so exceedingly treacherous. They however endeavour very piously to counterbalance those defects by positive assertions, agreeable to the old adage of ‘Tell a lie and stand to it.’ Mr. Wesley, in his first edition of the *Calm Address*, which he stole from Dr. [Samuel] Johnson and published under his own name, asserted that ‘Every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects; that is, to grant their property with or without their consent.’ No one word did he say in that edition about lords or commons. This infamous position, containing the essence of tyranny, was absolute and without any restrictive addition. In the future editions, after he had been severely reproved for the publication of such unconstitutional doctrine, he added something about the other branches of the legislature.¹ This loyal Mr. Wesley has also told us that the people are not the origin of power, and that kings are not accountable to them for their conduct. It was such sentiments as these that Sybthorp and Manwaring preached,² and had Mr. Wesley lived in the days of the tyrant Stuarts, I doubt not but he would have been an advocate for their oppression, and have justified ship-money in a *Calm Address to the People*.

Brunswick

Source: published transcription: *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post* (Jan. 26–29), p. 1.

¹See JW, *Calm Address to Our American Colonies*, Appendix, §6.

²Robert Sybthorp (d. 1662), and Roger Manwaring (1590–1653).

‘A Churchman’ to the *London Packet*

To a Gentleman who signs himself ‘A Church of England Protestant’

Bristol
January 22, 1776

Sir,

In your letter in this paper of January 17,¹ you charged me with quoting Mr. Wesley unfairly when I averred that in his *Calm Address to the Colonies*, his words were that ‘every sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects with or without their consent’. I maintain it is his quotation. You will find it in the first edition of that work printed in Bristol by William Pine. And to put you to the blush, if possible, for so wicked an accusation, here follows the whole of the paragraph relating to that position: ‘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 not.’ Not a word about lords and commons in the whole business. When therefore you have properly apologized for so peremptory a charge, it will be time enough for me to refute your other assertions, many of which I believe as much as I do transubstantiation.

A Churchman

Source: published transcription; *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post* (Jan. 26–29), p. 1.

¹This issue is not known to survive.

‘A Despiser of Hypocrites’ to the *London Packet*

To the person who signs ‘W. A.’ in this paper of January 12¹

Bristol
January 22, 1776

Sir,

In your letters to me you have affected much of the piety of the Methodist. If you had united to such religious pretensions the manners of the gentleman, you would have favoured me with reason instead of railing, and not have involved the question betwixt us in a cloud of theological illiberality. Your design is too evident to be mistaken; but you shall not succeed. My controversy with you originally respected the Mr. Wesleys. To those venerable and pious men I shall confine it.

I have given the public facts and dates, and every other evidence that can convict a man of intentional deception.² You ask me why I represent Mr. Wesley's mistake as a designed, premeditated falsehood. You have furnished me with an answer. First, because he keeps a journal of all the books he reads, and therefore he could not have forgotten it. This, sir, is your own account. And secondly, because he *privately* acknowledged in a letter dated the 13th November,³ that he had read the book, and yet would not make any *public* acknowledgment till December the 9th.⁴ And it was even then forced from him by private persuasion, and the repeated public calls of his antagonist. A man who had no latent design would cheerfully have acknowledged his error as soon as he discovered it, and not have waited till proof on proof arose with irresistible evidence against him. From these circumstances I believe, and multitudes are of the same opinion, that the venerable Mr. John Wesley ‘designed a premeditated falsehood’. It was cunningly contrived, to remove the odium of his versatility; but the impostor was for once detected and exposed.

Your questions respecting Mr. [Augustus] Toplady are as ridiculous as they are impertinent. I have already told you that I am a stranger to that gentleman and to his connections. I introduced Mrs. [Mary] Wesley as an evidence rather more credible than Mr. [George] Whitefield, because *her* knowledge of Mr. Wesley I should presume is more perfect and complete. But it seems ‘Mr. Wesley is a kind and tender-hearted husband’. Without great circumspection, sir, you will involve your venerable hoary-headed friend in a labyrinth from which your cunning and his art united will not be able to extricate him. I assert the direct contrary, Mr. Wesley *to his wife* is neither kind nor tender-hearted—he is a bad husband. I am not personally his enemy. I have therefore no wish to enter into an investigation of this subject. Thus far *you* have urged me, and if you are so ignorant of circumstances as to require more, you shall have authenticated facts. *Littera scripta manet*.⁵ However Zion may lament, Gath and Ashkelon will rejoice. If Mr. John Wesley should be at Norwich, apply to Mr. Charles [Wesley],⁶ he can explain my meaning.

¹This issue is not known to survive.

²The debate is again over JW's initial claim not to have read [Thomas Parker], *An Argument in Defence of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves* (London: Brotherton and Sewell, 1774). See the letter of William Pine to JW, Nov. 7, 1775.

³JW's letter to James Rouquet.

⁴JW's letter to Caleb Evans published in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*.

⁵Note in original: ‘The written letter remains.’ [The author is apparently referring to the letter of Philothea Briggs to JW, c. Dec. 1774, that Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley took from his bureau.]

⁶Note in original: ‘If Mr. Charles Wesley should choose to be silent on this subject, he may refer you to Miss B[rig]gs, who is capable of giving you full information.’

You should recollect you *positively* said, ‘Mr. Charles Wesley declares he believes his brother never read the book alluded to.’ I desired to know to whom he made this declaration. You were silent. I again repeated my enquiry, and you now say what you wrote concerning Mr. Charles Wesley you received from ‘some credible Methodists’, not from him. Why sir, could you not have answered so plain a question in your former letter? Was there any necessity for your copying your hoary-headed patron so exactly as to be dragged to confession? To close however this subject with you, I will only add that these ‘credible Methodists’ have asserted that which is false, or Mr. Charles Wesley has been guilty of the grossest deception. For as I observed in my last letter, before he left Bristol he was fully informed of the particulars of his brother’s ‘premeditated falsehood’. Whatever may become of these ‘credible Methodists’ it is incumbent on Mr. Charles Wesley to vindicate his own reputation. He has been desired repeatedly to do it by private letters from a friend. His silence is criminal, and if he persists in it, he shall not escape the attention of

A Despiser of Hypocrites

Source: published transcription; *London Packet or New Lloyd’s Evening Post* (Jan. 26–29), p. 1.

From 'Antidote' [#1]

c. January 23, 1776

To the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.
'O thou man of God, there is death in thy pot.'

I went into the country soon after I called on you to prevent the fatal effects of your enormous prescription of *one or two drams* of verdegriis. On my return to town I find your very unsatisfactory and evasive reply. Motives of humanity and benevolence have induced several gentlemen, in my absence (who are entirely strangers to me), to favour the public with their remarks on your publication, and their directions how you ought to proceed to prevent, as far as possible, its destructive consequences. As you have not thought proper to take any farther notice, I think it incumbent on me, as a duty I owe to the public and in justice to myself, to declare that *I do really think that you wrote ONE OR TWO DRAMS OF VERDEGRIS in your prescription, and that the printer is not to blame.*

One of the gentlemen, who has signed 'Antidote', to whom I am totally unknown, tells you he has your *eighth edition*, which agrees exactly with the *sixteenth* in prescribing *one or two drams*, and not *grains*.

You have been called on to tell the public which is the edition that is free from this unlucky blunder of the printers. You make no reply. When you produce an edition with the words 'one or two grains of verdegriis' in this prescription, you may assure yourself the public shall be again convinced that there is still *death in the pot*, and you will have farther occasion to hide yourself behind this unfortunate printer.

But I forget myself. My style is offensive to you. It will therefore be a 'more obliging manner' of communicating my thoughts to produce a passage from a book, with the letter of which at least you are well acquainted.

There was a dearth in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him [Elisha], and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

And one went out into the field to gather herbs and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap-full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage, *for they knew them not.*

So they poured out for the men to eat; and it came to pass as they were eating of the pottage that they cried out and said, *O thou man of God, there is death in the pot*; and they could not eat thereof.

But he said, then bring meal, and he cast it into the pot. And he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat; and there was no harm in the pot.¹

I make no comment. I neither expound or apply. The public are left at large to find out who gave the false alarm of a dearth of physic in the land, and then ostentatiously produced his great pot of *Primitive Physic*; or who was the officious person who gathered his lap-full of wild gourds and, ignorant of their good or bad qualities, shred them into the pot. But where shall the[y] find the holy hand to cast in the healing meal, that there may be no harm in the pot!

Indeed, Mr. Wesley, it is much your wisest and best way to throw away the whole mess.

Antidote

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 25, 1776), p. 2.

¹2 Kings 4:38–40.

From Joshua Armstrong to Rev. Caleb Evans

c. January 24, 1776
Bethnal Green [London]

‘Let not the sun go down on your wrath.’ St. Paul¹
‘Be calm in arguing’ Mr. Herbert²

Dear Sir,

I have read your *Letter* to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley. I think you write like a warm and angry Anabaptist, as stiff in your political opinions as you are in your Calvinistical notions. Suppose Mr. Wesley had recommended the book you mention, and afterwards forgot it; yet ‘Do you well to be angry?’³ seeing this does not invalidate his arguments in his *Calm Address*. Why do you impertinently say to the aged John Wesley *prove yourself* ‘an honest man’, seeing Mr. Wesley has already done it in his justly admired *Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, and also in his celebrated *Thoughts upon Slavery*? Who is a Christian, and has put on bowels of mercy? Can he commend the American patrons of liberty for keeping, lashing, and killing slaves? Did not *Jesus taste death* for these?

You appear, sir, to be greatly displeased with the injured Mr. Wesley for using such an expression as ‘Mr. Toplady’s spittle’. Had this appeared in the letters of the facetious Dean [Jonathan] Swift, how would you have praised it as a fine sally of pregnant wit? You should remember, sir, that Mr. Toplady had previously treated Mr. Wesley’s masterly *Thoughts upon Necessity* with the same scurrility as Bolingbroke, Hobbes, and Spinoza have ridiculed the miracles of God incarnate.⁴

You proceed, sir, to a bold assertion indeed. You say, ‘the amiable Mr. Harvey long ago advised Mr. Wesley to prove himself an honest man’. Here, sir, you are egregiously mistaken, for it was the late antinomian Cudworth said this. For the proof, I refer you to the Rev. Mr. [Walter] Sellon’s *Answer to the Eleven Letters said to be written by Mr. James Hervey*, in which answer you will see a shocking scene of Calvinian and antinomian iniquity opened!

I remember the late *amiable* Mr. George Whitefield more than once addressed his crowded audience in these words: ‘My dear hearers, do not spend your time in speaking against Mr. John Wesley, for I know him to be a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian.’ Let Mr. Evans go and do likewise. How long shall reason be lost in rage? if you must write upon politics, cannot you write like a calm, reasonable man? Why should you, who believe predestination and necessity, be wroth with Mr. Wesley for writing a short preface and making judicious remarks in a new edition of his *Calm Address to the Americans*? has not he an equal right and liberty to publish his *Address* as you have to publish the *Letter*?

Hoping that you will write in a more loving spirit, and be better informed concerning the laws of England and the charters of America, I wish you would *calmly* peruse *A Calm Address to Americanus* by a Native of America,⁵ worthy to be wrote in letters of gold.

Your humble servant.

Joshua Armstrong

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle* (Jan. 25–27, 1775), p. 93.

¹Eph. 4:26.

²George Herbert, *The Temple* (1633), 11.

³Jonah 4:9.

⁴Augustus Monague Toplady, *The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted. In opposition to Mr. John Wesley’s tract on that subject* (London: Vallance and Simmons, 1775).

⁵See 1771 in-letters collection, dated c. December 15, 1775.

From Matthew Mayer¹

Portwood
January 24, 1776

Honoured and Dear Sir,

A few days since I received a letter from Robert Johnson of Macclesfield acquainting me that a letter received very lately from you has the following saying in it: 'As Duncan Wright is the Assistant in your circuit, tell him to desire brother Mayer to take his choice either to preach regularly as the other preachers do, or not to preach at all in our societies.'

I am greatly surprised at this information, as I am not conscious that I have acted irregular or inconsistent in the character of a Christian or a preacher to anyone. I believe I may justly say (without boasting), since I was called to that work, that I have laid myself out for the good of souls, and given as much of my time and substance to the work as any local preacher in these parts—and I think much more so. And I believe there is few (according to my ability) that have defended your *person* and *doctrine*, and that has shown more kindness to the preachers and to the cause in general than I have done. And now, after all, without giving me any reasons, to be forbid preaching in the societies at all looks like hard usage. But I suppose someone or more has been laying grievous things to my charge; which I should be glad to know, that I may be allowed the liberty of clearing myself, or be convinced of the evil.

A few weeks ago Robert Johnson called on me and we had about five minute's conversation on a few mistakes that had happened without any design of mine. (And he is [the] only one that every complained to me about any such thing.) The last time but one that I was at Leek [Staffordshire], the people pressed me much to fix a time that I would come again; and I fixed, by their desire, on a day which they said would be a vacant Sunday with them. Now this happened, without mine or their knowledge, to be Robert Johnson's day. Another place near Macclesfield happened in the same manner, entirely without any knowledge of mine. When we talked about it, I told him I was sorry it had happened, but desired he would give me a copy of his plan and I would take care for the future not to come to any place on his day. And I expected it was so settled, and to have heard no more of it. Now Mr. Johnson knew of my appointment long before the time came at both places, and had it been very disagreeable to him he might easily have let² me know not to have come to those places—which would have been no offense to me at all. But alas, alas! I believe the grand cause of his complaints against me is he cannot bear that another should be more acceptable to the people than himself. And I fear on this account he, if not some other preachers, would be glad I would preach no more where they do. But I leave them to him that searcheth the heart.

I cannot but think that you are displeased at me through false representations, which I shall take as a particular favour to know what you have against me, and what is laid to my charge. I desire ever gratefully to acknowledge your kindness to me in using your interest with Mr. Barker in our partnership affairs.³ Though I am not likely to be any gain by his agreement, yet the creditors are, and it will be a satisfaction to me as long as I live for the creditors to be paid their due, which without his agreement they could not have been.

¹Matthew 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.

²Mayer consistently shortens 'have' to 'a', as in 'could a been'.

³Mayer had entered into a financial partnership with Daniel Barker (c. 1699–1778), a farmer in Little Leigh, Cheshire, to help set up John Hampson in business when he took a leave from itinerating. See JW to Daniel Barker, Apr. 17, 1776, *Works*, 29:239–40.

I have indeed been ill used and very falsely accused in this affair by some of his friends, and believe too many have run away with the report without knowing better. Some have said that I deceived Mr. Barker and did not tell him the whole truth, and that I got him into the agreement to serve my own purposes—which *is entirely false*. I represented the case in as true a light as I possibly could to him, and did not deceive him in one particular that I know of. And his agreement (as I then told him) is no advantage to me but to the creditors. He has, I hear, began to discharge the bond in which he was engaged. And I trust (after all that has been said to the contrary) the affair will be settled in peace. My trials in this affair are heavy indeed. But hitherto the Lord has helped me, and given me strength according to my day. Glory be to his name!

And now, dear sir, if it is your pleasure that I should no longer preach in your societies, yet it will give me real satisfaction if you will spend a night with us when you come this way in the spring. My dear wife joins me in duty and best respects, and we hope you will at least grant us this favour.⁴ I shall be glad of the earliest account of your coming.⁵

Source: holograph(?); MARC, MA 1977/610/96.

⁴Mayer married Rachel Hassles (c. 1741–99) in 1759.

⁵The original address page and closing signature are missing (perhaps this is Mayer's draft). But there is a note in another hand identifying the letter as from Mayer to Wesley.

From Samuel Johnson

[London]
Feb. 6, 1776

Sir,

When I received your commentary on the Bible,¹ I durst not at first flatter myself that I was to keep it, having so little claim to so valuable a present. And when Mrs. Hall² informed me of your kindness, [I] was hindered from time to time from returning you those thanks, which I now entreat you to accept.

I have thanks likewise to return for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question.³ To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has had upon the public, I know not. But I have no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right who, though he saw his audience slinking away, refused to quit the chair while Plato stayed.⁴

I am, reverend sir, your most humble servant,

Sam. Johnson

Source: secondary manuscript copy (in hand of Thomas Harwood); Pembroke College, Oxford. Published in *Gentleman's Magazine* (1797): 455.

¹Wesley likely sent Johnson his *Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament* (1765) and the fourth edition of his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (1768); these had been printed as a four-volume set by William Pine of Bristol.

²I.e., Martha (Wesley) Hall.

³JW's *Calm Address to our American Colonies*, published the previous autumn, 'extracted the chief arguments' from Johnson's *Taxation No Tyranny*.

⁴As the poet Antimachus read his epic poem all of the audience except Plato departed. Antimachus continued, saying, 'Plato alone is as good as a hundred thousand'. Cf. Cicero, *Brutus*, 191.

From Mary Bosanquet

Cross Hall
February 7, 1776

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for your kind favour of January 27.¹ It yielded us much satisfaction, for never before could we get any account to be depended on.

I am exceeding thankful Mr. [John] Fletcher is with Mrs. Greenwood.² She will tenderly care for him; and, having a spiritual mind, will be sensible of the honour God does her in giving her such an opportunity.

How wise are all the ways of God in keeping his faithful servant in that retired spot, while those precious works were completed by which he will yet speak to us, though in glory; and now to enable him to bring them out, while his exemplary life and conversation adds a lustre to those truths he hath so powerfully defended.

We could have liked to have seen him here once more. But the will of the Lord be done! But should it happen that this sickness is not unto death, we shall rejoice in having an opportunity of assisting him in anything which lies in our power. Should this favour be denied us, we must be content and beseech God to reward those who may supply our lack of service.

The blessed account you give of the state of his mind filled my soul with sacred joy, as also those of my friends. While I was reading it, it was a season of faith and love, and we could not help saying, 'Ah Lord! Let not this shining light be so soon extinguished.'

A few weeks ago I once more read over the *Equal Check*,³ and felt an unction in it above all I had ever found before. The 'Essay on Truth', with the appendix,⁴ is even as marrow and fatness to my soul. O may all the height and depth of every gospel promise be written on his heart!

Glory be to God, I prove him a kind and tender Father. I have daily had some exercising trials, both in my health and in some other affairs. But oh, how shall I ever praise him enough! It hath been to me an useful and profitable time. I am more than ever convinced that the sinner is both safe and comfortable when Jesus walks with him, even in the fire. I see such love and wisdom in every cup the Lord is pleased to mix me that all my soul does acknowledge, 'Thy will is best!'

I remain, dear sir,

Yours affectionately,

M. Bosanquet

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 47–48.

¹This letter, giving an account of John Fletcher's current illness, is not known to survive.

²Fletcher was convalescing at the home of Charles Greenwood (1726–83) and Mary (Thorton) Greenwood (1730–1804) in Stoke Newington.

³John Fletcher, *An Equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism* (Shrewsbury: J. Eddowes, 1774).

⁴The Essay on Truth begins on p. 137 of *Equal Check*; the Appendix on p. 228.

From Richard Condyl¹

[Epworth]
February 8, 1776

Reverend Sir,

As you desire to know the dealings of God with me, I send you the following account.

Since the Conference I have been completely happy, and have found rest in all circumstances, both as a Christian and as a preacher. Whether going by the way side, or lying down, or rising up, the Lord has been my portion, and satisfies my soul with the treasures of his house.

I have lately received a remarkable answer to prayer in the great change wrought on my mother [Sarah], and as so overwhelmed with joy that I was incapable of reading or praying. If you knew how settled a pharisee, and how fixed an enemy to Methodism she was, you would own that we may have anything for asking. At present I am so dead to all persons and things here below that I have no desire to see home any more, unless the Lord should seem good to will it.

Often when the world is wrapped up in sleep I have such views of heaven that I have scarce patience to be kept out of it. And often [I] think that an hour of earnest prayer would make me too happy to do my business. God gives me to penetrate heaven and hell, and to see the worth of souls in such a manner as makes me forget myself. It is true I cannot see thousands falling before me, and tens of thousands on my right hand crying out for God. Yet I have greater cause to be satisfied with my labours this year than the last. O what would I not do to save souls from eternal death!

A few days since, being much urged to visit Scotter, I could no longer withstand. At the appointed time the river was frozen over. But though my horse could not pass, the rider did; and walked through the snow, knee deep, all the way over the common. At night we were like those supposed to be full of new wine. In the morning a young man came back part of the way with me. A little after we parted, I met two travellers, who asked the way. After directing them, I said a great deal to them about Christ and eternity. As they appeared much affected, I cried out, 'Lord, what shall I say to these thy creatures, to induce them to serve thee?' Then turning to them, I said, 'Not long since I parted from a young man, and before I left him we went to prayer on the mountain. And seeing there is none but the eye of heaven upon us, perhaps if I ask you to kneel down with me, you will not be ashamed.' As they earnestly said 'No', we kneeled down together and I wrestled with God for them. When we had done the poor man, as if he thought himself unworthy, would hardly shake hands with me; but the woman, with tears flowing down her face, eagerly caught my hand and kissed it. If you had seen their thankfulness, and heard the many blessings they sent after me, you would have rejoiced. O how willingly could I have washed the feet of those poor creatures, for whom Christ died! Lord thou knowest I am little, and base in my own eyes; and content to be counted the off-scouring of all things, so thine honour be advanced.

R. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 48–50.

¹Richard Condyl (1752–1803) was baptized in July 1752, to Richard and Sarah Condyl, of Stoke Damerel, Plymouth. He first appears in the *Minutes* in 1776 (*Works*, 10:453), stationed at Epworth. There is no prior mention of his admission to itinerancy. He received recorded appointments 1776–79, then disappears from the *Minutes* until 1785. From 1785 to 1789 he worked in Ireland, then northern England. He is buried at City Road Chapel in London.

From Ann Bolton¹

Finstock
February 9, 1776

Reverend Sir,

The Lord still chastens me, but not in his hot displeasure. I was thinking lately what I could say of my experience, as I seemed to be in darkness. Yet [I] was not, for the Lord was still my light and my salvation, and I felt joy in the Holy Ghost and peace passing [all²] understanding. And yet, what different sensations (compared with what I felt six or eight weeks ago)! How heavily did my soul seem to drag on.

While I was thus enquiring into my state those words occurred to my mind, 'I am in heaviness through manifold temptations.'³ Thus did my gracious God condescend to explain what before I did not understand. My heart immediately offered up praise and thanks unto him, and I was much strengthened to hope that I should be made perfect through sufferings.

A few days since, I was comforted by a persuasion that neither tribulation nor distress, nor things present or to come, should be ever able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.⁴ And hour or two after, my faith was strongly assaulted; when the Lord tenderly spake unto my soul, 'Can the strength of Israel lie?'⁵ O how did I rejoice again in hope of deliverance!

I feel much need of exercising all the faith I have, that I may not be soiled by Satan. He labours hard to draw me into reasoning. But glory be to God, he hath hitherto supported me! I am frequently encouraged by relying on that promise, 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under thy feet shortly.'⁶

These last six weeks I have had sore conflicts with the adversary. But stronger is he that is for me, than all that are against me. I am enabled frequently, to derive⁷ much consolation from a persuasion that the trials I am permitted to pass through will terminate in my establishment. I rejoice in the thought of being more holy, more unreservedly given up to God. I long for greater conformity to my divine pattern, that I may be more capable of glorifying him on earth.

I believe I love God. But I want to love him more, that I may obey him more perfectly. I see he is a jealous God, and will be loved alone. He demands all the powers and affections of my soul. And glory be to his name, he enables me to yield obedience to his righteous claim!

Dear sir, I remain

Your obliged servant,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 50–51.

¹Bolton is likely reply to JW's letter to her of Jan. 24, 1776. But the abridged version published in *AM* omits any personal comments about her health, etc.

²Inserted by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

³Cf. 1 Pet. 1:6.

⁴See Rom 8:38–39.

⁵Cf. 1 Sam. 15:29.

⁶Rom. 16:20.

⁷Orig. 'desire'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

From 'A Whig'
A Calm Answer to Mr. Wesley's Calm Address

c. February 29, 1776

Reverend Sir,

As I intend to be very short, I will endeavour to come to the point immediately.

You begin then by saying that he who denies to the British parliament the power of taxing America must, at the same time, deny the power of making any laws binding on America. Strange reasoning indeed, Mr Wesley! Is not the kingdom of Ireland restricted in trade, and in other respects subject to the king and parliament? Yet don't you know that their money is raised and granted by their own parliament? In the same manner Wales, Chester, and Durham were not subject to parliamentary taxation, until they sent representatives to parliament, agreeable to the true principles of the English constitution, that makes taxation and representation inseparable. 'What property' (says that great luminary Mr Locke) 'can any man have in that which another can take from him at pleasure?' Observe again what Judge Blackstone (the present oracle of the English laws) says upon the subject; viz. 'America' (says he) 'is in some respects subject to English laws. But they carry with them only as much of those laws as are applicable to their present situation; so the laws of police, revenue and spiritual jurisdiction are neither necessary or convenient for them.'

Again you observe that, in wide-extended dominions, a very small part of the people are concerned in the making of laws, so of course they are in the same situation with the major part of ourselves. But you do not seem to attend to the great difference betwixt them and us in that respect, which is this, that our tax-masters can raise no tax upon their constituents without being subject to the very same themselves. The Americans have no such security against future oppression if once they yield to the principle which you want to inculcate, and which would destroy the distinction so well expressed by Sidney—viz., 'The danger' (says he) 'of perishing by those who must perish along with us, can never be so great as to those who have nobody fitting in that assembly immediately concerned in their interest or preservation.' Please likewise to observe what Sir John Dalrymple says in his ingenious pamphlet against American claims, and with him I heartily agree: 'If you mean' (says he) 'to deny to the king the power of appointing officers, and the putting a negative on your bills; or if you deny to the judicial powers their right of receiving appeals, or to the legislative part their power to regulate your trade for the general interest of the whole, we shall then stake the fate of the British empire on the contest. But your complaint of taxes deserves our most serious attention. We revere our king, but we cannot be certain of his successors. So that whatever pretensions we have to the exercise of such a power, we desire to throw it from us as a thing unworthy of us to possess, or of you to be subject to.' Observe again General Burgoyne in his letter to Lee: 'No man of sense or information', (says he) 'will suppose that the ministry, after the experiences they have had, will attempt again the exercise of such a power.'

Thus you see, Mr Wesley, that the post of taxation seems in a manner to be abandoned by the warmest advocates of the ministry, and of course your shot is too late. In this respect you put me in mind of a parish clerk who, being enlisted amongst some new recruits, was exercised one day along with the rest. But unluckily having reserved his fire too long, he gave a-pop shot some time after all the rest. Upon which the commanding officer gave him a rap on the shoulder, calling out at the same time, "D[am]n your amen shot, sir."

As to those Ahitophels (so named by you) in England, whom you accuse so boldly of a design to subvert the constitution (because they are against the present coercive measures), I should be glad to know what particular information you have received to justify such an assertion. 'Let every man be persuaded in his own mind',¹ says the apostle Paul, your master. Who are thou that judgest another man? May there not be good and wise men on both sides of the question, though they differ in opinion? And will you be as severe in your political creed as in the system of your religious faith, where you attempt to

¹Rom. 14:5.

shut the gates of heaven against all infidels? Because there are many who wish for peace with America, is it consistent with charity to suspect such people of being enemies to the king or the constitution? Because the Americans contend for the giving and granting their own money as formerly, is this any proof that they want to throw off dependency on their mother country? On the contrary, they require only to be placed on the same footing as before the Stamp Act in 1763. In time of peace, say they, we will labour for Great Britain in compliance with the Navigation Acts, and in time of war we will cheerfully expend our best blood and treasure in the common cause. Is this the language of independency?

Still perhaps you will say, What compensation have we in reality for the protection that we have afforded them? If the power of taxation is thus tamely given up, their answer is plain, and indeed has nothing mystical in it. 'Either be satisfied', say they, 'with the monopoly of our trade, which brings greater loss to us and greater advantages to you, than if we paid our share of taxes; or lay open our trade, and then we will contribute our proportion when called on in a constitutional manner. But if the war goes on, will ever the trade of ruined provinces compensate for your expenses? Or shall we ever be able to pay for our own chains?' 'We are more indebted', say the merchants of Bristol, 'to their former affections than to any dread they had of our power. It would not only be arrogant and presumptuous in us to address for war and slaughter, but unnatural and ungrateful.'

Let us now, if you please, examine the maxims and principles of the police of commerce so wisely established in the last century, and then consider, coolly and impartially, how far we have departed from the old system by the late revenue acts. It would appear, then, that the Navigation Acts were in consequence of three principal objects, as then set forth in the following words, viz.:

First, to establish, say those wise founders, a greater intercourse and friendly correspondence betwixt Great Britain and her colonies.

Secondly, to secure the vent of English goods.

Thirdly, to render this country a staple for the produce of our American plantations.

How well those salutary purposes were fulfilled by the mutual affection that subsisted, and the rapid progress of our American trade, is too obvious to enlarge upon. I shall therefore give one instance only to prove the truth of what has been advanced. In the year 1704 the province of Pennsylvania commissioned goods only to the extent of 11 or 12,000 £. But in the year 1772 their demands amounted to the amazing sum of more than 500,000 £. In the mean time, particular cities were enriched, the landed interest was greatly increased, and the exchequer, in the single article of tobacco, received nearly 300,000 £ a-year. Will any man pretend to say after this that America does not contribute to the public wants?

Again, during the late war not a year passed without the repeated thanks and acknowledgments of the king and parliament to those very people for their zeal and efforts in the common cause. Now, Mr. Wesley, if the venerable founders of this good old system were to rise and to see all those and many other advantages in a conflict with the finances, would they not express some surprise at the conduct of their blinded posterity ever since the fatal era of the Stamp Act? And though at present our manufactures are kept alive by an extraordinary demand from Spain, Russia, etc., yet surely we cannot depend on the continuation of such demands for many reasons. And will not the landed man suffer equally with the merchant by the decay of trade? If he doubts this, he may read what Mr. Locke says on the subject—viz., 'The decay of trade' (says he) 'is immediately felt by the landed man. And though he is not very forward to believe this, yet this is certain, that he is as much concerned in trade as the merchant himself.' By the old system, the wealth and riches of America flowed peaceably and quietly into Great Britain. Their luxury was our advantage, and the debts still owing to the merchants prove that the produce of their soil, their fisheries and Spanish trade, have not all been sufficient to pay for British goods. To what purpose then would you tax them? Unless you want to resemble the man in the fable, whose hen produced a golden egg to him every morning, which only increased his avarice, and at last tempted him to kill the poor hen, in expectation of growing rich all at once by the vast treasure which he thought must be within her?

As to the tea riot, their tarring and feathering of custom-house officers, etc., no man in his senses would pretend to vindicate. But such actions I hope can only be imputed to the base-born multitude, or unthinking herd of the people. And I am glad to hear that committees of safety are appointed now to prevent such disorders for the future, which must disgrace any cause. Yet many are of opinion that such

excrescences or ebullitions of liberty may be considered as specks on the eye of the political body, and to be touched with a gentle hand, lest the eye itself should be endangered by sudden or violent operations. Porteous was hanged at Edinburgh by a mob, and Shawfield's house at Glasgow was destroyed by a riot. Yet care was taken not to confound the innocent with the guilty, and those cities still preserve their former liberties and immunities.

Since the beginning of this century there have been two open rebellions in favours of tyranny and arbitrary government. Yet surely it would be an unfair and illiberal reflection to say that Scotland, in general, was governed by mobs and rebellious councils.

To conclude, join then, as a minster of peace, in praying for a happy and honourable accommodation of differences; that the horrors of a civil war may be averted, which hardens the heart, and debauches all degrees of men. And which entails not only general distress, but hatches evil morals in the minds of many. And may kind Providence dispose both parties to see their real interest, and to meet one another under the calm dictates of reason, instead of being guided by the blind impulses of passion. Lest, after exhausting our strength in this unnatural contest, one or both parties should fall a prey to the common enemy.

A Whig

Source: published transcription; *Edinburgh Weekly Magazine* (Feb. 29, 1776), 295–97; and *Scots Magazine* (Feb. 1776), 69–72.

From Joseph Chambers¹

Cheapside [London]
March 1, 1776

Reverend Sir,

You call upon me in this day's *Lloyd's Evening Post* to publish a letter,² part of which has been inserted in a morning paper 'with several scurrilous reflections on you, grounded thereon'.³ This will serve to inform you that I have not that letter in my possession, and that all the publications in the papers wherein my name, or my wife's, have been mentioned were entirely without my knowledge, privity, or consent. Nor have I the most distant idea of the author or authors of them.

J. Chambers

Mr. Chambers having received some anonymous letters from an *infamous slanderer*, under the signature of 'Detector', takes this opportunity to inform that vile assassin that if he dare discover his name and address, due attention shall be paid to him.

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Mar. 1–4, 1776), p. 219.

¹Joseph Chambers, was a haberdasher (as specified in JW's letter), on Queen Street in Cheapside in 1776. Nothing else is known of him or his wife. But note JW's mention of Chambers in his letter to his wife Mary, Dec. 9, 1774, *Works*, 29:102–08.

²*Lloyd's Evening Post* (Feb. 28–Mar. 1, 1786), p. 214.

³JW indicates that the partial letter was printed in the *Public Ledger*; unfortunately the only known surviving issue of the *Public Ledger* for the entire month of Feb. 1776 is on Feb. 3, and it does not contain this partial letter. It was possibly the letter of Philothea Briggs to JW, c. Dec. 1774, that Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley took from his bureau.

From John Riley¹

March 1, 1776

Hail rev'rend sire! Afflicted Wesley, hail!
What tho' malevolence thy peace assail!
And with invidious arrows would thy name.
Which stands distinguish'd on the list of fame.
Tho' persecution wreak its utmost rage,
Regardless of thy piety or age!

Tho' friends forsake when silver'd hairs appear,
And speak the hour of dissolution near!
What tho' infernal agents from below,
With man combin'd attempt thy overthrow!
Tho' threat'ning thunders at a distance roll,
To shake with terror they intrepid soul!

Above the storm Jehovah-Jesus stands,
And hold the tempest in his sov'reign hands;
Directs its course; nor suffers it to move
Injurious to the objects of his love.
Beneath his shad'wing wings he screens his bride,
Or turns the well-aimed vengeful bolt aside;

His ever-waking, ever-watchful care,
Guards and preserves they ev'ry sacred hair.
See how the teeming promises conspire
T' expand thy bosom with seraphic fire;
T' improve the fervid ever-glowing flame
Of ardent love to the redeemer's name.

'These light afflictions, momentary pain!
'Are hast'ning on our everlasting gain;
'Are adding to th' inexplicable weight
'Of glory which on the celestial height
'Of paradise awaits the suff'ring race,
'The favour'd subjects of redeeming grace.'

Faint not then in this dark and low'ring day.
Omniscience thro' the gloom shall mark thy way;
Shall guide thee safe thro' life's perplexing race
To the unclouded vision of his face.

And ere in Jesu's arms thou fall'st asleep,
Thy heart may cease to mourn, thy eyes to weep.

¹While the name is spelled 'Ryley' by both JW and the author, the letter was hand delivered shortly before JW left London for his annual preaching tour. This makes it likely that the author was John Riley of London, whom JW mentions in his diary in the 1780s.

Love cordial, universal love may heal
The bleeding wounds of persecuting zeal.

Rapt in ecstatic wonder thou may'st see
Zion below in perfect harmony.
Blest with this sight, and ripe for joys above,
May Jesus then they waiting soul remove
To heav'n, the heav'n of everlasting love.

J. Ryley

Address: 'The Revd Mr J. Wesley'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jo. Ryley's verses / March 1. 1776'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, item 9.

From 'Philo-Veritas' to 'A Whig'¹

March 4, 1776

Sir,

Please allow me to make a few observations on your *calm* answer to Mr. Wesley's *Address*, inserted in last week's magazine. As I have but little time to spare, I will not take up your attention long, but shall endeavour to be as concise as possible.

Before I begin, we must settle a small point. You sign yourself 'a Whig', but seem totally ignorant of the true principles of Whiggism. I am rather inclined to take you for a Tory who has assumed the mask of a true friend to his country, in order the more easily to deceive ignorant people. Don't you know that the principles of Tories are to curtail, as much as possible, the authority of parliament, and increase that of the king? On the contrary, the principles of real Whigs are to let all the three branches of the legislature exercise their power equally; not to suffer one branch to inroach upon another, and to keep the king's power within its due bounds. A party in the nation are for making America independent of parliament, and consequently for increasing royal authority. You have joined that party. You have defended their measures. Therefore you are a Tory, and have committed a small blunder when you took up the signature of a Whig. I despise party names as much as any person in the three kingdoms. It is enough if a man behaves himself like a loyal subject. But your party, sir, were the aggressors; they have revived these invidious distinctions which otherwise would have remained in oblivion.

Having settled this preliminary point, Mr. Tory, or Whig, or whatever is your name, let us now proceed to the discussion of these matters contained in your *answer*. I entirely agree with you as to the claim of taxation. I believe Great Britain has no lawful right to tax America. But as, by your own confession, this contested point seems to be given up, the Americans can have no pretence to take up arms in defence of the right to dispose of their own property. You say however afterwards that they are 'contending for the giving and granting their own money as formerly'. Can they be fighting for a prize, when by your own account it is already renounced to them? To reconcile this difference may be the object of your leisure hours; for the present please attend me a little further.

I pass over the first part of your answer so far as relates to taxation. Though I may observe that in your commendations on Sir John Dalrymple's pamphlet, with whom I cordially agree, you unwittingly approve of the present method used to bring the Americans to a sense of their duty. Have not these deluded subjects denied the king's power to appoint officers, by expelling his governors? Have not they denied the legislative power to regulate their trade, by opening their ports to all nations who please to visit them? Sir John, when speaking in the name of the people of Great Britain at that time, mentions that if they mean to do these things, we are willing to stake the fate of the British empire on the contest. You say in your answer, 'And with him I heartily agree'. This is another contradiction, which you may reconcile alongst with the former.

You push very hard upon honest Mr. Wesley, because he accuses a desperate faction (who, in my conscience I believe, would not fail to ruin the nation if it could forward their diabolical schemes) of a design to subvert the constitution. There may be good men on both sides of the question. But good men often do a bad thing. And pardon me for presuming to give you an advice in your next: try to express yourself with greater decency when you criticise the labours of a reverend grey-headed gentleman who can be induced by no other motive but the good of the empire at large; who endeavoured by a little well-timed admonition to reclaim a number of poor deluded subjects enticed by wicked persons to destruction. And endeavour for the future to say nothing but truth, when you write on such an important subject.

It is quite unnecessary to enter into the merits of the present quarrel, after removing the inexhaustible quantities of rubbish which your party, as it were, have conspired to bury it under. It may be reduced into one plain simple proposition: Is America subject to the supreme legislative authority of Great Britain? You seem to admit that she is, when you say that 'they do not want to throw off

¹See letter by 'A Whig', c. Feb. 29, 1776 above.

dependence on their mother-country'. This word 'dependent' must imply that Great Britain has some authority over America. If you own she has, why do you complain of the mother-country for endeavouring to exercise the right? If she has none, what meaning do you annex to the phrase, 'dependent on the mother-country'?

You proceed in a declamatory manner about the monopoly of their trade. If you understand anything of the matter, you must know that the Americans do trade with Venice, Genoa, Cadiz, Lisbon, Amsterdam, or where they please. Search the entries of the different custom houses in America, and you will find vessels entered directly from these places. Must Great Britain and Ireland fight to the last drop of blood in the American quarrels, merely to enjoy the *great* privilege of being the only foreign nation allowed to trade with them? You cannot deny that the Americans trade with other nations, and this boasted monopoly consists in other nations being restricted from trading with them. You go on with quoting the Bristol petition.² They say 'we are more indebted to their former affection, than any dread they had of our power'. Perhaps you might be so, gentlemen, but was this the case of the nation in general?

You next 'examine the maxims and principles of commerce, so wisely established last century', and set forth 'the three principal objects' which produced the Navigation Act. By what legerdemain do you allow the British parliament a lawful power last century to frame acts for the government of the colonies, and deny them the same privilege just now? Lord Chatham, that ambitious man, and one of your party, in the debate on the repeal of the Stamp Act, was for going lengths in the restricting their trade that every wellwisher to the colonies would oppose. He was for no internal taxes being laid on them; but to compensate this he was for entirely debarring them from manufacturing the smallest thing, even the nail of a horse shoe. A speech both foolish and unjustifiable; but it serves to show what opinion was formerly entertained of these affairs. The Americans themselves quietly submitted to the government of the British legislature. They never attempted to break through this famous Navigation Act, which some writers do style the 'Palladium of our commerce', till lately. And the same methods they take to relieve themselves of one act, they may employ for casting off all subjection to this one too.

You seem to think tobacco is imported from Pennsylvania, by saying (after enumerating the value of the goods shipped for that province) that 'particular cities were enriched, the landed interest greatly increased, and the exchequer, in the single article of tobacco, benefited near 300,000 £ a year'. Making all due allowances for your ignorance of the place where tobacco grows, do you think the Americans pay any of that duty on that commodity which you mention the exchequer so much benefited by? Is not every farthing of it raised on the consumer at home? And are we not as much obliged to the Chinese for the duties on their teas, or to the French for the duty on their wines, as to the Americans for the tobacco duty? We may judge from this 'one instance' you have given 'to prove the truth of what you advanced' what degree of credit is to be paid to your other assertions. What you advance about votes of thanks that were granted every year to those people for defending their own lands, proves fully as much as your other argument that 'America contributed to the public wants' by the duty on tobacco.

No man will dispute that the landed interest will suffer as well as the merchant by the decay of trade. You need not have quoted Mr Locke, whom you seem to worship, to prove what would be readily granted. You think we cannot depend upon the present demand for our manufactures for many reasons. 'I should be glad to know what particular information you have received to justify such an assertion.' You go on with observing that 'the produce of their soil, their fisheries and Spanish trade, have not all been sufficient to pay for British goods'. Pray, sir, did you never hear of people that would not pay their debt suppose they were able? You seem to have forgot the great resources which your brother-advocates, who appear in the same good cause, declare the Americans possess. So great that they are sufficient to cope with the force of the whole British empire; nay, of the half of Germany also, as an Irish Whig declared lately in the House of Commons. You must certainly be gifted with a treacherous memory, that you do

²Note in original: 'The Bristol merchants who traded to America petitioned; but an address from a larger member of the principal inhabitants and the mayor was likewise presented.'

not remember the profuse grants of paper-money that the congresses, both continental and provincial, issued last season. And do you think they will be able to carry on the war another year upon nothing? Consider these things maturely before you offer again to prove their inability to contribute to the defence of the empire in general.

There is just another thing I must take notice of before I take leave of you. You declare, in the name of all Americans, that they will not contribute their proportion unless their trade is laid open. This is so contrary to what the Americans themselves ever asked that it gives one cause to suspect your commission. The farthest that ever they claimed was to be left to their own wills to grant the money in such ways as they thought convenient. They always professed an inclination and readiness to bear their due proportion. But you go beyond the wildest of their desires, and presume to demand an exemption from public burdens, or the repeal of the Navigation Act. The charge is heavy, and you had need of broad shoulders to support it.

You conclude with a most excellent and good advice to Mr. Wesley. You exhort him to pray for a happy and honourable accommodation of differences, and that the horrors of civil war may be averted. Pity but that you would take the admonition to yourself. You must be conscious that you endeavour to kindle the flames of commotion by your seditious writings. The Americans need no encouragement. But you are so good that you take upon you the burden of their defence. If you are desirous to appear again in print, try your abilities in the path of admonition upon those deluded people. They stand fully as much in need of it as the gentleman who is the occasion of our present dispute.

Finally, learn to pay more respect to the supreme legislature of your country. Leave off teaching the doctrines of rebellion and sedition, and be convinced that you cannot take a more ready method to plunge the nation into all the horrors of civil war than by spiriting up the Americans to a resistance, the certain consequences of which are total ruin to one party, and perhaps destruction to the other.

I am, with hopes of your reformation,
Yours, etc.,

Philo-Veritas³

Source: published transcription; *Edinburgh Weekly Magazine* (March 7, 1776), 332–34.

³‘Love of truth.’

From Unnamed Correspondent

Bristol¹
March 5, 1776

Sir,

As you have often recommended the perusal of that old-fashioned book called the Bible, I take it for granted you are fully acquainted with its contents. Indeed you frequently quote it in your religious and political writings, though whenever you cite it on the latter occasion, you do it in such a methodical way, that while you endeavour to persuade the people to honour the king, that honour is to be given at the expense of their rights and privileges. You do not appear to be a friend to a limited monarchy, consequently you cannot believe our present king to be our rightful one.

I am induced to direct this to you on account of your *Calm Address to our American Colonies*, wherein, in page 24, 1st edition, you say, '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.' I think I can satisfy your desire, for I find in that old-fashioned book, 1 Kings 12:20, it is thus written: 'And it came to pass that all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel.' I in my turn desire to know what motive you had to ask such a question? Was it owing to your ignorance of the Book of God, or to the naughtiness of your heart? I therefore call on you to publish to the world which of those reasons influenced you to put such interrogation. Don't excuse yourself by saying you will not answer an anonymous writer. The printer of this paper has authority to deliver you my name on your publishing your reason, as above. And I take this opportunity to recommend those of your stamp to read the whole of the chapter quoted, and give their opinion whether such facts as there related do not frequently produce the like consequences.²

Source: published transcriptions; *St. James's Chronicle* (Mar. 2–5, 1776), p. 2; and *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* (Aug. 24, 1776), p. 3.

¹The place of writing appears only in the printing in the *Bristol Journal*, where the letter is dated Aug. 14. This may mean that someone in Bristol is reprinting the original written by another hand. In any case, this author is either the same as that of the earlier tract *Resistance no Rebellion* (c. Nov. 15, 1775 in prior collection) or borrowing this argument directly from p. 35 of that tract.

²In *Resistance no Rebellion* these consequences were detailed: '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.'

From 'Casca' [William Moore¹]

c. March 10, 1776

[p. 389]

... Hunc tota *armenta* sequuntur. Virgil²

As Johnson *noddles*, right of wrong's inferr'd:
He *stalks* the leader of the *scribbling herd*.

Of all the various ways by which *courtly and ministerial* partisans have endeavoured or pretended to serve their *king and country*, there is but one way of serving them effectually. That is neither by *bleeding*, by *voting*, nor by *writing down the constitution*; but by *administering restoratives*. Those who have endeavoured to write it down are among the worst traitors. Their iniquity can admit of no excuse, because it is attended with all the guilt of the most deliberate and serious premeditation. They are not irritated and inflamed by the insulting approaches of an enemy in the field, or by a vigorous opposition of *patriots* in the senate. Theirs is the cool work of the pensive and sequestered closet; the infernal product of a prostituted pen, an itching palm, and a rotten heart. They are base enough to write for *tyranny*, in opposition [p. 390] to their understandings, their reading, their reason, their inward conviction, and their conscience. When I say this, it is with an eye only to the head of this scribbling fraternity, the great Doctor [Samuel] Johnson, and his pious shadow Mr. John Wesley. I consider them but *as one*. As to the common herd of *ministerial hackneys*, they are but echoes of their master Johnson, without professing themselves so, as the reverend pastor Mr. Wesley does most zealously. He is the 'mimic of his master's dance', the professed admirer and abridger of that elaborate tract *Taxation no Tyranny*, which has (together with Mr. Wesley's little two-penny manual) been already answered more largely but, I hope, neither more satisfactorily nor more explicitly. I shall confine myself to the faithful *abridgement* (by Mr. Wesley) only, which I took up casually the other day.

As it is manifestly intended for the use of the *myriads* of Moorfields (an enthusiastic, hot-headed, clamorous body, and therefore fit for despotic purposes), though it excited my attention for a moment in a former paper, yet I really think, as Mr. Wesley says, that I shall serve my king and country in good earnest by animadverting upon it once more. So rank a poison in so compact a form calls for an antidote in as small a body as itself. Mr. Wesley has worked his master's tract into a small drop of comfort for his *tribe*. My observations upon his pigmy composition will make but a little pill, which I beg leave to present (like all my others) *gratis* to the public.

To begin with Mr. Wesley's title of his tract. He calls it *A Calm Address*. It is the great business and master-stroke of all art to conceal *art*. Under this specious mark of a *calm* peace-maker, the reverend epitomizer most insnaringly uses all his sacred authority to bias his flock in favour of *ministerial and despotic measures*. I use Mr. Wesley's new edition, corrected and enlarged.³ In the preface he professes to serve his *king and country*—but mark, gentle reader, that this service cannot be effected by endeavouring to instill *false principles* into either; even such exploded principles as Sir Robert Filmer's treatise upon government abounds with.

Mr. Wesley asserts 'that they are no *slaves* who enjoy both civil and religious liberty'. I admit the truth of this general assertion. But it cannot be applied to America, who is now suffering in her frontiers all the miseries of war for *constitutional resistance* and in [p. 391] her back settlements sees popery established by act of parliament, that she may be driven by papists in her rear upon the bayonets of

¹William Moore (fl. 1770–1775), was the author and publisher of several anti-government periodicals.

²Virgil, *Aeneid*, i.185; 'this whole herd follows'.

³I.e., his '4th' edn.

tyrants, parricides, and assassins in her front. This *ministerial divine* is then pleased to inform us 'who is a *slave*'. He points to the negro. But can it be any alleviation to the distressed American to behold another *slave* of a darker complexion than himself? Is this any argument, or any justification for introducing *slavery* among *free subjects*? Even the subjecting *negros* to slavery is against the law of reason, the law of nature, the law of nations, the law of God, and the laws of England.

In the next paragraph we are told what is the real difference between *liberty* and *slavery*. 'It consists' (says Mr. Wesley) 'in going where we will, and in the enjoying the *fruits* of our labour.' Or in other words, it consists in mere *locomotion*, and in the secure enjoyment of what we earn by the sweat of our own brows. We shall live to see Englishmen restrained from using this first species of liberty, should they *secede* (as probably they will) in large bodie, to America within a very few years. And a contrary doctrine to this will be asserted *then*, perhaps even by Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wesley themselves. As to the other species of liberty, if *money* is a fruit of our labour, we have already seen the most despotic attempts made to wrest it from the Americans without their consent. The English government will not allow them the right of *giving and granting* what they earn by their own labour.

Mr. Wesley then arraigns the great Montesquieu, and Judge Blackstone. They prove too much it seems. Be that as it may, since they are no advocates for *despotism* I shall not consider them as opponents. Mr. Wesley's candour induces him to confess that *he* only speaks according to the *light* he has at present. But why would a man of his calling and good sense, as well as reading, stoop to light his farthing candle at Doctor Johnson's lamp, which was, even at that instant, expiring in stench? He abjures all lucrative views. But could he seriously think that by inculcating *anti-revolution* notions among his congregation, he could really serve his *king*, who owes his crown, and his country who owes her present constitution, to the happy *Revolution*?

Let us hear him further. He supposes in the outset of his *Address* that all emigrants owe the origin of their settlements to the *king's charter*, 'permitting them' (as he says) 'to [p. 392] settle in some far country'. But the truth is that the first settlers in New England had no *charter* at first. They were Puritans who, instead of emigrating under the sanction of *royalty*, flew from the face of *tyrannic royalty* and *oppression*. They made their first settlement (whereby they formed a community distinct from their mother country) entirely at their own expense; independent either of the favours, influence, or authority of the crown of England. Yet to this *authority* Mr. Wesley tells us they still continue subject. I admit it, as far as that *authority* goes. But it must have been in consequence of a charter obtained *subsequent* to their settlement. But what was this *authority*? No authority that could *tax* them, for it was the *king's* alone.

Mr. Wesley, conscious of this, artfully slides into the next paragraph (p. 8.) from the term 'authority', to the term 'supreme power', as the master Johnson does in his larger lucubration. And then, as if the king's single authority and the 'supreme power' (i. e. the king in his parliament) were one and the same authority, he proceeds thus: '*considering this*, nothing can be more plain than that the *supreme power* in England has a right of laying *any tax* upon them' (the Americans) 'for any end beneficial to the whole empire.' Here is reason and argument! That because the Americans are subject to the king's control under his charter (that is, to observance of the charter), *therefore* they are subject to *unlimited taxation* by the *supreme power*, that is, by the king and parliament. This is as much as to say that because the *executive power* (the king) may do one thing, *therefore* the *legislative and executive power* (the king and parliament) *joined together* may do another. Upon this doughty argument rest the whole merits of Dr. Johnson's laboured tract *Taxation no Tyranny*, which procured him a doctor's degree at Oxford and a double pension from the minister. Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address* is but the echo of it.

Let us pursue the sound again till we lose it. Mr. Wesley, as if he had laid undeniable premises, proceeds as master of the field. He attacks the Americans with this argument, drawn as it were from an absurdity. 'If a freeman', says he, 'cannot be *taxed* without his own consent, neither can he be punished without it.' The argument will not hold. In a state of nature every individual is his own avenger, his own judge and executioner. Upon entering into society he tacitly yields up this personal right to the supreme power with whom he stipulates for protection. That protection, and the dispensation of rewards and punishments, should flow from the supreme hand is the very essence of society. Were its members still to remain judges in their own cause, it could [p. 393] exist no longer; all must be anarchy and confusion.

Their natural right therefore, which is no longer tenable by a subject without the total loss of the most substantial benefits, is tacitly and necessarily yielded up to the supreme power for the good of the whole community. But was it ever yet supposed, or can it with reason be asserted, that individuals, when they form societies, ever mean to yield up their present and future *property*, the fluctuating eventual acquisitions of their own labours, to the sole will and pleasure of the supreme power? Such a supposition is absurd unless *all* are made for *one*. Besides, the demands of the sovereign power upon the subject cannot, in justice, be unlimited. They must, in justice, be proportioned not only to the occasional necessities of the state but to the different circumstances of the several members; who must otherwise have exchanged their natural *free state* for a *state of slavery*, if nothing remains to them which they can call their own. *Despotic* government was never yet embraced. It has ever been usurped. This is one of its constant badges, that a subject should have no *peculium*, or property of his own. Civilians tell us that *slaves* can have none. But the having or not having this is one of the chief distinctions made by all writers on civil law, between the *freeman* and the *slave*.

This *peculium* is really and truly the very thing which Mr. Wesley calls the ‘fruit of a man’s labours’. It can be no other. If then a *freeman* (to be a *freeman*) must necessarily have some free will and some property (nay all his acquired property) in his own disposal, why should he not be at liberty to exercise that free will in *giving* and *granting* for the use of the state what must be his *own*, and only his, to give and grant? If he has neither this degree of free will, nor this property left, then all must belong to this *supreme power* (so often sounded in our ears by Dr. Johnson and his pupil Wesley), and all mankind who have once entered into a state of civil society must be neither more nor less than *slaves*.

But Mr. Wesley (persevering like the Doctor and his ministerial paymaster, in his mistakes and fallacies) insists ‘that the reception of any *law* draws after it, by a chain which cannot be broken the necessity of admitting *taxation*’. I think I have just proved the very contrary to be true. I will therefore only add one position which is universally granted by all writers on civil and municipal [p. 394] law, and particularly by all English lawyers—that the renunciation of a subject’s right in one case, or more, is not a renunciation *in all*.

I now come to Mr. Wesley’s third section, where he encounters one most true position, with as much ferocity and assurance of success as Quixote did the windmill. It is this: ‘That every *freeman* is governed by laws to which he has *consented*.’ This is most true, if by the term ‘consent’ is understood either an actual or virtual, an express or necessarily implied *consent*. These must necessarily have obtained at first, in the origin of every government, between the *supreme power* and the *people*. It must otherwise have been *usurpation*, not *government*—which always presupposes a *previous compact*, either express or implied, or both, between the sovereign power and the subject. Every sensible and able writer upon government declares the same: Grotius, Puffendorff, Locke, Sidney, Milton, Nathaniel Bacon, Montesquieu, St. Armand, Archerley, and others.

In contradiction to these great authorities, to history, reason, common sense, the general opinion of mankind, the essential difference between freedom and slavery; nay, in contradiction to the letter and spirit of the British laws and constitution (under which the colonists as well as we are born); in defiance of all these Doctor Johnson, and his scholar Wesley, pronounce this magisterial sentence: ‘Absolutely false.’ [p. 395]

Mr. Wesley asks, ‘How has any man consented to those laws which were made before he was born?’ I answer, *virtually*. He has consented by his *ancestors*. Why do laws bind now which were made three hundred years ago? Because the *supreme power* still survives; it is, by a rational fiction, supposed never to die. By as rational a fiction of law the deceased *ancestor* is supposed still to survive in his *heirs*. Otherwise how could the *heir* be bound by the solemn acts and covenants of his *ancestor*? Every man’s *heirs* are considered in law as a part (a surviving part) of himself. For this very reason the brave Americans justly think themselves bound to deliver down to their posterity such original rights as they neither have, nor possibly could intend to, surrender by accepting a charter from the *crown*. Though *they* and *we* have consented *virtually*, or (as Mr. Wesley terms it) ‘passively’, to such laws as bound our *ancestors* (to the laws at the *Revolution* for instance), yet by those very laws, and by the law of right reason, (the fountain of all other laws) both *they* and *we* are bound to be *active*, and [p. 396] not *passive*,

when the *inherent right* of disposing of *our own*, of the 'fruits of our own labours' (as Mr. Wesley says) is disputed with us; nay, absolutely denied us. When I use the word 'us', I mean to speak as an advocate for America. The Americans do not complain of those laws which bound their *ancestors*, but they rightly insist upon being treated like free *agents* in such laws as are at this instant intended to bind and subject their *own peculiar property*, acquitted in a community distinct from Great Britain. They will not sit like *passive cyphers* with their hands behind them, whilst their *money* is taken out of their pockets *without their own consent*. This would argue the greatest pusillanimity, the basest inattention to posterity, freedom, and their country.

This indubitable right of disposing of *his own* every man does and must bring with him into a distinct community, because every *freeman* has it in himself previous to his entrance into society, and unless he gives it up it still remains in him. Mr. Wesley asserts that 'the settlers in America had no right to erect a legislature, any more than those who have no vote in England have a right to erect a parliament'. This he asserts contrary to the constant established usage in all the English colonies (without exception) where legislative assemblies of their own have not only been held from the first settlements, but countenanced by the royal instructions to the several governors. This would hardly have been the case if the *crown* had thought that the *colonies* had no right to form a *legislature* of their own. So little does Mr. Wesley know of the subject on which he writes; but he follows his master Johnson's steps, right or wrong. He is equally unfortunate in his application of the American case to that of persons who have no vote in England. Is there no difference between the case of a *distinct community*, and that of subjects still resident under the old government, within the same territory? In the first instance, the government is not as yet settled, nor can without such a *distinct legislature* be conveniently settled. In the other, it has been long established and must not be overturned.

Mr. Wesley in his seventh section, allows the Americans all they claim under royal charters, 'provided those privileges are consistent with the British constitution'. Note reader how very careful Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wesley are to *exclude* the Americans from all *benefits*, unless they are strictly agreeable to the British constitution. Yet when these people are to bear *burdens* (*taxes*) these may be laid without regard [p 397] to the *constitution*; that is to say, without the consent of the people. And even their *lives*, and *liberties*, and *properties* in general, may be disposed of in the same manner. This Mr. Wesley expressly asserts [on] page 10 and page 20. This the reprobated doctrine of Sir Robert Filmer, which has never dared to show its face since the great Mr. Locke opposed and confuted it, till Doctor Johnson wrote, and the Reverend Mr. Wesley held the candle to him.

'The legislature of a colony' (says Mr. Wesley) 'is like the *vestry of a large parish*, which may assess its own inhabitants, but is still liable to *taxes* laid by supreme authority.' I have shown the difference in a former paper, but to add another word: The *vestry* and *parishioners* are all but a part of one great community, *taxed* on account of property acquired by *themselves*, within one and the same territory, under one and the same legislature where they are actually represented, and entitled to no distinct legislature of their own. The Americans form a distinct and distant community, where they acquire a distinct property, out of the territory of Great Britain, entitled a *distinct legislature* of their own, and exercising distinct legislative powers time out of mind, in all cases relative to *internal* burdens and civil economy, and this too with the constant assent of both king and parliament. Till Mr. Wesley can prove that America lies in Great Britain, his comparison will not hold.

Mr. Wesley has the modesty in his eighth section to confess a gross mistake in his former edition. It would be more candid to recant his whole supplement to Dr. Johnson's larger work.

In his tenth section he seems to tremble at the thought of a '*commonwealth*, which is to be erected in England by a *few men*'. A wondrous revolution this! Like that of Bayes in the *Rehearsal*; to be effected we know not by whom, or how, or why. But to treat this phantom of the brain more seriously: A *commonwealth* certainly followed the *decollation* of that *unhappy dupe*, that *persevering* tyrant, Charles the First. But does Mr. Wesley see a stronger likeness between the reign of that weak prince and his present Majesty than there is between America and a parish vestry? Charles attempted to govern without a parliament—George the Third never did. The views of king and parliament were *then* very different. The parliament *then* were against the king and endeavoured to save the constitution. [p. 39] Charles wished to

destroy it. His present Majesty never fails of having a *majority* of his parliament with him, because the views of king and parliament are *now* the same. Is this the reason why Mr. Wesley trembles at the dreadful thought of an approaching *commonwealth*? *Oppression* is the cause of every well-founded *revolution*. Monarchies may fall, and commonwealths may rise from their ashes. But commonwealths ever are and ever must be founded upon *virtue*. They are the greatest favourers both of civil and religious liberty, and their ruling principle, *equality*, is better adapted, if not to bloodshed, yet to peace and commerce, than the despotic supremacy of a tyrant king and a corrupt majority of parliament, formed into a determined junto for the destruction of civil liberty.

I shall endeavour now to answer the several interrogatories which Mr. Wesley puts to the Americans in his eleventh section.

‘Can you hope for a more desirable *form* of government?’ Mr. Pope answered this question long ago.

For *forms* of government let fools contest;
That which is best *administered* is best.⁴

‘What more *religious* liberty can you desire than that which you enjoy already?’ Do you mean in Canada, sir, where popery is established by act of parliament?

‘What civil liberty can you desire which you are not already *possessed of*?’ We desire not to be *dispossessed*.

‘Do you not sit, without *restraint*, every man under his own *vine*?’ We cannot say without *restraint*, for we are obliged to defend our *vineyards*. The late blasts of *tyranny* have so soured the *grapes* that ‘the people’s teeth are set on edge’.⁵

‘Would the being independent of England make you more free?’ We only wish to be independent of *tyranny*.

‘Do you not enjoy the *fruit* of your labours?’ The *fruit* of our labours is our wealth and property. These you have already told us (page 10) we have ceded to the king and parliament, who have (you say) the power of disposing, *without our consent*, [p. 399] of both our *lives*, *liberties*, and *properties*. The king and parliament have intimated the same, though not quite in such direct terms. But their cannons speak the plainest language in the field.

‘Would a *republican* government give you more liberty?’ No government can give us less than that which leaves us nothing that we can call our *own*.

‘*Republics* (you say) show no mercy.’ True, not to sodomites and hired slaughters of the people. But let America and Wilkes declare the mercy which whole territories, if not *passive*, and individuals, if not *dumb*, have received from a government which is not *republic*.

The wholesome advice which Mr. Wesley administers in his twelfth and thirteenth sections to America must be well received from the same mouth which tells them in his fourth section that their *lives*, *liberties*, and *properties* are at the disposal of the king and parliament. A doctrine to which the servile bench of *bishops* would hardly subscribe unanimously. Nay, I doubt whether some of the *crown lawyers* would not hesitate, not perhaps from conscience but from shame.

With the same strength of features Mr. Wesley declares that the advocates for America have ‘exclaimed against grievances, which either *never existed*, or are aggravated *above measure*’. Did the *Fishery* (or *famine*) Bill never exist? Does not the *perseverance* of king and parliament still exist? Have not famine, popery, sword, and fire been carried into America by act of parliament? Are not these the worst of temporal miseries? When these grievances are let loose among subjects, can the complaining sufferers be said to aggravate them *above measure*? But I congratulate myself upon my happy arrival at Mr. Wesley’s pious *peroration*, exhorting the oppressed Americans ‘to follow *after peace*’. Smitten upon

⁴Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle III, st. 6.

⁵Jer. 31:29.

one cheek, they are to turn the other. As if the sufferers were the aggressors, he admonishes them with his parting breath 'to fear God and honour the king'.

Mr. Wesley has given his opinion freely (p. 14) to the Americans. I take leave to give my opinion as freely to him. This it is: That subject may be truly said to *fear God* who defends with firmness and intrepidity his *life*, his *liberty*, his *property*, and the *dignity of his nature* against every effort of *tyranny* and *oppression*. When these [p. 400] gifts are inhumanly invaded, heaven itself is daringly insulted. For the due employment of these distinguishing and peculiar blessings man is accountable to God, and therefore it would be the height of impiety and presumption to submit them tamely to the disposal of any power upon earth. They are to be enjoyed and used to the honour and glory of our maker. Should we make a servile offering of these choice bounties at the feet of *man*, we should offend and affront God, dishonour the king, enslave our posterity, injure our country, and debase our nature.

Casca

P.S. Mr. Wesley seems fond of *secrets* (p. 17). I will tell him one, known as yet only at St. James's. A considerable part of our provision-transport, sent to the royal troops at Boston, are taken by the Americans, guns and all. But the *ministerial contractors* are to be paid, for all that, larger prices than better provisions sell for by retail in Newgate Market. Another *secret*: *Press warrants* are soon to issue for manning our second (or rather *third*) fleet against *America*. Not a single sailor enters willingly. They are of the same opinion with our soldiers, that *English* throats ought to cut⁶ by *foreigners*; especially by Hanoverians, whose *little electorate* hangs like a *dependent cobweb* upon the *British crown*. As to the *ministerial lies* circulated about the defeat of General Montgomery at Quebec, I give Mr. Wesley and his masters joy of them. But as that *divine* deals in *probabilities* (p. 14) no less flimsy than his *logic*, I should be glad to know what *probability* there is that the Canadians should have *deserted* General Montgomery, as our news writers say, on account of the inclemency of the weather. Would not a Scotch highlander, who sleeps all night upon a mountain and finds his hair frozen down to it in the morning, endure the inclemency of the weather better than a macaroni⁷ of the guards? The case is the same between the Canadians born in the back settlements, and the natives in the frontiers and midland parts of the continent of North America. If our *ministry* will *lie*, they should remember *probability*.

Source: published transcription; *The Crisis*, No. 61–62 (Mar. 16–23, 1776), 389–400.

⁶Likely meant 'ought not to be cut'.

⁷*OED*, meaning 2: 'A dandy or fop; spec. (in the second half of the 18th cent.) a member of a set of young men who had travelled in Europe and extravagantly imitated Continental tastes and fashions.'

From an Anonymous Writer

c. March 20, 1776¹

... *Fugere pudor, verumque, fidesque:*
In quorum subiere locum, fraudesque, dolique
Insidiaque, et vis, et amor sceleratus habendi. Ovid²

‘Alas, Master! for it was borrowed.’ S[acred] S[cripture]³

[p. 3]

Reverend Sir,

Your conduct, in a political view, has of late been an object of some attention. By avowing yourself to be the author of *A Calm Address to the American Colonists* you have submitted yourself to the judgment of the public. I am not, therefore, to make any apology for the privilege I claim, in common with the rest of your readers, of freely animadverting on the part you have taken in our present political disputes. I shall reserve to myself the liberty of indiscriminately rejecting or approving, according as circumstances may arise on a review of your conduct. And in the course of this examination I shall endeavour to restrain my pen within those limitations which I have always esteemed as the golden rule in all [p. 4] matters of controversy: ‘Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.’⁴

As this is most agreeable to my natural temper, I shall begin with the language of commendation. Actuated as I am by a religious regard to an old and homely adage, which is founded on the strictest principles of humanity and justice, I cannot refuse to ‘give even Mr. Wesley his due’.

It has been said that you have *borrowed* your arguments, and many even of your expressions, from a certain pamphlet entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*. But what of that? You have herein acted the part of a wise and provident man. It is true, you had not the foresight to avail yourself of the illustrious name of Dr. Johnson till it was rather too late, till you were unexpectedly charged with the heinous crime of *literary theft*.⁵ This was indeed an unlucky instance of your inattention. But *aliquando bonus dormitat* John Wesley.⁶ Possibly, however, it may be some palliation of the crying sin of *plagiarism* to suppose that you might delude yourself with the vain imagination that the sentiments of the verbose and elaborate *Rambler*, having undergone a chemical process, and having been [p. 5] simplified and analyzed in the crucible of your brain, might be lawfully adopted as your own. And least others should not so readily acquiesce in this opinion, you thought it might be as well to say nothing at all about the matter. And in all this, surely there can be no great harm. It cannot be denied that there is a degree of similarity between your pamphlet and Dr. Johnson’s. Nay, there is in fact no other difference between them than that which the Doctor himself hath very distinctly marked—his ‘is the unmeaning clamour of the *pedant* of policy;

¹This tract was first advertised in *St. James’s Chronicle* (March 26, 1776).

²Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, i.129–31; ‘Modesty and truth and faith fled the earth, and in their place came tricks and plots and snares, violence and cursed love of gain’.

³2 Kings 6:5.

⁴Shakespeare, *Othello*, Act 5, Scene 2.

⁵Footnote in original: ‘See *The Old Fox Tarred and Feathered*, a pamphlet lately published “by a Hanoverian”, from whence it appears that “no fewer than *thirty-one* paragraphs in the course of only ten pages” of Mr. Wesley’s *Calm Address* are borrowed from Dr. Johnson’s *Taxation no Tyranny*.’ [See in previous collection, dated Oct. 19, 1775, by Augustus Toplady.]

⁶‘Sometimes the worthy John Wesley nods’; adapting Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 359.

yours, 'the delirious dream' (I cannot say, of republican, but) 'of monarchical *fanaticism* .'⁷

You flattered yourself that if this similarity should not pass totally unobserved, yet it might be attributed only to a singular and fortuitous coincidence of ideas, as is sometimes the case with men of genius. Still however I cannot help thinking that it was running too great a risk with respect to Dr. Johnson himself. For he might hastily attribute this effort of your ingenuity to a paltry design of pilfering the laurels of his fame. Or he might consider it as a subtle encroachment on his *literary* [p. 6] *property*. In either case, how would you be able to stand before the indignation of the huge lexicographer, 'or answer his waked wrath'?⁸ Methinks I see him, with terrific frown and direful intent, brandishing in either hand a folio⁹ of tremendous size—oh *Dii avertite omen!*¹⁰ I shudder at the very idea. But should he, on the contrary, imagine that you intended to do homage to his profound abilities in political science, he may graciously unbend his rugged features, relax the native terrors of his aspect, and in the words of the poet, 'Grin horrible a ghastly smile'.¹¹ It comforts me, however, to think that your conduct in suppressing the good Doctor's name cannot justly be branded as selfish and insidious, since it appears that you were running a great personal risk in thus retailing his sentiments to the public.

It is preposterous to think that you could have any other than the harmless ambition of swelling yourself, like the frog in the fable, to the vast bulk of this enormous *Idler*, who awkwardly frisks about and wantonly riots in the rich pastures of ministerial favour. I said the *harmless* ambition, because if you should, in so laudable and meritorious a rivalry, unluckily share the fate of the ridiculous little animal just now alluded to, it would I trust be no great loss to any but yourself. [p. 7]

But you have afforded an unequivocal proof of your great *modesty* and *diffidence*. Being yourself a mere novice (I would not be understood to insinuate) amongst the hirelings of administration, you were unacquainted with the arguments that might be adduced to support the slavish system of despotism. And determined by irresistible evidence to support it, what was to be done? You could not have hit upon a luckier expedient. What, though it be (as our sagacious friend himself expresses it) 'An expedient which argues no great profundity of politics'?¹² Yet, the *compressibility* of the Doctor's pamphlet rendered it, upon the whole, a fit object of your attention. It would also be an act of generosity, as well as of public spirit, to rescue it from that oblivion to which it seemed to have been destined. And newly vamped, it might do wonders in reclaiming many from the error of their opinions. Accordingly, you undertook to lop off its luxuriant branches, to chastise its pedantry and parade of words, to condense its diffuse and flowing periods, and to bring it within the reach of the *weaker brethren*. This was well-intended, and deserves to be applauded.

Moreover, you gave abundant evidence of your *prudence* and *discretion* in the matter, as considered in the light of [p. 8] *convenience*; and discovered a very happy method of uniting 'the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove'.¹³ For in any event, you are secure. Should the Doctor's blessed arguments be productive of unforeseen mischief, his own brawny shoulders must bear it all—it cannot justly be imputed to you. Or if it should, you may quietly slip your neck out of the collar, and

⁷Note in original: 'Vide *Taxation no Tyranny*, p. 35, "It is the unmeaning clamour of the pedants of policy, the delirious dream of republican fanaticism."'

⁸Cf. Shakespeare, *Othello*, Act. 3, Scene 3.

⁹Note in original: 'Vide *A Dictionary of the English Language*, in two volumes folio, by S. Johnson, L.L.D.'

¹⁰'Gods avert the omen.'

¹¹Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii.846.

¹²Note in original: 'See Dr. Johnson's *Journey to Scotland*, p. 224.'

¹³Cf. Matt. 10:16.

reply to the upbraiding adversary, with Macbeth in the play, 'Thou canst not say I did it.'¹⁴

Thus far I go with you hand in hand, but no farther. Thus far I could not withhold my testimony to the *openness* and *ingenuousness* of your conduct. But here, sir, I leave you. There are other charges brought against you which do, I am afraid, carry their own evidence along with them.

I have little to say, at present, of the *suddenness* (however extraordinary) of your political conversion; although we have it upon good authority that so lately as the last general election you 'expressed yourself very warmly in favour of the Americans'.¹⁵ To be sure, it may be archly insinuated by the profane that the man of God had not then been corrupted by that mammon of unrighteousness which is the [p. 9] idol of the children of this world. *Nondum laurus erat*.¹⁶ There are certain secret and powerful attractions within the great vortex of the court, certain charms and *douceurs* which had not yet either fascinated the eyes, or debauched the heart of the *itinerant apostle*. But far be it from me to ridicule your spiritual intentions. Much less would I be understood to throw any reflections upon the pious doctrine of *supernatural influences*, of *involuntary* and *instantaneous conversions*.¹⁷ For to this occult principle, probably, you would have us attribute the late revolution in your political system. You read Dr. Johnson's unanswerable pamphlet; and *magna est veritas*!¹⁸ Such is the irresistible force of truth that your whole soul was enlightened in a moment. Darkness and error fled before the face of reason and argument. All this is, undoubtedly very natural and supposeable—that a man of your age and experience, I will not say, inflexibility and steadiness of temper, should be so instantaneously wrought upon by the fastidious conceits of a pensioned hireling.

I have only to express my wishes in regard to these two profound politicians, labouring in the same vineyard, that the event may not verify a certain remarkable [p. 10] prediction which I shall take the liberty of quoting: 'These *antipatriotic prejudices* are the *abortions of folly*, impregnated by *faction*, which being produced against the standing order of nature (*parturiunt montes*!¹⁹) have not strength sufficient for long life. They are born only to scream and perish, and *leave those to contempt or detestation, whose kindness was employed to nurse them into mischief*.'²⁰

Now that these unlucky '*abortions*' should be 'born to *scream*', I seriously profess I do not so easily conceive. But as I am a novice in these matters, I make my appeal as to this point, to Mr. Hunter, or to any other gentleman eminent for his skill in obstetrical science, who will condescend to furnish the needful information. In the meantime I cannot help admiring the beautiful structure and the musical cadence of the above period, dark and mystical as it is—such aptness and *perspicuity* of allusion, such wonderful *ease* and *simplicity* of diction!

Some profane wit indeed might wantonly insinuate that in a case of *abortion* like this, a *midwife* would be more requisite than a *nurse*. I disdain such a puerile and pedantic attention to the *minutiae* of verbal precision. My mind dwells upon the idea which this prophetic sage has suggested of [p. 11] the holy man—to *nurse* Dr. Johnson's *abortions*! Right worthy and laudable occupation! But I deprecate the accomplishment of the direful presage which winds up this elegant and harmonious sentence. Ye ministerial gossips, forbid that poor Mr. Wesley 'whose kindness has been' so usefully, and so respectably 'employed in nursing the abortions of folly, should be left to contempt or detestation!'

¹⁴Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act. 3, Scene 4.

¹⁵Note in original: 'See *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Wesley* by Caleb Evans, M.A., page 22.'

¹⁶Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, i.450; 'There were no laurels'.

¹⁷Note in original: 'See Mr. Wesley's *Journal*, passim; not the mutilated extracts from them which (from what motive I do not presume to guess) he thought proper to publish, subsequent to the journals themselves.'

¹⁸'Truth is greater.'

¹⁹Referring to Aesop's fable about the mountains in labour.

²⁰Note in original: '[Samuel Johnson] *Taxation no Tyranny*, page 4.'

To return from this digression, I understand that the chief article in your indictment relates to the *motives* of your very extraordinary conduct in this business. Of *these* we are now to judge.

It has been said that you were actuated by selfish and pecuniary views. In reply to this imputation you have attempted to clear up your conduct to the public. In justice to that public, as well as to yourself, it is true some apology was absolutely necessary. But since you condescended to take up your pen, I am sorry that you did not think fit to write more explicitly upon the subject. It is a pretty general opinion that your replies have been as inconsistent, sophistical, and evasive as they have been petulant and laconic. And as I cannot help thinking that there is some foundation for the charge, it is upon this ground therefore that I now appear against you.

You reply first that you did not publish your '*Calm Address* to the American [p. 12] colonists with a view to get money', if this had been your object, you would have swelled it to the size of '*a shilling pamphlet*'.²¹ But you were too wise and too knowing to imagine that this could be so much to your advantage, as if you were to retail your precious plagiarisms in the more commodious form of a *two-penny* pamphlet. And so far was your wonted sagacity from betraying you in this instance, that you were well aware that hereby you had a much greater probability of indemnifying the costs of your publication. By means of your numerous emissaries, you would easily distribute it amongst your humble followers in every corner of the kingdom. And those without much inconvenience to their indigent families, might spare so small a pittance, in order to possess themselves of this wonderful *epitome of Toryism*, this blessed *vade mecum*²² in politics, at an expence proportioned to its intrinsic value. There is likewise, another substantial reason why you could not conscientiously rate it higher than *two-pence*. For, as upon a reasonable computation, the *Calm Address* did not cost you above a ninth part of the *labour*, so neither could you have the confidence to charge it at more than a ninth part of the *price* of *Taxation no Tyranny*, [p. 13] which was *eighteen pence*. Thus was your modesty duly mindful of the great disproportion there is between the poverty and meagreness of your own creeping style, and the elevated, sonorous language, the *sesquipedalia verba*²³ of that Boanerges in the cause of administration, the venerable *Pomposo*.²⁴ Would it not have been the height of arrogance and presumption for such a pigmy in politics to have taken any other course than, with the profoundest reverence, to crawl between the legs of this literary Colossus?

But secondly, you allege that you did not write the *Calm Address* 'to get preferment to yourself, or your brother's children'.²⁵ And how does this appear? Because first (for I love to be methodical), 'I am a little too old to gape after it for myself, when I have one foot in the grave.' *Poor old man!* The surest sign that he is already in his dotage, to have forgotten that this is the very time of life when man sinks unawares '*to second childhood and mere oblivion*';²⁶ when the sordid love of lucre takes firmer hold of the affections; when the dim eye of age and infirmity views the setting sun of interest and preferment through a denser and more deceitful medium! And secondly, 'If my brother or [p. 14] I fought for them, we have only to show them to the world.' I do not call this shuffling, or evasion. But it does not require any great quickness or depth of penetration to observe that this declaration does not deny but some very flattering and courtly promises may notwithstanding have been made you on the behalf of your 'brother's children'. Yet surely, Mr. Wesley is 'a little too old' to believe that these fair speeches are to be always implicitly relied on. And our even-handed rulers (of whom I would always be understood to speak with the most

²¹Note in original: 'See a Letter to the Printer of the *London Chronicle*, in the paper of Nov. 28.'

²²'Handbook.'

²³'Foot and a half-long words.'

²⁴Note in original: 'See Churchill's Ghost, a poem.'

²⁵Note in original: 'N.B. These and the following passages marked thus (') are cited from Mr. Wesley's Letter to the Printer of the *London Chronicle*, above-mentioned.'

²⁶Cf. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene 7.

profound veneration) are too wise and too orthodox not to support the good old doctrine that ‘the sins of the fathers are to be visited on the children’.²⁷ Should this be the fate of your brother’s poor children (God help them!), how miserably would they be left in the lurch, and how ungratefully, in this case, would those who reap the fruit of your doings requite your work and labour of love! I should have taken no notice of this part of your accusation, had not your own way of answering it (I had almost said) inclined me to think that it is not wholly without foundation.

Thirdly. I grant that if you were actuated by mercenary views, in regard either to yourself or others (which, it seems, may still be very naturally inferred), you did not then engage in this business ‘to please [p. 15] any man living high or low’—*but yourself or your brother’s children*, you must give me leave to add. I can readily conceive that you did not mean to benefit any living creature besides. No, you ‘know mankind too well’ to imagine that it could answer your purpose to act under the impulse of any other than that which has frequently been supposed to be the primum mobile, the ruling principle of your politico-methodistical machine.

You speak so confidently, and so rancorously of the inconstancy of political men that we have good reason to surmise that you have, on some former occasion, made proof of their sincerity, and *that* sometimes to your no small mortification and discomfiture. Alas! It is pity you have not profited by this dear-bought experience. But the unsuccessful gamester is frequently no less eager in the pursuit than he that wins. ‘I know’ (says the pious Mr. Wesley) ‘they that love you for political service, love you less than their dinner; and they that hate you, hate you worse than the devil.’ Oh fie, Mr. Wesley! I did not expect such an expression from you. I give you credit indeed for your wit, but doth it not discover a degree of levity which gives the lie to your demure look and sanctified deportment? It betrays moreover so much acrimony and intemperate wrath, that I fear you had for a moment [p. 16] forgotten that moderation and *calmness* you profess. *Tantaene in animis caelestibus irae?*²⁸

As to your next assertion, fourthly, that you did not ‘write with a view to enflame any, but the contrary’, I do not presume to determine what might be your particular views. But I ask, could you really imagine that you were taking the right method of ‘*putting out* the flame that rages all over the land’? That you have, at least, been mistaken is evident from the disapprobation which has been again and again expressed, both in conversation and from the press, of your curious and *original* pamphlet. How could you sir, a preacher of peace, ‘pour oil into the flame, and cause it to rise higher and higher’, by forwardly asserting, with so much bitterness, that ‘the resistance of America has been wholly owing to the traitorous designs of some persons on this side of the water’? It cannot be supposed that a person of common pretensions to veracity would publicly advance a thing of this kind on light grounds. I therefore call upon you, sir, as bound in duty to your king and justice to your fellow-citizens, I call upon you to bring these traitors (whoever they are) before the awful tribunal of their country, to lay before the world their dark and infernal designs. If you cannot do this, you have only given us a proof that you are arrived at the highest pitch of [p. 17] insolence, arrogance and presumption in thus daring to traduce some of the first names and of the most respectable characters in this country. It is a most cruel, audacious, and malignant insinuation. Nor can it be any breach of charity to say that you could have no other view in making so shameless a declaration of your own weak and ill-founded opinion than to exert your impotent endeavours to raise the horrid demon of civil discord, to unsheath the murdering sword, and put in motion the gloomy engine of tyranny and oppression.

You allege that ‘the Americans are not used either cruelly or unjustly ... that they are not injured at all ... that they are not contending for liberty,’ etc. But surely you have forgotten that those who have an opinion of their own, who have the spirit to avail themselves of the common privilege of humanity by judging for themselves, will not acquiesce in arrogant assertions and jesuitical evasions. These, indeed, may probably suffice with your own artless and implicit followers, who look up to you as their infallible guide, their ghostly father, and the keeper of their consciences. I can conceive that it may be very politic

²⁷Deut. 5:8.

²⁸Virgil, *Aeneid*, i.11; ‘Do the heavens hold such anger’.

to promote the purposes of popular delusion by affirming everything with an unembarrassed countenance, and a confident, dictatorial air. Whatever you do, do not risk a single *argument*; that would ruin [p. 18] everything. Pronounce upon every question absolutely and decisively. This requires some degree of artifice, and not a little modest assurance. But perhaps nine times out of ten you will be sure to gain your point by it. It will repress idle curiosity. It will preclude all further enquiry, which might otherwise prove, in many cases, a very awkward and troublesome business. Besides, it throws a veil of mysteriousness and obscurity over the subject, which I find to succeed wonderfully in my way (says the spiritual-minded Mr. Wesley), and I have no reason to doubt but it will do as well in politics as in religion. For, it seems, there is quackery and empiricism in the one as well as in the other.

I do not mean, sir, at present to debate with you the great question of taxation. It is in much abler hands. Nor do I presume to think that either you or I have any new light to throw upon the subject. Besides, it is now referred to a more important issue. The avenging sword is drawn. The awful guardians of liberty and justice are engaged to vindicate the cause of the oppressed. And 'shall not the judge of all the earth do right?'²⁹

You must however allow me to observe that it ill becomes you to decide, and that so dogmatically, upon a point which you do not appear to have maturely considered; nay which you have only taken upon trust, [p. 19] upon the authority of a man (however capable perhaps in many other respects, and though allowed to speculate upon the narrow politics of a barren island in Scotland, yet) as ill-qualified as yourself to judge of the exigencies, the resources, and the mutual dependencies of the different parts of a great and flourishing empire as this *has been*. Thus, 'to perplex the opinion of the public *many artifices* have been used which, as usually happens when *falsehood is to be maintained by fraud*, lose their force by counter-acting one another.'³⁰ I must beg the author's pardon for the liberty I beg the author's pardon for the liberty I take, if I have perverted the words now cited from their original meaning. But they are so exactly apropos (in their present accommodated sense). So expensive of my own idea that I could not withstand the temptation of *borrowing* them; an act in which I thought myself abundantly countenanced by the honest sanction of Mr. Wesley's example.

Is it not also a little extraordinary that you, sir, who have known the Americans so well; who have received so many personal civilities from them; who have (in your curious and valuable *Journals*) borne ample testimony to their virtues; nay, who have no longer ago than the late election (as hath been already observed) signified [p. 20] the most unreserved approbation of their resistance—it is surely not a little extraordinary that *you* should now so suddenly rise up to condemn them. 'Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.'³¹ It is reported that you have been disappointed in your hopes of an American bishopric. And when I consider your conduct, 'I partly believe it'.³² It is likewise said that you have now some other object in view. And this we also may take for granted, because you do not absolutely contradict it. You adopt the safer method of endeavouring to *evade* what you do not think fit to *deny*. I do not expect you to acknowledge that you have basely offered yourself to hire, that you have actually received the wages of prostitution. Though we know it to be an undoubted fact that your *Calm Address to the American Colonies* has been circulated from the first office in the kingdom. Yet I think you cannot be quite so abandoned as to suppose that this circumstance does you any great honour. To me it affords a strong presumptive evidence of your shame. You probably have found it convenient to oblige a certain *pious* lord in administration, whom it was impossible to refuse. That this might not much interfere with your apostolical labours and pursuits, it was also convenient to have recourse to Dr. Johnson, and to pilfer the most contemptible [p. 21] of his publications. Thus, while you were cringing and licking the dust of the great man's shoes, in order to obtain some paltry pittance of his precious bounty, at the same time (to use

²⁹Gen. 18:35.

³⁰Note in original: *Taxation no Tyranny*, p. 4.'

³¹Note in original: '1 Cor. 17:22.'

³²Note in original: '1 Cor. 11:18.'

the words of your own very delicate figure in regard to Mr. Toplady) you unfortunately chanced to 'lick up Dr. Johnson's spittle'.³³

After all, by whatever considerations you may have been influenced in this business, it was to be sure the luckiest expedient that, amidst innumerable resources, could have been devised in the present emergency of affairs. To have gained over a man of Mr. Wesley's description, affords a striking proof of the *wisdom* and *consistency* of 'the powers that be'.³⁴ This surely must be considered as an invaluable accession of weight and dignity to government. I felicitate my fellow-subjects on their having obtained so upright and so conscientious an assertor of their natural and just rights! I heartily congratulate our rulers, the guardians of our liberties and laws, on their sagacity in distinguishing, and on their good fortune in making so respectable an acquisition!

Perhaps it is not an easy matter at once to determine whether administration or Mr. Wesley hath gained most honour by so extraordinary a coalition. But is it not humiliating to the last degree to reflect on the [p. 22] state to which this once happy, free, and commercial country is reduced, when obliged to look for aid in the prosecution of its plans to the itinerant leader of a gloomy and fanatical sect? With what astonishment must our neighbours on the continent—the silent but not inattentive spectators of the conduct of Great Britain at this important crisis—with what astonishment must they contemplate, with what secret satisfaction exult in our disgrace! How would the breast of our late venerable sovereign have glowed with generous indignation, had it been predicted to him during his lifetime that in the reign of his illustrious grandson the politics of England would have found a resource in the pharasaical cant and grimace of *Methodism*!

It is a truly singular and curious phenomenon in our political hemisphere that the proud *pensioner* and the *apostate priest* are the most substantial pillars of the prerogative, the most zealous friends of government, the most *original* and *disinterested* writers in support of its measures this day in the kingdom. Pity it is that, in one *single* instance, our otherwise sagacious ministers are blind to their own interests, regardless of the honour of their sovereign, and indifferent to the welfare of the people. Had they the quickness to take a broad *hint*, or the grace to attend to the awkward advances of a true son of the church—a certain [p. 23] Reverend Dean³⁵—might happily complete the triumvirate. Most worthy and exalted emulation! That men who have pretensions to learning and abilities, should thus nobly aspire to be the abject tools But I will repress the indignant language of rising detestation.

Sir, it is time to be serious. The occasion abundantly requires it. Such instances afford a melancholy and degrading picture of the human heart. We know it is necessary that the man who sinks so low as to become the creature of administration should not possess the most refined sentiments of honour and delicacy. But sir, *your* conduct (which is now more particularly the subject of animadversion) so abounds with inconsistencies that an impartial observer might be strongly induced to think that, notwithstanding your ostentatious pretensions, you had no fixed principles either of belief or of action. That you had ever lived in a fluctuating state of doubt and uncertainty. And consequently, that you can have no real concern for the fate of your country, for the welfare and security of your fellow-citizens. I am sorry to [p. 24] further, that those who know you best will be tempted to believe that you are governed by the basest and most unmanly motives. What shall we say to your shameful apostacy from those sentiments of freedom which you once so eagerly espoused? To your gross and flagrant plagiarisms? To your affected disavowal of being influenced by those considerations of private emolument, with which

³³Note in original: 'See postscript to Mr. Wesley's Letter to the Printer of the *London Chronicle*, before referred to.'

³⁴Rom. 13:1.

³⁵Note in original: "'If it was not'" (says an ingenious writer, in relation to the Dean of Gloucester [Josiah Tucker]) "for a seeming disclaim, the sincerity of which I question, I should shrewdly suspect myself to see in the writings of this gentleman the very strongest signs of seeking preferment." See *A Further Examination of our Present American Measures*, by the author of *Considerations, etc.*, page 176.

you must be conscious that your conduct is too strongly marked? What are we to think of the futility, the reserve, the evasion, and the petulance of your 'feeble replies' to this complicated charge? In the name of all that is just, what can you urge in your own defence? But if your strange infatuation does not still continue, you will rather seek the darkest shade of silence and oblivion. Yet in what estimation, think you, will those hold your religious profession whom you have hitherto imposed upon by the specious garb of external sanctity and self-denial, by a studied solemnity of countenance, and a gloomy austerity of manners—to all outward appearance devout, mortified, *wanting nothing*; but in reality proud, ravenous, oppressive, and *for a pretence, making long prayers*? Hypocrite, bigot, or enthusiast; or a composition of these three characters? Do you, in your dotage, likewise long after the fleshpots of Egypt? Or are you afraid least that the light of [p. 25] reason and of liberty should banish your cant and your jargon out of America?'³⁶

There is one circumstance remaining, which is of no small weight in the scale of your conduct. I must therefore be excused if I here take some notice of the heavy charge which your antagonist Mr. Evans brings against you, of publishing what has very much the appearance (it were idle to endeavour to soften the harshness of the expression) of a *flagrant and palpable falsehood*. You last year 'strongly recommended an Argument for *The Exclusive Right of the Colonies to Tax Themselves*.'³⁷ Upon being reminded of this, you at first absolutely deny your having ever seen the book.³⁸ But Mr. Evans, producing incontestable evidence that you had both seen and recommended it, you begin to falter in your denial, and with awkward hesitation to acknowledge 'I believe I did'. You do not vouchsafe to give us a clear and explicit account of this business. What opinion must you then have of your readers, if you think they are to be satisfied with such flimsy and evasive excuses, as 'I *believe* I did. ... but I had entirely forgotten it'?³⁹ To be sure, there [p. 26] is an air of great probability in the declaration, that 'till you had read several pages' you *recollected nothing* (happy forgetfulness!) of a publication which had, not long before, made the strongest impressions upon your mind. To this declaration, I can but say with Dr. Johnson (speaking of the notion of the *second sight*, in his *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, page 256) that 'I am *only willing* to believe.'

But now I think of him, cannot your trusty friend, your oracle, your *magnus* Apollo, relieve you in this dilemma? Cannot he aid you with his advice or consolation? Apropos: 'To revenge reasonable incredulity by *refusing evidence* is a degree of insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt.'⁴⁰ Indeed, indeed. Mr. Wesley, I am afraid this applies too closely where you would least of all wish it to apply, to the case of a certain *Calm Addresser*, and that the conclusion to be deduced from the premises is too obvious to escape the notice of the most inattentive observer: *Nec erit dubitabile verum*.⁴¹

The *motives* of your conduct in publishing your *Calm Address* have hitherto principally engaged my attention. I must, before I conclude, bespeak your indulgence, whilst I make a few remarks on the [p. 27] general tendency of the pamphlet itself. It is needless for me to enter into any discussion of your arguments, since they contain nothing that is *new*—nothing that has not been again and again refuted, and that long before ever you took up your pen to *propagate the system of slavery and despotism*. For, next to those considerations of a private and personal nature which have been supposed to influence your

³⁶Note in original: 'See *A Further Examination of our Present American Measures*, p. 183, where the author, in the course of his animadversions on Mr. Wesley's conduct, expresses himself as above.

³⁷Note in original: 'See Preface to the 2nd edition of Mr. Evans's *Letter to Mr. Wesley*, page 7.'

³⁸Note in original: 'See Preface to a new edition of the *Calm Address*.'

³⁹Note in original: 'See Mr. Wesley's Letter to the Rev. Mr. Caleb Evans, in the *Gazetteer* of December 13th [1775].'

⁴⁰Note in original: 'See Johnson's *Journey to Scotland*, p. 274.'

⁴¹Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, i.223; 'Nor shall there be any doubt of the truth'.

conduct, *this* (I am sorry to say it, this) seems to have been the object of your publication. An object most worthy of such an interposition, *dignus vindice nodus*!⁴²

But sir, give me leave to ask, Are you so totally lost to all the generous feelings of patriotism and public virtue? Can your mind be so thoroughly debased as to join with the reptiles of a corrupt and arbitrary ministry in aiming to enslave and to ruin your country? What shall we think of your insolent, but feeble attempt, at this time of day, to revive the obsolete and justly exploded notions of *passive obedience* and *non-resistance* in the *subject*, or *absolute* and *unlimited power* in the *sovereign*? Surely no tenets can be more hostile to the interests of humanity than these; and the infatuated notion of the *divine right* of princes, so nearly allied to these. With respect to this latter (to adopt the sentiment of a respectable writer), 'It is a doctrine which avowedly subverts civil liberty, and which [p. 28] represents mankind as a body of vassals, formed to descend like cattle from one set of owners to another, who have an absolute dominion over them.'⁴³ And what is more to be dreaded by those who call themselves men, than the exercise of *absolute dominion* and *unlimited power*, when committed to the hands of an earthly potentate, who is himself naturally no more than their equal? It is indeed, an object of too high importance to be intrusted to any mortal, a charge to which no human being is equal. Whoever would risk the daring attempt, let him call to mind the fate of that rash, aspiring youth who, presuming to guide the chariot of the sun, was overwhelmed with deserved ruin and confusion. *Non agat hos currus*!⁴⁴ Would it not justly be deemed madness to furnish one man with the means of crushing the rest of his species? History will inform us that, in fact, *despotic princes* have ever been the scourges and the destroyers of the people. Witness the Neros and the Caligulas of every age, and of every country! Has it not been their constant and unrelenting language, '*We will add to your yoke, we will chastise you with scorpions*'?⁴⁵

But if the tendency of these slavish doctrines is so fatal and pernicious, what a monster must *he* be, who puts himself forward as the abettor of tyranny and [p. 29] arbitrary power! He must be the worst and most dangerous of rebels, the curse of civil society, and the enemy of the whole human race. If you ask, Whom does this character describe? I cannot answer you more pointedly than in the words of Nathan to David: '*Thou art the man*.'⁴⁶

In short, sir, the more I consider your conduct, the more strange and unaccountable, the more unjustifiable and mischievous does it appear to me. Surely it affords an unhappy instance of the baseness and depravity of mankind, to think that a man at your time of life, and (according to your own expression) 'with one foot in the grave', who has been looked upon as a mirror of piety and sanctity by some, and in defiance of the *calumnies* of a *censorious* world has been well-spoken of by others—that this man should at last sink himself so low as to be even suspected of the most unworthy deviations from the purity, nay the rigid severity of his former pretensions. That, after all his parade about the forms and externals of religion, he should, when 'declining into the vale of years',⁴⁷ by an unhappy and flagrant departure from those which have been at least his ostensible principles, bring upon himself the gross imputations of selfishness and hypocrisy, of cunning, prevarication, and falsehood! I would indeed willingly hope, for the credit of human nature, that you [p. 30] could never have had recourse to these little, unmanly, and iniquitous arts. But I think it must be acknowledged that, unfortunately, appearances are too strongly against you. And I need not remind you what dishonour even the *appearances* of evil may, in the opinion of many, reflect upon that sacred cause of religion and of gospel-liberty in which you have professed to

⁴²Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 191; 'a knot worthy of a vindicator'.

⁴³Note in original: 'See Dr. Price's *Observations on Civil Liberty, etc.*, page 16.'

⁴⁴Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ii.62; 'Do not drive this chariot'.

⁴⁵Cf. 1 Kings 12:11–14.

⁴⁶2 Sam. 12:7.

⁴⁷See Shakespeare, *Othello*, Act. III, Scene 3.

‘labour, both in season and out of season’.⁴⁸

Is this then the end of all your boasted *perfection*? Does it serve you only as a mask to conceal the hideous deformity of vice? But the arts of imposition and deceit will always sooner or later defeat their own purposes. And the detection of *hypocrisy* is a public benefit. It tends to caution the unwary multitude against *that unwholesome leaven* of the self-righteous *pharisee*.

I am not ignorant that there are many amongst your deluded followers who have a blind and implicit faith in your *political* as well as *theological* creed. But could you be taking so base an advantage of their credulity and ignorance as to practise upon their innocent and unsuspecting minds, and designedly to mislead and seduce them? Could you deliberately aim to involve them in slavery and error, without once considering that for this you must one day be accountable—accountable to the violated rights of an injured people; and, [p. 31] above all, accountable to him who is ‘the Prince of the kings of the earth’?⁴⁹

For God’s sake sir, let me entreat you seriously to reflect for a moment on the disgraceful situation into which your own artifices have betrayed you. Have you not basely prostituted yourself to the vilest and most execrable purposes? Have you not shamefully endeavoured, at least in effect, to depreciate the value of that inestimable jewel, that ‘pearl of great price’,⁵⁰ that ‘sacred blessing of liberty, without which’ (to use the manly language of the excellent writer already referred to) ‘man is a beast, and government a curse’?⁵¹ It is natural to ask, Are you *actuated by no other than the detestable ambition of branding your name with contempt and abhorrence as a second [Henry] Sacheverell*? Do you aspire to stand conspicuous on the ignoble list of infamy and venality—amongst those *slaves of state*,⁵² the *pensioned* Jacobites and Tories of whatever rank of precedency in guilt, the [Samuel] Johnsons, the [John] Shebbeares, the [James] Macphersons, and the [Thomas] Hutchinsons of this degenerate age?

Till of late, I was willing to entertain a favorable idea of your views and intentions. I am sorry to say that you now have compelled me to deviate from this opinion. Nor am I singular in this. You have taken the [p. 32] most effectual means to forfeit the esteem of the public in general. Possibly indeed you may think it ‘a small thing to be judged of man’s judgment’.⁵³ This however is not always to be despised. And your character, whether of greater or less significance in the eye of the world, is now at stake. You are accused of the most atrocious conduct. Nay, you are convicted upon unquestionable evidence of attempting to revive and propagate doctrines which are, in their tendency, totally subversive of all the ends of civil society, and absolutely destructive of the happiness of man. You are found guilty of treason and rebellion—*treason* against the *constitution*, and *rebellion* against the *majesty of the people*. I am afraid it is not in your power to make even the shadow of a defence. And I wish you no other punishment than the loss of that confidence with a certain class of people, which has already enabled you to carry the arts of deceiving to such a pitch of enormity. For my own part, I should think my time not ill-employed if these pages should have so much effect as to guard but one honest and well-intentioned mind against the unmeaning rhapsodies of enthusiasm, or the *jesuitical delusions of priestcraft*.

I am, sir,

Your’s, etc.

Source: Anonymous, *Political Empiricism: A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley* (London: J. Johnson, 1776).

⁴⁸Cf. 2 Tim. 4:2.

⁴⁹Rev. 1:5.

⁵⁰Matt. 13:45–46.

⁵¹Note in original: ‘Dr. Price’s *Observations, etc.*’

⁵²Note in original: ‘See Johnson’s *Dictionary*, article “Pensioner”, “A slave of the state hired by a stipend to obey his master”’.

⁵³Cf. 1 Cor. 4:3.

From an Unnamed Correspondent

[London?]
c. April 1, 1776

Reverend Sir,

As you was pleased to declare in the *London Chronicle* that your motive in publishing your *Calm Address* was not this or that,¹ and particularly not to inflame but to heal, so you will give me leave to say in answer. That as your secret motive can be known only to God and your own conscience, that must be left to those awful judges. But you certainly have been very unhappy in the execution of your declared motive of healing, by throwing all the blame on the Americans, and giving this reason for it: That they never had this privilege by charter, nor even claimed it till this reign. Why sir, can you be ignorant that they claim this as Britons by their great charter of rights? That they had it as St. Paul had his, not by purchase or favour, but their birthright? And this being the grand question in debate, whether Britons abroad should not enjoy it as well as Britons at home, ought you to take it for granted they should not? Or could you think to evade it by saying, they have not the privilege by charter, and call that healing? And as to their not claiming it till this reign, their answer is ready—that till this reign there was no attempt to divest them of it. Surely I need not lay claim to the house I am in possession of, till an attempt is made to dispossess me.

In a subsequent *Chronicle* you stepped forth immediately to refute a charge brought against you relative to your advising of verdigrease.² But not a single word that I can find has been offered by you as to the arguments brought against your *Calm Address* by ‘Americanus’ [i.e., Caleb Evans] and others, and the heavy personal charge of inconsistency, etc. by Mr. Evans, with the proof of the fact. These are still left to stand against you in full array, unnoticed, unanswered.

I cannot conceive why you had not trusted Dr. Johnson with the management of the argument, and to have left him to defend the position of *Taxation no Tyranny*. His abilities are confessed, his original sentiments were arbitrary, he has only transferred them and he is honoured with a pension. But what had you to do with it, who had declared your sentiments to be different, and therefore needlessly to engage, and that at the expence of contradicting your own opinion, and without (I shall say the least hopes of) a pension, is a conduct that has surprised everyone who knew John Wesley. And has brought him and his laboured, artful, though *Calm Address* to be considered as not wholly consistent with the character and writings of an Israelite without guile. But though you have been thus silent yourself, a zealous friend from Bethnal Green has thought proper to appear as your advocate in the *London Chronicle*.³ But as he only uses rough words instead of arguments, and talks of your writing well about the slave trade, and about Calvin and Arminius, and other matters quite foreign to the argument and consistency of your *Calm Address*, which was the point in question; so that matter must still stand *pro confesso*,⁴ till you appear yourself to refute facts, clear up motives, and enforce arguments, in a manner becoming yourself and character. I am, sir,

Your humble servant.

P.S. Just as I had wrote this letter to be forwarded to the *London Chronicle*, I observed a short epistle from you in that paper of the 2nd of March, respecting some letter published in a daily paper that

¹Referring to JW's letter of Nov. 26, 1775, which appeared in the *London Chronicle* (Nov. 25–28, 1775), pp. 519–20.

²The author is referring to JW's letter dated Dec. 28, 1775 that appeared in the *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 1, 1776), 2; and *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Dec. 29, 1775 – Jan. 1, 1776), 4. No copy in the *London Chronicle* has been located.

³Joshua Armstrong to Rev. Caleb Evans, *London Chronicle* (Jan. 25–27, 1775), p. 93.

⁴A legal term for ‘guilty as charged’.

you thought reprehensible and your calling on Mr. [Joseph] Chambers to produce it.⁵ Aas I see no public paper but the *London Chronicle*, so I know nothing of what you allude to. But why, sir, let me ask you again, do not you as readily step forth and take notice of what had been published in the *London Chronicle*, as above referred to, ere you divert the public to other papers that you may think more easily to be answered, and to endeavour to cover yourself with that cloak?

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle* (Apr.4–5, 1776), p. 333.

⁵JW's letter to Joseph Chambers, Mar. 1, 1776, in *London Chronicle* (Feb. 29–Mar. 2, 1776), p. 209.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
April 2, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I would sooner have returned my sincere thanks for your last kind favour had I known where to have found you.¹ But like your blessed master, you go about doing good, and here have no abiding home. I love to know where you are. But when I cannot do this, I can tell my dear Lord all my warmest wishes concerning you. He whose presence fills all space can sweetly pour all the Spirit of his love into your waiting heart.

Your last letter was a particular blessing to me. I found much encouragement in hearing the faith you have for me. My soul prays that you never may feel pain on my account, or at least that pain which my walking less close with God would occasion. We wish to please and oblige those we love, and next to pleasing my heavenly Father, I feel it would be, and is my meat and drink, to please my dear and honoured spiritual father. You have, in the Lord's hands, administered much consolation to me by your writings, your sermons. Your public and private instructions have, glory be to God, through divine grace taught my soul to soar aloft, far above these earthly toys I once was so attached unto. And now my soul is lightened of its load, and seeks the things above. I have been in affliction's school since I wrote last. But the Lord doeth all things well. He was with me in the fire and in the water; the flames did not kindle on me, nor the flood overflow me. No, blessed be the Lord, the angel of his presence comforted me, and the language of my heart continually was

Mold as thou wilt the passive clay.²

I had a violent inflammation in one of my eyes. The sight of both was much affected. But the Lord gave me perfect resignation to his divine will, for I often told him, 'All I have and am is thine, take or give what thou wilt but give thyself to me'. I had much of a fever on me and some returns of my old complaints: pain in my side, shortness of breath, no appetite; and at times I did eat, much pain in my stomach after taking food. Some of these it has graciously pleased the Lord to remove. My eyes are much better, also my side and breathing. But my stomach is still the same, and often I have much pain in my bowels. For near three weeks I have seldom been free from the headache. But still, glory be to my Lord, I am more than conqueror. He keeps me continually happy in his love, and though I am not well in body, yet I am able to go about and do what his kind providence allots to me. I am enabled to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks.

The fond desire, the painful thirst
His joyous presence does remove
But my full soul shall still require
Thy whole eternity of love.³

I have been at Leeds lately. Some of my dear friends there are in the fire. Dear Mrs. [Ann] Clapham much wants your advice how to act in regard to her relations; but as it would be needful to say much to let you know her situation, we will defer it till we see you, which I hope will be soon.

¹This may be a reply to JW's letter of Nov. 29, 1775; or there may have been a more recent letter that has not survived.

²CW, "An Act of Devotion," st. 4, *HSP* (1749), 1:207.

³Cf. CW, 'Pleading the Promise of Sanctification', st. 22, *HSP* (1742), 263; Ritchie may have know from the extract CW published in *All in All* (1781), 54, where this is stanza 4.

I am glad to hear you are coming towards us, and should esteem it a particular favour if you would as soon as convenient let me know when we may expect you at Otley. Many hearts rejoice in the hope of hearing the Lord's message from you. O that the lips of the righteous may feed many. I should also be glad to know when you will be at Cross Hall,⁴ and if your Yorkshire plan is laid out, pray let brother [Joseph] Bradford copy the places hereabouts and enclose for me. I love to know where you are, and when I can, will strive to be with you. I love my Lord, and I love his devoted followers. I long to follow you as you follow God, and when I am with you my spirit seems to catch the heavenly fire. It often does me much good to think on you. How employed for God? How taken up with things divine? How empowered is your time?

O dear sir, may you be more than ever so employed, till without a veil between you, you see the God you love. And may I be found at your feet in the day of the Lord. The work of God continues to go on sweetly among us. We had fourteen joined the last Sunday. Some have lately been justified, some sanctified; and blessed be the Lord, some have gained the wished for port, and the Lord seems about to call others home. I hope, nay I believe, we shall have a good time when you come. The Lord will come with you. May your journey be truly prosperous, and may all our souls get near our adorable Saviour, prays, dear sir,

Your [affectionate, though unworthy daughter,

E. Ritchie]

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wes / At the preaching H[ouse] Manchester'.

Annotation: another hand, '11th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁴The home of Mary Bosanquet and Sarah Crosby.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

[Otley]
May 17, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

How shall I sufficiently praise my God and thank you for every favour?¹ The gratitude I feel is too big for utterance. I am lost. 'God is paid when man receives, to enjoy is to obey.'² And as to you, dear sir, I continually pray the Almighty Father of mercies to make you as happy and as holy as my full heart wishes you to be. May your cup run over, and may you be ever filled with all the fullness of God.

I have often thought myself so indebted to you, and felt my heart so united to you as would hardly admit of an increase—but feel I am happily mistaken. I will now set no bounds, for as the love of God enlarges the heart, and while it fills still makes room for more, so does that divine love which we feel for the followers of our Lord. It is of the same nature, springs from the same source, and produces the same affect. I bless the Lord for the many precious opportunities I enjoyed while with you, and I can praise him for what I felt even [at] parting. All the powers of my soul seemed afresh to contract themselves to the Holy Jesus, and my heart cry out, 'I will be more then ever thine'. I felt a sweet confidence that I should soon be transported from this vale of tears to that celestial hill where death shall be done away and bodies part no more, to dwell forever with my blessed Lord and his dear redeemed ones. I love you now, but how much better shall I love you then. There I shall be all spirit, and freed from the encumbrances of flesh and blood. Shall a J. C. express it with greater strength and elegance? [I] love every friend to whom the love [of] Jesus here unites me. I cannot express what I often feel. When my soul is nearest God, I [am] most one with you.

While thus we walk with Christ in light
What shall our souls disjoin
Souls which himself vouchsafes to unite
In fellowship divine.³

Nothing shall, nothing can, but sin. And this I believe my Lord will keep me from. I often think if it please the Lord, I could love you to outlive me. But I must live the present moment. You now live, the Lord be praised, O that he may spare your valuable life.

I want your advice my dear sir, and must pray you freely to tell me what you think. Don't be afraid of trying me, for to do what you judge best will afford me pleasure. For some time my York friends have much wanted me to go and stay a little time with them. If the Lord please, I will contrive to be there when you will be at York. But Miss [Elizabeth] Hurrell, hearing me speak of it, tells me she intends meeting you at Yarm and going around with you until you come to York. She has offer[ed] to take me with her to Yarm. If it would then be no inconvenience for me to go with you until we came to York, I should much like to accept her offer, as I should have the blessed privilege of being so much with you. But if you have anyone else that this would hinder you from assisting, or it would subject you to any inconvenience, or if you judge it would be better for me to go to York from home, I hope you will freely tell me. Don't be backward to deny me. Your light I will endeavour to follow, for I believe God will direct you to tell me what will prove most for his glory and my good. If you judge it imprudent, tell me so, and with pleasure I will do what you think best. I bless the Lord who gives me to feel his will my rest. When he would have me at home, I am truly happy here. Sometimes I do not at first see the path wherein I ought to walk. But I leave myself in the Lord's hand, and he shows me his will. At present I will pray

¹JW had been in Otley on Apr. 24–25, 1776; when he could answer in person her letter of Apr. 2.

²Alexander Pope, 'The Universal Prayer', st. 5.

³CW, 'At Parting', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 160.

the Lord to direct you to direct me, and shall take your answer as the answer to my prayers.

Glory be to God I have the things I ask. In all temporals I can pray with resignation. And as to spirituals, he does give more than I can ask or think. And yet I ask on. Jesus still gives and my soul is kept as a well watered garden. No want his fullness knows.

Athirst, to him I ever fly;
I drink and yet am ever dry.
Ah who against such charms is proof;
Ah who that loves can love enough?⁴

I have had a good time since I saw you. I have been meditating on many things I heard, and feel the Lord has made them truly profitable to me. The work of God prospers much, glory be to his name. We have had six justified lately. The Lord may shortly pour all the Spirit of his love, and make Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth. May you even in cold Scotland find many warm hearts. May the pleasure of the Lord prosper in your hands, and may you return to our favoured isle with every blessing blessed prays, dear sir,

Your ever affectionate though unworthy daughter,

E. R.

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wesley / Edinburgh'.

Annotation: another hand, '12th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁴Cf. Johann Christian Jacobi, 'We love him because he first loved us', st. 9, as revised in JW, *CPH* (1741), 40.

From William Moore

c. May 25, 1776¹

[p. 35²]

Now I should be glad to know from the modern disciple of Loyola, Mr. John Wesley, whether the almighty would have inflicted so severe a punishment upon Ahab, his queen, and all their posterity,³ for this *single* act of murder and injustice, if it had been *lawful* for the kings of Israel to take the people fields, [p. 36] vineyards, etc. *without their consent*, to possess or give them to their servants (that is their minions and ministers). He cannot answer in the affirmative. And yet he most impiously, falsely, and jesuitically asserts (contrary to the express word of God) in his *Calm Address* (page 7) that ‘the king of England, may dispose of the *lives, liberties* and *properties* of the people in the whole British dominions *without their consent*.’ And again page 21, he says, ‘Every sovereign under heaven, has a right to take the property of his subjects without their consent.’

These are Mr. Wesley's bare assertions without proof, which are clearly refuted from the Bible itself by this instance of Ahab, and others which I have quoted. But this is not the first time John Wesley the jesuit has attempted to establish his own idle notions in direct opposition to the word of God, to answer his own inconsistent purposes. His *Calm Address*, like all his other productions, is a compound of incoherent nonsense, absurdity, and lies; the mere invention of his own distempered brain, fit only to be read were it was fabricated in Moorfields. This kingdom cannot produce such another being. One day he is an advocate for *liberty*, the next he brandishes the sword of *tyranny*. One day he reads a book, takes large extracts from it; the next day swears he never saw it, and when detected, charges the treachery of his memory with the [p. 37] guilt of his mind. At another time he rivals Hippocrates in the medical art, gives his own ignorant prescriptions, and then calls it *primitive physick*. Indeed they are most of them *specifics* and when regularly followed always produce that certain cure for all disorders, *death*. In a word, he is a divine and an atheist, a traitor and a loyalist, a doctor and no doctor, everything and nothing.

Hail excellent sophist! The true descendant of the founder of the Jesuits.

Thrice hail thou mighty king of Britain! Whole armies of monks and friars, papists and Jesuits, pagans and Mahometans shall fall down and worship *thee*. Thou art, as Wesley the Jesuit has declared, the great disposer of *all things*. Well might thou talk of thy *supreme power* over the people (which till now we thought supreme wickedness). Hecatombs of rebellious Americans shall fall at thy almighty mandate. Well might the *Addressers* call thee *sacred*, and beg leave to lay themselves at thy *feet*, although Wesley has not yet told us that the people of Judah and Israel ever worshipped their kings, or blasphemously gave them the title of *sacred*. Nor is there one word of the kind in the whole Bible. But what of that, a Jesuit can prove anything from Scripture which never was there. [p. 38]

Hail happy Englishmen! The magistrate whom you have chosen to execute the laws may now ravish your wives and daughters, cut all your throats, burn your houses, take your property, starve you to death, sack your cities, subvert your liberty, destroy your religion, lay three kingdoms waste, and send millions of souls to hell, and you must not resist his arbitrary will. So says that infamous imposter, hypocrite, and Jesuit John Wesley. On *him* and his *Foundery* let the experiment be first made.

I would ask Mr. John Wesley whether Samuel did not mean a tyrant when he told the people of Israel, ‘And ye shall cry out in that day, because of the king which you shall have chosen you.’⁴ Could the people have occasion to cry out against the proceedings of a just, good, and upright king? Certainly not. But against tyrants they always will cry out, for they are the scourges (not like honest magistrates the

¹This pamphlet was first advertised on June 3, 1776 in *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*.

²Most of this pamphlet by Moore is addressed to authors other than JW; we reproduce here only the pages specifically engaging Wesley.

³Referring to 1 Kings 21.

⁴1 Sam. 8:18.

blessings) of mankind.

Those words were evidently meant of the injustice, violence, and oppressions of kings against law and right. For all the kings of the Israelites and Jews were subject to the laws, and no more than the mere administrators of them, and *elected* for no other purpose. Without the least power in themselves, to act by their own arbitrary wills. Nay they were strictly forbid to add to or diminish one single tittle of the law. And when they did, for such and other public crimes, the [p. 39] people who constituted and appointed them kings always censured, resisted, deposed, and some times put them to death.

Mr. Wesley, with his usual effrontery and impudence, like his master in politics Dr. Johnson, from whom he got his arcana of government, roundly and dogmatically asserts, in order to deceive his ignorant deluded followers (who implicitly believe all he says, for no man of commonsense can be misled by so gross a falsehood), page 23, 'I know but one instance in all history, wherein the *people* gave the sovereign power to anyone. That was Masaniello of Naples, And I desire any man living to produce another instance in the history of all nations.' The folly, knavery, and sophistry of this bedlamite Jesuit will remain unparalleled to the last ages of time. He knows as much about Masaniello of Naples as he does about the Bible, or the government of nations. Masaniello was the leader of a rabble at Naples as John Wesley the Jesuit is the leader of a rabble in Moorfields—with this difference, Masaniello from the noblest views, a love for his country, bravely led the people by their *desire* and for their good, to free them from oppression and tyranny. John Wesley is the leader of a weak and credulous multitude by *deception* only, and the *advocate* and *promoter* of oppression and despotism. This subtle Jesuit means by those knock me down words, that kings do not receive [p. 40] their power from the people, but that they all came down from heaven. How strange it is that this quack both in politics, physic, and divinity, should always leave himself open to detection. We no sooner begin to analyze his nostrum than we discover the imposition upon mankind.

Had this self-righteous Jesuit seriously read Joshua, Judges, Nehemiah, Esther, Maccabees, Kings, Acts chapters 4, 5, 22, 23, 24, 25; or any of the authors who have written on the Jewish republic, he could not have had the impudence to have published so gross a falsehood to the world. He would there have found that the power of kings is derived from the people, and that hereditary kingdoms have been changed into elective by the people.

Every king of Judah and Israel took the crown upon certain conditions (Deut. 17:18–20). 'To keep all the words of the law, and these statutes to do them, that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right hand nor to the left.' A clear proof that kings are not superior to nor exempt from the laws, but inferior to and bound by them, as well as subjects. And for breach of them, they and their posterity have been often times punished by the hand of divine providence in a remarkable manner, some dethroned, others murdered, [p. 41] and the crown transferred to another family. Perhaps the parasitical Jesuit of Moorfields may tell us it is agreeable to the word of God, and no breach of his law, in a king to commit murder, and destroy a whole nation by famine, fire, and sword.

Mr. John Wesley *desires* any man living to produce an instance (Masaniello excepted, which is no instance at all) of the people giving power to a king, or in other words of a king being elected by them. Now I *defy* John Wesley the Jesuit to show one instance in all the empires, kingdoms, states, and nations that ever have been or yet are in the world, where the judges, emperors, kings, or princes were not created, instituted, ordained, appointed, continued and limited by the people; and received all their jurisdiction, authority, and power, both from, by, and for the people, whose creatures and servants they ever have been, are, and ought to be; and in this all histories, sacred and profane agree.

As I would wish to deviate from, and be as much unlike Mr. John Wesley as possible, I will give some proofs of what I assert.

Second Kings 8:22, 2 Chron. 21:8. 'In the days of Joram Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and *made a king over themselves*.' Here we see the sovereign power was in the people. [p. 42]

Judges 9:1–7. 'All the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo went and *made Abimelech king*.' A further proof that the power of electing, constituting, and appointing a king was in the people.

First Sam. 1:15. 'And all the people went to Gilgal, and there *they made Saul king*.'

First Chron. 12:23–40. We have a particular account of the band that were ready armed to war, and came to David at Hebron to *turn* the kingdom of Saul to *him*, and to *make David king over all Israel*.

First Chron. 28:29. 'And *all the congregation made* Solomon the son of David *king a second time*.'

First Kings 12. And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for *all Israel* were come to Shechem, to *make him king*. Does Mr. Wesley know what the people said to him? 'Thy father' (that is Solomon) 'made our yoke grievous. Now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father and his heavy yoke which he put upon us *lighter*, and we will *serve thee*.' And did not Rehoboam consult with the old men how he should answer the people? And did they not say to him, 'If thou wilt be a *servant* unto this people this day, and wilt *serve them* and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.' [p. 43]

It is of little use to multiply instances, although [I] could produce an infinite number more. But these are sufficient to refute John Wesley, and to satisfy ever rational thinking man (except Jesuits and the worshippers of kings) that the sovereign power is the *people*, and that no king ever had any other than what they freely gave him. Indeed it is the height of ignorance and wickedness to talk otherwise. For by nature we are all equal, all born in the same manner, of the same materials, and subject to the same dissolution. God has given no preeminence or power to one man or a few, over the rest. Distinctions were made by the subtlety of men, and there would have been no such nonsense in the world as royal blood and noble blood, if the pride of men had not got the better of their reason, by which the equality of mankind was destroyed. Yet all the art and villainy of men, and all those idle distinctions which have brought misery and ruin upon millions, have not been able to alter *nature*, the great work of God. She remains the same. The blood of a peasant is as pure and good as the blood of a king. Now if there was anything *sacred* in kings, they would certainly imitate the divine original from whence they sprung, in justice, mercy, wisdom, and goodness. Instead of this, more than nine-tenths have been worse than butchers. They have held councils of blood, and a palace has often been the slaughter house of mankind. How impious must it be then to ascribe to *man* the attributes of God. ...⁵

Source: William Moore, *The late Addresses for Blood and Devastation, and the Addressers Exposed ... Which may serve as a answer to ... Wesley's 'Calm Address'* (London: for the author by T.W. Shaw, [1776]).⁶

⁵None of the remainder of the pamphlet focuses on Wesley.

⁶This also appeared in *The Fall of Britain* (Jan. 11–18, 1777), 56–63

‘Public Applause’ to the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*

[London]
c. June 5, 1776

To Mr. Hawes, Author of *An Examination of Mr. Wesley's 'Primitive Physic'*.

Sir,

Nothing can prove more fatal, more baneful, or more destructive to the human race than divinity, physic, and politics, when exhibited by artful and unprincipled bunglers. Because the first must tend to the ruin of the soul, the second to the ruin of the body, and the third to the downfall of mighty and powerful empires. To prove which (particularly the last) we need not wander far back to the annals of history, nor travel to remote realms in search of instances. There has, I doubt not, always been impious divines, seditious quacks, and ignorant and profligate politicians, who have each committed horrid mischiefs in their different professions. But I never till this era found all these enormities united in *one* person, who attempted to poison the soul by religious doctrines, the body individual by quackism, and the body politic by a jesuitical and daring attempt to vindicate the violent measures of government to tax three millions of unrepresented free-born Englishmen.

However, I am happy to find that he has not succeeded in any of his dark designs; that his various baneful publications have met with an efficacious antidote. But although his unscriptural doctrines have been sufficiently defeated by some worthy members of the Church of England, and his unconstitutional principles by virtuous patriots; yet sir, give me leave to say that none of his adversaries have gained so complete a victory, none of them have been so universally approved of by the public, as your very able and truly learned refutation of his unhermetic *Primitive Physic*.

It afforded me inexpressible satisfaction to find that the Medical Society had held forth your very humane and virtuous endeavours to the public, by giving you their thanks for your industrious and indefatigable efforts to refute the above pamphlet, and *to restore true medical knowledge*.¹

Sensible that the most salutary consequences must arise to the public at large from that laudable undertaking, permit me sir to render you my hearty thanks for the same in the name of a grateful public.

The restoration of true medical knowledge has indeed been greatly wanted in this country for some time past, but much more so of late years, during which this metropolis in particular has become overflowed with a swarm of quacks from all nations (but chiefly from Germany), to the great prejudice of the credulous part of the community.

But sir, since you have made a successful beginning towards this very requisite reformation, I shall take the liberty to furnish you with a plan which, if put in practice, will at once clear the metropolis of those infectious vermin, quacks, and by which (of course) true medical knowledge will be restored to its ancient lustre and dignity, viz.:

1. That the whole respectable medical gentlemen in this great city form themselves into an association, and raise a subscription amongst themselves for the purpose of prosecuting, according to law, every physical practitioner who has not completed his studies at a British university, and who cannot produce his diploma from the same.

2. To put a stop to the custom of granting royal letters patent to quack medicines, particularly to such (which indeed they all are) as are mercurial or antimonial preparations. The efficacy of mercury and antimony is best known in the medical world, and made use of in certain cases and under certain circumstances. But to make them universal medicines, and to give them the sanction of royal patents, is in fact no less than granting patents to destroy mankind in the same manner as they are granted to destroy bugs and rats. And

¹See above, May 11, 1776.

3. To treat with the different Irish and Scottish universities, and particularly that of St. Andrew, not to grant a decree to any person but such as is entitled to it by having completely finished his studies there. I say particularly the University of St. Andrew's because I can point out certain persons within my own knowledge in London who never have been within sight of an university, nor ever had any education, and yet obtained (by what means I know not) a diploma from the above university, and now practise as physicians.

If this plan should be executed, I doubt not but it will answer the salutary purpose of abolishing all manner of quackism, and of restoring true medical knowledge, and you will acquire still more

Public Applause

P.S. By way of hint, I recommend to your vigilance an inspection into the characters and medical abilities of a set of men who have lately opened a medical asylum.²

Source: published transcription; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (June 7, 1776), pp. 1–2.

²A medical asylum on Welbeck Street, St. Mary le Bone, announced election of a president of the board in *Public Advertiser* (May 2, 1776), p. 2.

From Sarah (Ward) Nind

Ramsbury Park
July 13, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I never enjoyed more tranquillity of mind than I have at late, nor was more free from outward and inward trials. This is matter of great thankfulness, that after I was smitten down and withered like grass, after my days were waxed old with heaviness and my years with mourning, the Lord should turn again and refresh my soul. Health also invigorates my body, so that he makes all my bones to rejoice. And what I now want is more of the mind which was in Christ.

I long to be a follower of him in meekness, gentleness, and lowliness of mind. I desire also to have my heart more closely united to him, that all his goodness may pass before me. I do indeed feel that my will and affections are given up to him, and I can truly say he ruleth in my soul. But in many things I come so short of that obedience which I ought to render him that I am ashamed before him. Yet why do I complain? Something within checks me and suggests to me now to look up and be saved, and momentarily to act that faith which I have upon God, in order to obtain more. I bless the Lord that, amidst all the vicissitudes of life, my heart is fixed and neither pain nor pleasure diverts me from desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ.

Nothing so elevates my mind as the thought of arriving at my Father's house above. This helps me to weather every storm and cheerfully to bear the daily fatigue of domestic employment. Death and judgment used to have a doleful sound to me. But now my brightest views are in eternity. I am enraptured at the consideration of leaving this world and standing at the right hand of God, when all nations shall appear before him. When troubles invade me, I cry, 'O that I had wings like a dove. Then would I fly away and be at rest.'¹ And when 'My thoughts are smooth as the Elysian plains, without a rub',² I seem to have but just patience enough to be content to be detained in this body. I long to be free from the encumbrances of flesh and blood, and to stand all-glorious before the throne of God. Though I am persuaded I should have a larger inheritance in the heavenly Canaan if I were to bear the burden and heat of the day.

I am, dear sir (wishing you the highest degree of that purity and peace which you teach to others),
Your affectionate but unworthy sister,

S. Nind

Source: published transcription; *Methodist Magazine* 24 (1801): 140–41.

¹Ps. 55:6.

²Thomas Southern, *Isabella*, Act V, Scene 2.

From John Crook¹

Castletown, Isle of Mann
July 24, 1776 [Part 1]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am under a particular necessity of laying before you several circumstances (which in the sequel you'll find). Therefore I beseech you, hear me patiently.

And first I desire to bless God for his great goodness which he hath been pleased to show to this people, the like of which I never saw. I've seen in our meetings seven or eight thrown down as it were by violence, not in a 'state of bondage unto fear', but with the 'overwhelming spirit of adoption',² enabling them with 'joy unspeakable and full of glory'³ to cry, 'Abba, Father'; having

felt (the promise) apply'd,
They joyfully cry'd,
Me, me he hath lov'd and for me he hath dy'd.

So that many of the brethren and sisters, particularly in Peel Town, Ballaugh, Sulby, and Barrule could say with blessed experience,

Jesus all the day long,
Is my joy and my song.⁴

And when they heard or thought of those words, especially in their meetings,

He hath lov'd me, I cry'd,
He hath suffer'd and dy'd
To redeem such a rebel as me.⁵

They had not power to contain themselves; but cried out, 'O sweet Jesus, O help me to praise Jesus'. And generally speaking they were so filled with ecstasy that many of them lay prone. And if they were helped up, they could no more stand than an infant. So that in this respect those words, 'They shall return to the days of their youth'⁶ were literally fulfilled in them. Their bodies were to a man thrown into such a tumult that sweat seemed to usher or exude out of every pore in vast quantities. But indeed, description fails; so I will not attempt it any farther, but may add that we had 'young men and maidens, old men and children' (even as young as 14 years) 'praising the most excellent name of God and of his Christ.'⁷

¹John Crook (1732–1805), a native of Lancaster who served in Ireland as a soldier, was converted in Limerick in 1760. After his discharge from the military he settled in Liverpool and became a local preacher. He was admitted on trial as an itinerant preacher in 1775 (see *Works*, 10:440) and sent to serve as a missionary in the Isle of Man. He would serve there and in Ireland for much of his career, which ran up to his death. See James McDonald, 'A Memoir of John Crook', *Methodist Magazine* 31 (1808): 3–10, 97–105, 145–51, 193–204.

²Cf. Rom. 8:15

³1 Pet. 1:8.

⁴CW, Hymn 65, st. 4., *HSP* (1749), 1:124

⁵Ibid.

⁶Job 33:25.

⁷Cf. Ps. 148:12.

But you will not be surprised if I inform you that we had, soon as this work began (which was the week after I came into the island; yea, its first commencement were two days after I came), the world's *hue and cry* about us. And I had to come into Peel Town (where it first began), figuratively speaking, like one going into a house when it was all in flames about his ears; and was obliged to get all the promises I could muster (or God was pleased to give me). And have thus the gospel *watering engine*, I played away in the *name*, and I believe by the command, of my *master*. And for some time the *flames* were extinguished tolerably well. But there being chasms (as indeed chasms there are many here, that serve the devil's conveyances), the flame seemed to take a subterraneous passage from hence and in a small time set all Douglas in a more *rapid* flame by far than Peel Town—that place being furnished with a more proper piece of combustible for the purpose. (Mr. Corlett of Peel⁸ was staggered, it is true; but acted the part of a prudent divine in this sense, he never *fully* set himself against it, although he has not been wanting to speak some.) The brand I mean, which lighted the whole town of Douglas, after the communicative subterranean *spark* fell upon it, was the Reverend and godly Dr. Mr. Moore⁹ of the above said town—the same which were the *watering pot* in Satan's hand sometime ago to quench the little spark of desire the word had kindled in the hearts of the Douglas people; and indeed which he did pretty well, but not quite so effectually as at present. (You may remember, sir, I informed you of such a person's conduct last Conference.) Nay, this gentleman is famous for exploits of this nature. For I am informed he banished one Mr. Meredith from the place,¹⁰ by incensing the late pious Bishop Wilson¹¹ against him, and by that means carried his point.

The method he now takes is to give his schoolboys a number of texts picked here and there out of the divine Oracle against 'false prophets', 'dreamers of dreams', 'running and he hath not sent them', 'none can preach except they be sent', 'creeping into widows' houses', 'leading captive silly women', 'serving their own bellies and not Jesus Christ',¹² etc., etc. And he hath been at the pains of making his scholars buy paper and write, as tasks, a ballad wrote by the late Dr. Bowden, affixed to a most scurrilous pamphlet lately put out by an anonymous writer (who indeed I don't wonder he don't give us his name; I've had the opportunity of reading it¹³). This piece having fallen into this gentleman's hands, he has an opportunity of spreading the sweet savour therein contained to all around him by the fore-mentioned method. His way of proceeding is to deal out by the hand of his scholars half a sheet of paper, whereon is wrote his texts; next another whereon is wrote the contents of that ballad. And these being dealt out to the populace with a liberal hand, I will leave you to judge, reverend sir, the effect they are likely to have; more especially as they come from his hands, and are dealt out by his direction. I have read them both as come from him, and therefore it is past a hearsay.

I have still a more evident token of it. For when I go to this town, if I pass the streets, particularly if any of Mr. Moore's scholars are near me, even in the open or midday, they fail not letting me know the

⁸Rev. Henry Corlett (1735–1801) served as vicar of St. German's Cathedral in Peel, Isle of Man from 1761 to his death.

⁹Rev. Dr. Philip Moore (1705–83) was rector of Bride, and Chaplain / Schoolmaster of St. Matthew's chapel in Douglas. His opposition was based on considering Calvinist doctrine as central to Methodism, due to the prominence of Whitefield.

¹⁰In his manuscript diary (MARC, MA 1977/220) Crook identifies this person as 'Mr. Meriton' and notes that the incident took place nearly 30 years previously.

¹¹Rev. Thomas Wilson (1663–1755) was Bishop of Sodor and Man from 1697–1755.

¹²Matt. 7:15, Deut. 13:3, Jer. 23:21, Rom. 10:15, 2 Tim. 3:6, Rom 16:8, etc.

¹³*A Letter to a Friend on the Subject of Methodism* (London: Printed and sold by the booksellers in town and country, 1775). This tract focuses mainly on Whitefield. The ballad is a revision of Samuel Bowden, M.D. (fl. 1745–1765), 'The Mechanic Inspired; or The Methodists Welcome to Frome', in *Poems on Various Subjects* (Bath: T. Boddley, 1754), 212–17.

lesson they are taught at school—first by abusing me with their tongues; next in throwing dirt, hard pieces of mortar, potatoes, and stones, or what comes next to hand. These are handed to me with a considerable degree of energy. Nor that only, but the last two evenings I preached here these silly young sheep were ordered by all means to attend, and there to rout us if possible. They first began by singing their famous ballad (but note, there was a great number of aged people in the rear, as auxiliary forces if occasion called). They next proceeded to shouting. When that failed answering the valuable end, they betook themselves to stones, and threw many at a little door which supplied the place of a window. And indeed it was well we had it, that we could shut it, or those within would have been knocked in the head, poor souls! Their violence was such that they split the door. After preaching, when I went into Mr. Hayles's¹⁴ house, which was but a little way off, I got pretty well bespattered with dirt. And if any of our brethren offered to say anything to them on account of their usage, the aged persons lifted up their sticks over their heads, menacing them if they kept not silent.

Thus, reverend sir, I have shown the commencement of this persecution. But it does not stop here, as I am bound in conscience to show, in order if possible to its prevention—that the poor souls who have been *ridden* with little better than *priestcraft* may be delivered out of the hands of them who have been serving themselves of them heretofore. But this I must reserve for the second part. Interim am I

Your affectionate and (well as I am capable) dutiful son in the gospel,

Jno. Crook

Later intelligence. This very evening we were obliged to remove from the place we had. Otherwise, for aught I know, we had many of us been knocked in the head. But their orders run (that is, when we came out of the preaching house) 'fight or meddle with none, small or great, save the preacher; and if possible maul him well'. So I was glad to keep close quarters, and when they found I stayed, and came not out amongst the lions and beasts of the people (great and small) who were gathered together in an amazing multitude, they threatened to pull brother Corlett's¹⁵ house about his ears. But by and by they dispersed. But I thought about 12:00, when we were all in bed, they would have fulfilled their promise. Howbeit the Lord took upon himself to keep us, and so little harm was done, thank God.

Address: 'The / Revd. Mr. John Wesley / at the Foundry / near Moor-fields / London'.

Postmark: 'White Haven' and '9/AV'.

Endorsement: '1st part'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/43.

¹⁴Crook consistently spells the name 'Hayles' in his manuscript journal; the amanuensis who wrote these letters spells it 'Heyles'. We have followed Crook's spelling.

¹⁵This was Thomas Corlett, of Derbyhaven, who was a recent convert to Methodism (see Crook's manuscript diary).

From John Crook

Castletown, Isle of Man
July 24, 1776 [Part 2]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am now to acquaint you with the farther proceedings of this godly Dr., the Rev. Mr. [Philip] Moore (for that is his name). Not content with the mischief he has already done, he (as I presume) hath been at the head of another [mischief], steps being taken subversive of all manner of good, and as is plain at present, productive of much evil—namely, set the bishop on fire against us.¹ Although the bishop and he were at variance between themselves, but in this matter Herod and Pontius Pilate are agreed, so that unity will take place between them now. But he is not all who are engaged in the plot, only the first fomentor. I will therefore give you an account of the combination, or at least the substance of it, as not my fancy, for the copy of the *pastoral letter* I had from a friendly clergyman not far from Peel, who stood by and told it [to] me whilst I wrote it in his own house. And he himself was obliged to read it [to his congregation] Sunday, 21st instant. The words are as follow:

To the several Rectors, Vicars, Chaplains, and Curates within the Isle and Diocese of Man

Reverend Brethren,

Whereas we have been informed that several unordained, unauthorized, and unqualified persons from other countries have for some time past presumed to preach and teach publicly, and hold and maintain conventicles, and have cause several weak persons to combine themselves together in a new society, and have private meetings and assemblies and congregations, contrary to the doctrines, government, rites, and ceremonies of the established Church and the civil and ecclesiastical laws of this isle.

We do therefore (for the prevention of schism and the reestablishment of that uniformity in religious worship which so long hath subsisted among us) hereby desire and require each and every of you to be vigilant and use you utmost endeavours to dissuade your respective flocks from following or being led and misguided by such incompetent teachers.

And to exhort and incite and invite them devoutly to read and consider the holy Scriptures, to attend reverently the blessed sacraments, their parish church, and the ghostly advice of their own ministers, by which they will be better and more comfortably instructed in the means of grace and salvation than by the crude and pragmatistical and inconsistent, (if not profane and blasphemous) extempore effusions of these pretenders to true religion.

And if afterward they regard not the truth, but obstinately persist in error, then to know and find out the names of such persons within you respective parishes and chapelries as attend the public instruction of the said disorderly and unqualified teachers, or frequent the said conventicles, meetings, assemblies, and congregations.

And if upon due inquiry and certain information you discover, or consistently with your own knowledge know, that any licensed schoolmaster, school mistress, parish clerk, or any other person who holds or enjoys any place, office, of employment under episcopal licence as aforesaid, [send?] within one month after the receipt hereof; as also unto our reverend vicars general, or one of them, the name or names of any other person or persons within your respective parishes or chapelries who attend the public instruction of the said teachers, or frequent the said conventicles, meetings, assemblies, and congregations within the above limit time.

And we likewise further desire and require each and every of you, in case any of the above mentioned unordained, unauthorized, and unqualified teachers shall at anytime hereafter offer to be a partaker of the holy Communion in any of your respective churches or chapels, that

¹Rev. Richard Richmond (d. 1780), had been Bishop of Sodor and Man since 1773.

you repel him or them so offering, and [the] minister so repelling them or any of them to give an account of the same unto us within 14 days at the farthest as the rubric in this behalf directs.

Given at Peel town this 16th day of July 1776

(signed)

R[ichmond], [Bishop of] Sodor and Man

P.S. Let these be forwarded in the usual manner, and the time of receiving and forwarding the same be noted by each of you. You will also take a copy thereof and publish it *plena ecclesia*, in English and in Manx, at the usual time in your respective churches and chapels the Sunday next after your receipt thereof.

There you see, reverend sir, Rabshakeh is come up.² O that the Lord would make bare his own arm! If he does not, the Lord's sanctuary will tumble. The reason which naturally appears is obvious. The clergy have heretofore had the people in more than common awe (and they have greedily drunk in their doctrine without tasting), and have pretty frequently harassed them in their ecclesiastical courts—which in some cases I allow was necessary. But now this yoke being turned into a *tyrannical one*, I greatly fear, without some timely intervention, the people will be scattered one from another. Who does not plainly see good Bishop Gardiner's and Bonner's spirit?³ And as the people are by means of this 'bull' much intimidated, so on the other hand wickedness, vice, and immorality begin to lift up their proud waves. The populace begin to be impudent, and imperiously insolent (and now wonder they should behave so to us especially, who are in a manner turned out of the synagogue). Yea, and the people act as though they took it for granted they might *swear* and *curse*; more particularly if their oaths were but pointed against us, some way or other. So that they have made a greater breach in the morals of many than perhaps they will be able to repair whilst they live, or peradventure us to help them.

The ministers to a man will not credit the liberty of conscience (at least to us in *this isle*) that they have, but as it we been winking at us heretofore. And are not these causes when put together sufficient to produce a wonderful effect? More especially when a people who have been cowarded and kept under by a kind of providential restraint have in virtue of this *famous bull*, leave to think not only more meanly of us and our poor followers, but also to use us as they list. Nay, what can be too bad for 'thieves and robbers', as Mr. Moore of Douglas calls us? And what redress? The captain of the town (in the last mentioned one) and Mr. Moore, and indeed most of all the gentlemen, are against us. And so also is the comptroller of Castletown, who is the clerk of the rolls. And indeed chiefly all the leading men in the island.

The last time I was at Castletown, after that mobbing at Douglas, I petitioned the Lieutenant Governor and have afterward an audience with him. He did indeed behave like a gentleman and a man of probity and justice, for he desired me only to get the name of some of the principal actors and, said he, 'I'll give them a hearing *myself*, and be assured I'll do you justice. I'll do it for every man, but more especially for the *ministers of the gospel*.' But alas, just as we were preparing to get the names of the mob (i.e., some of them) the old gentleman who is head Governor came into the isle, and he is represented as one who depends entirely upon the judgment of Mr. Quayle the comptroller,⁴ who as I have said above is our fast and rooted foe. Nevertheless, hearing the ministers were for coming to the governor, in order to have his *sanction* for the *bull*, I was determined I would put in my caveat before them if possible. So accordingly, Monday [the] 22nd, I petitioned the old gentleman. But what answer I am to have I cannot certainly tell. Although he himself told me in ecclesiastical matters he did not meddle, as it do not come under his cognizance. But he would consider my petition (i.e., Mr. Quayle shall), as so I think if God (and

²See 2 Kings 18.

³Edmund Bonner (c. 1500–1569), sometime Bishop of London, known as 'bloody Bonner'; and Stephen Gardiner (1483–1555), Bishop of Winchester and a strong opponent of the Reformation in England.

⁴John Quayle (1725–97) was Clerk of the Rolls and comptroller of the Isle of Man.

you as his instrument) do not appear speedily, the people must even return to Egypt; which thought, who can bear? That many will do so is notoriously clear. And those who may stand will be harassed out of their lives by the inquisition, which is an easy inference from the bull and the spirit of the clergy in general, who are rejoicing and saying now in effect, 'There, there; so would I have it.'

The sum of my petition is, craving the liberty of worshipping the God of my fathers according to the strict doctrine of the Church of England, and that the people may be allowed the liberty of hearing without any penal law being laid upon them. As I do not nor ever did attempt to make a *rent* or breed any kind of feuds, schism, or animosities in the Church by word or deed, appealing before his Excellency to the ministers themselves; yea, the most *invidious* of those who have heard me.

But herein reverend sir we want *your* help. The proof of toleration in the Isle of Man, as well as in the kingdom of Great Britain, which many of these my persecutors *deny*, and the most favourable call in question. I hope you'll be pleased to take this matter into your consideration, and send us what help you can speedily as possible.

I wrote a 14-night ago to Whitehaven, informing them of the state of the Isle. And yesterday Mr. Hayles had a letter noting the wonder of Mr. Mason and Saunderson⁵ [that] they never heard from me, which gives me some suspicion lest the letter I sent hath been intercepted,⁶ and if a speedy step is not taken, the floods will mount it is much to be feared, so as to be nearly without bounds. Only I know the Lord *can* stay them.

I will give you just of sketch, which is all I can do:

A General View of the State of the Isle of Man

Names of places	classes in <u>each place</u>	Joined since <u>I came</u>	Backsliders <u>in the whole</u>	Dead	Total <u>in each</u>	State of the Society <u>in general</u>
Peel Town	3	17	1	0	75	prosperous and loving
Castletown	1	2	2	0	20	tolerable
Douglas	1	0	3	0	16	just kept by the power of God
Ballaugh	1	4	2	0	20	pretty prosperous
Sulby	1	0	1	0	13	loving in God but no increase
Barrule	1	5	1	0	13	tolerable
Baldwin	-	-	-	-	--	A number of hearers but no society as yet
Total	8	28	10	0	157	

But let it be remarked there is but a gloomy prospect of a perpetuity, much less an increase, without speedy help. N.B. I have been at the last mentioned place, and the man with whom we lodged being church warden, he dare not let us come any more/ This intelligence since I first drew this sketch, which was but two days ago. See the effect of Phalaris's bull.

⁵Mason and Saunderson were the itinerants currently assigned at Whitehaven, the point of contact in England for the ministry in Isle of Man (see *Works*, 10:442). Joseph Saunderson (b. 1746), a native of Birstall, was born into a Methodist family there. He was accepted 'on trial' as an itinerant at the 1775 Conference (see *Works*, 10:440). He served full-time for about ten years and is listed as desisting from travelling in 1784 (10:553). But his name continues to reappear in the *Minutes* as late as 1805, most frequently in Scotland, and often in a supernumerary status. See *WHS* 10 (1915): 94–97.

⁶This letter is not known to survive.

N.B. I am afraid of leaving this people until I am favoured with a line from you, lest the wolf break into the fold entirely. Pray dear sir, send help speedily as possible.

I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your (desirous to be) dutiful son in the gospel of Jesus,

Jno. Crook

P.S. Please to direct for me, to be left at Mr. Hayle's in Douglas. Pray be so kind as to remember me for good! I would have been more particular, only want of time hindered. You'll easily see I've been obliged to borrow a hand to copy after me, as I'm so driven at present from post to pillar. But blessed be God, I have peace in him! Let it be noted, not any of these who are our greatest persecutors ever heard any of us.

I observed to you before my sentiments concerning the necessity of your paying the isle a visit.

Address: 'The / Revd. Mr. John Wesley / at the Foundry / near Moor fields / London'.

Postmark: 'White Haven' and '9/AV'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jo Crook! / Jul 24. 1776 . a[nswere]d Aug. 10'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP_r 2/17

From William Hawes¹

Strand
July 24, 1776

Sir,

Your short letter, addressed to me, in this paper on Monday last² is a most astonishing proof of your effrontery and insensibility. I believe it impossible for any man of common probity, or of common humanity, under such circumstances to have answered the charge which I have brought against you in the manner that you have done. And I have little doubt but the generality of the public will now join with me in the opinion that, notwithstanding your pretensions to sanctity, you are a consummate hypocrite.

I have openly charged you with publishing a book *replete with ignorance* and calculated to *injure the health*, and in some cases *destroy the lives*, of all who depend on it. And in the opinion of most impartial readers, and of many of the ablest medical practitioners, I have proved this charge. In answer to which you say that my *Examination of your Primitive Physic* has promoted the sale of it, and in this consideration you exult. Is it possible that any man influenced by the common feelings of humanity could have published such an answer to such a charge? Would the most mercenary quack that ever disgraced a stage in Moorfields have satisfied himself with no better a vindication of his character? The ignorance with which your book abounds, and its pernicious tendency, I may venture to assert have been demonstrated. And if your mean and avaricious spirit can find satisfaction in reflecting on the *profits* of your book, you have no right to rank with any but the most base and unworthy of mankind.

W. Hawes

Source: published transcriptions in *Lloyd's Evening Post* 39 (24–26 July 1776), 95; and *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Thursday, July 25, 1776), 1–2).

¹William Hawes (1736–1808) was an apothecary (and later physician) in London. In April 1776 he published *An Examination of Wesley's 'Primitive Physic'* (London: Dodsley) which garnered significant public attention. JW responded with a rather flippant short letter dated July 20 in *Lloyd's Evening Post* 39 (July 19–22, 1776), 79, to which this is a response.

²The transcription in *Gazetteer* reads 'addressed to me and published in *Lloyd's Evening Post* of the 22d instant'. It then appended a copy of JW's letter.

From 'Talus'

c. August 1, 1776

Reverend Sir,

Destitute as you are of the feelings of humanity, I do not wonder at your affected air of sovereign contempt for Mr. [William] Hawes in a late scandalous letter, dated July 20th, the whole of which is a downright grimace, that you only wanted to screen for your malice. And that the pretence of a greater demand for your *now reprobated* pamphlet is no other than an indecent cover for putting this last weak effort of your rage in print. But perhaps, reverend sir, in your list of virtues this *pretended unconcern* is reckoned not the *least* among them; and yet others may think, and some I doubt not will dare to call it, a *mere brutish obstinacy*, or the more filthy obstinacy of a priest.

Talus

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle* (Aug. 3–6, 1776), 127.

From William Hawes¹

Strand
August 6, 1776

Sir,

Mr. Wesley at length appears to be sensible that an answer was necessary to my *Examination* of his *Primitive Physic* of a different kind from that which he thought proper to publish in your *Evening Paper*² of the 20th of July. I rejoice to find that he has not yet lost all his feelings, which I confess I before began to be apprehensive was the case. But my letter addressed to him in the same paper of the 26th ult. seems to have had a considerable effect upon him, notwithstanding the affected contempt with which he appears to treat it. With his usual art, indeed, he has drawn up his last letter as if he intended to publish another answer before he saw my last. But no impartial person can suppose this. It must have been very ridiculous in him to have exposed himself by such a letter as that which was published in your paper of the 20th of July ult., if he had then intended to have published another containing the least appearance of argument.³

Mr. Wesley has discovered that I was induced to make 'so violent an attack upon the *Primitive Physic*' by the displeasure which I had conceived against him on account of his writing the *Calm Address to the Colonies*. In this he is totally mistaken. I meddle too little with politics to have been led to write against him by any such motives. He says, 'Believe it who can.' Those who know me will easily believe it, and I flatter myself that my general conduct in life has been such as to entitle me to some credit with the public. Nor was I induced to write against him by my attachment to Mr. [Caleb] Evans or Mr. [Augustus] Toplady. The one of those gentlemen I never saw, and the other I have not the pleasure of being much acquainted with.

My reason for mentioning Mr. Evans's charge against Mr. Wesley was that it affected, not his political sentiments, but his veracity as a man. And I believe it is not the opinion of any impartial person that a *satisfactory* answer to this charge has been published, either by Mr. [John] Fletcher or Mr. [Thomas] Olivers.

My motives for writing *An Examination of Mr. Wesley's Primitive Physic* were truly assigned in that publication. I thought his book calculated to do essential injury to my fellow-creatures, and that I acted the part of a good member of society in pointing out its pernicious tendency. I am still of the same opinion, and have the satisfaction to have good reason to believe that the impartial public concur with me in sentiment.

I have charged Mr. Wesley, in the 66th page of my *Examination*, with an artful insinuation in one of his letters, calculated for no other purpose but to deceive. Instead of answering this charge, he intimates that I am deficient in politeness towards him. I believe that throughout the whole affair I have written with full as much politeness as *such* a man deserved. Had I supposed it possible for a *good man* to have written such an answer to such charges against him as those brought in the *Examination* as was published by him in your paper of July the 20th ult., I should have answered him in a different style. But I thought it impossible for any well-intentioned man, in such circumstances, to have written in such a manner. I am still of the same opinion, and on this subject I have not met with a single person who has differed from me.

¹Hawes is replying to JW's letter of July 27, 1776, published in *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Aug. 2, 1776), p. 2. *Lloyd's Evening Post* 39 (July 31 – Aug. 2, 1776), p. 113; and *London Chronicle* 40 (Aug. 1–3, 1776), p. 117.

²Here and on two later occasions the *Gazetteer* version specifies 'in *Lloyd's Evening Post*'.

³The *London Chronicle* version omits this first paragraph.

Mr. Wesley is displeased that I knew not readily where to find the cases to which he refers in two or three places in his *Primitive Physic*, though he quotes no authorities. And indeed, it is not generally his method, in his publications, to acknowledge from whence he borrows his materials; for his character as a *plagiary* is well established.⁴ But Mr. Wesley has such a knack at misrepresenting the cases which he may happen to derive from a good author, or states the facts in so awkward a manner, that it may well be doubted whether the original writers themselves, from whom he has borrowed them, would know them again in his book. At least it can hardly be considered as a mark of *ignorance* in another man not to know them again, however well he may be acquainted with the original authors. And indeed there is no man of extensive reading who does not forget many things that he has read. Nor is there perhaps any man in Europe, besides Mr. Wesley, who would charge another with *ignorance*, merely for not remembering every case that may have published in *magazines*. To obtain the reputation of knowledge with Mr. Wesley, it is necessary that a man should be a very diligent, exact, and retentive reader of those learned monthly publications.

As to [Thomas] Sydenham, he is an author entitled to the highest regard from every professor of the medical art. And I was no stranger to his having recommended *chicken-broth* in the *cholera morbus*. But it was only as a watery fluid to correct and dilute the bile, and not as a remedy for the disease, as Mr. Wesley ridiculously does. Dr. Sydenham advises as a medicine sixteen drops of *liquid laudanum*. Whereas Mr. Wesley, as *another remedy*, prescribes *six grains of laudanum*; by which he must mean *solid opium*, a prescription which would be fatal to ninety-nine persons out of a hundred. When Mr. Wesley has recourse to a good author, it is not unusual with him to render what he borrow from him useless or pernicious, by his own absurdity and want of knowledge in that science to which he pretends.⁵

The last edition of *Primitive Physic* contains prescriptions that would kill those who should make use of them. With this Mr. Wesley has been some months publicly acquainted, and yet these pernicious books are now, to my knowledge, sold in London, not altered even with the pen. Had he been possessed of the least humanity, he would have taken care that this should not be the case. He would have reprinted those leaves, and called in those books that were in the hands of the booksellers which contained the dangerous prescriptions. But no *gain* was to be made of this. Though somewhat may possibly be got by the *new edition*, which we are now informed is in the press. And however pernicious the tendency of the book may be, the *disinterested* compiler will be abundantly gratified if it can be made to sell *more and more*. The honest frequenters of the Foundry will be carefully informed by Mr. Wesley, or his learned deputies if he should not be present himself, that when service is over *it may be had at the door*. Upon the whole, without at present troubling the public with any further observations upon this subject, it may be sufficient to observe that, notwithstanding all that Mr. Wesley has urged in his own vindication, or that of his book, I believe those who impartially attend to the many observations on the *Primitive Physic* contained in my *Examination*, to very few which Mr. Wesley even attempts to reply, will be convinced that his compilation is extremely injudicious, and of a very injurious tendency, and that it was a real service to the public to endeavour to put a stop to its dispersion. He indeed says himself that, in consequence of my *Examination*, in a new edition of his *Primitive Physic*, which he is now preparing for the press (and for a sale of which he hopes from the credulity of his followers), he shall omit *forty or fifty remedies*. He also says he shall *guard others*, and adopt several of my *practical observations*.⁶

It therefore affords me some satisfaction to find that if what I have written should not wholly prevent injudicious people *from attending to Mr. Wesley's 'Primitive Physic'*, which as a medical compilation is unworthy of the least regard, yet *I shall at least have been the means* of rendering it less pernicious.

⁴A chief claim in Caleb Evan's attack upon JW's *Calm Address* was that it was simply a plagiarization of Samuel Johnson's *Taxation no Tyranny*.

⁵The concluding sentence of this paragraph is found only in the *Gazetteer* and *London Chronicle*.

⁶Hawes added a note at this point quoting the entire last paragraph of Wesley's letter.

W. Hawes

N.B. As Mr. Wesley has been kind enough to prescribe for me in a postscript to his last, I will repay the civility by prescribing for him also in my turn, as I should be extremely sorry to have *less benevolence* than himself. I will take the liberty of recommending the following prescription, as what would be of unquestionable service to him. Take one ounce of *veracity*, half an ounce of *modesty*, one ounce of *religion* (unmixed with *hypocrisy*), and two ounces of *honesty*; the whole to be mixed up with a sufficient quantity of *medical skill* somewhat superior to that of a *Moorfields quack*, and to be taken once in twenty-four hours, with a large draught of *warm water*, *cold water*, *tar-water*, or *red-hot flint-water* (see the *Primitive Physic*, 180, 181, 182, 183⁷), whichsoever may be most agreeable to the patient.

Source: published transcriptions in *Lloyd's Evening Post* 39 (Aug. 7–9, 1776), p. 140; *London Chronicle* (Aug. 8–10, 1776), 140; and *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Aug. 8, 1776), p. 2.⁸

⁷See receipts for 'The Colic' in *Works*, 32:149–50.

⁸We follow the *Lloyd's Evening Post* version, which was clearly the earliest; but note the significant variants and one key addition.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

[Otley]
August 9, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Yesterday, at my return from York, I received your kind letter dated July 15.¹ It gave more pleasure and pain than I have often felt at one moment—pleasure to find that, though unworthy [of] your regard, the Lord still favours me with your friendship (his name be adored, for this invaluable blessing), and pain to think it should so long lie unanswered.

While from home I often thought of writing. But after you left,² I soon went to Pocklington, and with dear Mrs. Cross spent a very comfortable fortnight.³ We went to most of the neighbouring villages to see the dear lovers of our Lord. And when I returned to York [I] found the old lady I used to live with dead. Her niece wanted me to be much with her, which took up a deal of my time, [so] that I used to think as I had much to say to my dear father, I would not write at all until I got home and could take time to tell you all that is in my heart.

Many thanks, my dear sir, for your kind inquiries. In regards to the first, I think I do, glory be to God, find my communion as near and constant as ever with him. He is ever with me. Nothing separates between my God and me; but night and day I sit, in willing bonds, at his dear feet. As to the second, I am always happy in a greater and smaller degree. Jesus is present with me, and I have for some time found complaining banished from my streets. My soul dwells in constant praise and feels uninterrupted tranquillity. Temptations I often find, but they do not make me unhappy, for they do not enter into my soul. The shield of powerful faith in a bleeding Saviour keeps off these fiery darts, and my soul sits calm on tumult's wheel.

In regard to prayer, the inward and outward exercises I meet with does not interrupt, but often tends to quicken me in the exercise thereof. My soul ever thirsts after more of God and [the] desire of my heart is continually going out after him. Sometimes, I think it is through indisposition of my body [that] my mental prayers are not so earnestly engaged in the exercises as I could have. But I endeavour to bear it as my cross and simply to cast myself just as I then am into the open arms of my dear Lord. And he receives me and tells me 'I am thine'.

The day you left me, dear sir, I shall never forget it. The rain detained me at Mr. Brooks' some time. But I longed to be at home. I wanted to give my full heart vent in praying for you, and telling the Lord all I felt. Soon I did, and felt, though my heart was in God, much united to you. I could with sincerity say 'Thy blessing I restore'. I praised the Lord for the many gracious opportunities I had with you, and was enabled to look forward to that blessed day which shall our flesh restore, where deaths shall all be done away and bodies part no more. Yes then, with my dear and much loved father, to all eternity I'll range the plains of lights and climb the mount of joy. But Satan, who I believe is bent on my destruction, finding here the Lord had helped me from another quarter, closely beset me. He told me I had, in being with you, hindered your usefulness and hurt the cause of God. But in this my Lord did not suffer me to be tempted above what he enabled me to bear. I could appeal unto him. He knew my heart, and that if I had done wrong it was ignorantly. He also knew the purity of my affection for you. I believe I love you with the same love I shall do when we meet above, though not with the same degree. But it is no wonder Satan had laid a snare for me. My being with you has, I trust, been a means of my escaping it.

¹See JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, July 15, 1776.

²JW had been at Otley on Apr. 23, 1776 (see *Journal, Works*, 23:10); but it appears that Ritchie had joined him in York in early July, as she suggested in her letter of May 17, 1776.

³Eliza Wilson had married John Cross of Pocklington in Mar. 1775; she would die two years later (see JW, *Journal*, May 14, 1777, *Works*, 23:50).

This has enraged my foe, but let him do what he will. Beyond his chain he cannot go. I felt all these things work together for my good, and my soul was so sunk in deep humility at Jesus' feet as made me cry out, 'Do with me what thou wilt; only be thou glorified and I am satisfied'. Since then the Lord has kept me at his dear feet. I am lost at his great love. My soul seeks only for his approval, and is content with his approbation. I returned home in great peace and with much thankfulness to my Lord for all his mercies, and will endeavour to follow your guidance. My mite is little, but to be all employed for God is the only thing I would live for.

After you mention Mr. [Cornelius] Cayley, you say, 'A thought just rose in my heart'. From what follows I suppose that thought respected him. But indeed, dear sir, I find the many conversations I had with you on the things that to me appear still very unintelligible have been of great use. I trust Satan will not gain his end in attempting to set me to seek for things the word of God is silent about. The conversing in silence; the communicating grace; being out of reach of every foe so that none dare approach, no not even to tempt; and the discerning of spirits in the manner Mr. C[ayley] speaks of I do not understand. I asked him, does conversing in silence consist in communicating ideas or is it only what we call the communion of saints? He told [me] it was a conversation carried on without ideas, for the state he was in was separate or beyond all ideas. As to the communicating grace, he speaks just as Madam Guyon. I told him I often thought I got more benefit from his conversation than I really did. At some times it has been profitable, but at others not so much so as he seemed to think. He told me, 'There is in you a bud of that state I now enjoy. I have fellowship with it, and though the child before it is born receives no nourishment from its mother of which it is sensible, yet it is nourished, so it is with you. That bud of glory in you is strengthened by conversing with me, though you know it not. Nor do you yet know me. But when the other seal is opened, you will know me.' I told him, 'Indeed, I do not look for another liberty, but enlarged degrees of that I now enjoy. He said, 'But you will find another, different not only in degree but in nature. You now enjoy sanctification, but you will find glorification.' As to the being tempted, I urged 'The servant need not expect to be above his Lord, and he was tempted'. 'Yes', he replied, 'so will all be who know him only after the flesh. But Christ risen cannot be tempted. I have fellowship with him in his resurrection state and know him after the spirit.' As to the discerning of spirits, I told him I believed some had the gift of deceiving. But his is not as a gift, but the very Spirit of God in him that discerns what there is of God in others. I asked, 'Do you think any can fall from this state?' He replied, 'I am, like the sun, in firmament—if I would, I could not; and if I could, I would not.'

We have often had such conversation as these lately, but though we could not think alike, we still talk and walk in love. I sometimes tell him 'I do not understand you, but will leave what I cannot comprehend'. And, I bless God, hitherto I [am] saved from being the least muddled with his conversation. But tell me, dear sir, what you think? He takes all well [that] I say unto him. And I often pray him not to speak these things in the pulpit, but to let us have the simple gospel. And he, in general, does, saying 'When I speak tonight I must go out of the closet I live in to speak to the people, else they will not understand me'. I have written freely, dear sir. Tell me what you think of these things and how you would have me act.

Annotation: another hand, '13th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

From Charles Boone¹

Canterbury
August 23, 1776

I arrived here just time enough to attend the funeral of our dear friend Mr. Charles Perronet, who died on Monday, August 12th, about seven o'clock in the morning.²

It may afford matter of joy to many to give a little account of his experience sometime before his departure. It is well known that he had been long subject to great affliction, but his affliction increased with his years. In April last God laid his hand sorely upon him and caused him to pass through the fire of a burning fever. This left him very little use of his limbs, and in a very weak state of body. But the strength and vigour of his soul were such as I never saw before. All his expressions were those of a soul lost and swallowed up in God. Oft have I sat with pleasure and astonishment to hear him repeat what God had done for his soul.

He often told me, 'This affliction is the best I ever had. God has revealed to me his power, his love, and excellence in so great a measure that no tongue is able to express it.' He then broke out into such glorious descriptions of the worth, the merit, the preciousness of Christ as I never heard before. He frequently repeated, 'I have uninterrupted fellowship with God, and Christ is all and in all to me.' A variety of equally strong expressions were *continually* dropping from his lips. He was a *living* and *dying* witness of the blessed doctrine he always defended—I mean *entire sanctification*.

About a week before he died he told several friends (and among the rest, his brother Mr. Edward Perronet) that God had given him an entire new nature; that he felt nothing contrary to the will of God, nothing contrary to holiness. 'God', said he, 'has purged me from *all* my dross. All is done away. I am all *love*.' A particular friend asked him, 'How was this work wrought in you? Was it done *gradually* or *instantaneously*?' He replied, 'You know that God has long been at work in me in a peculiar way, but the work I am now speaking of was wrought in one *moment*. I was pouring out my soul to God that he would give me a full *meetness* for himself. He answered my request and gave what I desired.'

From *that moment* he lived, he spoke, he appeared as in eternity. And it was remarkable that, though he suffered much in life, he suffered nothing in death. As he was easy the day before he died, so he was the morning he departed. He changed in a moment, and had just time to say, with the greatest composure, 'I am dying. Into thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.'

Charles Boon[e]

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 528–29.

¹Titled: 'Some Account of the Death of Charles Perronet'. Charles Boone (or 'Boon'; d. 1795) was admitted as an itinerant minister in 1771 (*Works*, 10:395) and remained active in the ranks up nearly to his death. See Atmore, *Memorials*, 62–64; and *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1795), 1:318.

²Boone had been reappointed to Kent at the 1776 Conference, which ran Aug. 6–9 in London.

From Hannah Ball

[High Wycombe]
August 26[–27], 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

It is with great pleasure that I sit down to write to you once more, to thank you for favouring me a few minutes with your company.¹ It was a strengthening blessing to my soul, as I have always found everything that came from you. When anything intercepts the intercourse it seems to me that I am deprived of help from my best friend. And if it was possible for me to think you capable of neglecting me without some cause it would afflict me, if God did not prevent—as I have, ever since I was acquainted with you, esteemed you as my father, friend, and guide under God. And if I could admit of anyone so nigh to me as yourself, I should be exceeding jealous of my heart being in danger of departing from God. But this is not the case. I still esteem you as my highest friend and believe the only reason why I have not heard from you is because it slipped your memory through the many and great things you have to do for God. And rather than be troublesome or add to your burden, I would willingly be denied what I so much esteem, as this appears to me to be the mark of the sincerest love, not to desire more of them I love than they are able to do.

I have nothing to write about but the goodness of God, who has kept my soul as a well-watered garden. I have suffered no want. He has richly fed my soul, either by his servants or himself. In the spring I was ill for some time and underwent the longest confinement I ever experienced since I knew the Lord. Then I felt that it needed a greater degree of grace for a willing active mind to suffer the will of God than to do it. Though glory be to God, I found my soul kept above the water floods. I could rejoice and praise God for all his dispensations. And since I have been well esteemed, a measure of health and strength to use the means of grace, a greater blessing than before.

When I was in London my soul was richly fed. I seemed to myself when I came home like a bee richly laden, and could not rest until I had imparted to others what God had done for me. Since, I feel my old seeking mind, not through a sense of any loss I have sustained, but through a deeper sense of my dependent state on God for fresh grace and strength to go on my way. And glory be to him, I feel my wants supplied as I stand in need, and believe he will keep me to the end.

I believe I shall meet your happy spirit in the realms of everlasting day, though it appears to me that you will be capable of receiving so great a degree of glory to what I shall that if I am at your feet I may be well content. I do not mean by this that I shall be satisfied just to get into heaven's gates. No, glory be to God, a holy ambition has ever fired my breast (that is, since I knew the Lord) to seek for a high and nigh place in glory to Christ my Lord. He more than ever fills my heart, so that I can say with the poet:

Whatever makes the Godhead great,
Or fit to be adored
Whatever makes the creature sweet,
And worthy of my passion, meet
Harmonious in my Lord.²

I still long to be more closely united to him.

Tuesday morning, [August] 27th

I was hindered from writing any more yesterday, being called to see a person that was very ill and thought she should die. I went and prayed with her, and she told me something about a psalm that ran in her mind and wanted me to find it. I fetched a Bible and found, as I thought, the psalm and was reading

¹During her recent trip to London; where JW was from July 19 through Aug. 11.

²Isaac Watts, 'The Fairest and the Only Beloved', st. 2., *Horae Lyricae*, 126.

the first three verses to her. And her doctor came up and looked as black as Satan could make him, and bade me be gone with my Bible. I only made him room to come to his patient and stood my ground, being determined in my mind that he should not make me quit the room without he took me and put me downstairs with his own hands. He blustered for a while and then sat himself down, saying as he sat down he had made ten quit the room where he had been, and Mr. Williams with them. I still thought, 'But you shall not make me go', and sat down by him. He asked his patient a few questions, and then departed and left me the room to myself. I spent the greatest part of the day with her. But he still says I shall not visit his patients, for I shall do them more harm than he shall do them good.

When I first went, she told me she wanted to be more resigned, to give up her family, and to have a clear evidence of the love of God to her soul. She found power most of the day, after we prayed with her, to keep her husband (who she loved, she told me, as her life) and children at a distance, seeking for a clear evidence of the love of God, seeing that her soul was of greater value to her than either her husband or children. I have been with her this morning and find she can rejoice in God her saviour, and is not now afraid to die. I think there is room to hope she will recover. I found much power after I came from her yesterday in the afternoon to beg her life, for the sake of her dear children and husband. And I seem in a great measure persuaded the Lord will grant this also.

I feel in my own soul an increase of courage and strength, waking this morning with this prayer in my mouth: that the peace of God might rule in my heart and that I might be thankful. The peace of God seems to me this day more desirable than ever. Glory be to his holy name. I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

Hannah Ball

Evening: The person I have been writing about is much better and has had three hours sleep this afternoon and continues happy.

Source: manuscript copy in her letter book; MARC, PLP 4/32.1, item #14.

From Damaris Perronet

[Shoreham]
[c. early September 1776¹]

Sir,

I received your letter last Sunday, and on Monday shall have an opportunity of sending it by a careful friend to Mr. [John] Atlay at the Foundry.

You receive it, sir, with the same secrecy that you entrusted it with your pious friend. But you will excuse it if I mention that my brother [Edward] was rather sorry that you trusted in the hands of that exceeding wicked great man, Lord Sandwich.² You know the tender mercies of such are cruelty, and we are commanded to have the wisdom of the serpent, as well as the innocency of the dove. And I suppose your afflicted state of mind at that time was the hindrance of your not paying more attention to that affair. I mean with regard to caution in not securing from the inspection of the wicked.

But we have one who takes over in extremities, and bears our sicknesses. And as my dear late brother [Charles] used to observe, we are, through the unavoidable weakness of human nature, continually doing something for Christ to undo. And as we have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, we may cast all our care upon him, *knowing* that he careth for us. And even instructs us to draw nigh to him, even into the holiest, through his most precious blood. Who is an all-sufficient saviour, as well as all-sufficient sacrifice for us.

My brother was a miracle of grace of sufferings, but so purified through his trying dispensations that I believe he came forth as gold seven-time purified, and bore the image of him that was meek and lowly of heart in a more than ordinary manner, and testified for some weeks before he died that the Lord have given him an entire new nature.

It was remarkable that for a month or more before, he seemed as if growing better and had no thought of his dissolution being nigh. So his Lord came in an hour when he thought not. But as he had not deferred to prepare for that awful time, he was found ready! He broke a blood vessel, but without any seeming pain, as it was only a little gentle cough. And he did not know till they told him what it was. He then said, 'I am dying. Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit!' His eyes then remained fixed, as they used to do of late when he has been in fervent prayer, even as if he saw his Lord face to face and was worshipping before him. And within five minutes, from beginning to end, he fell asleep, without the least sigh or struggle, and even hardly any alteration of his pulse till it ceased. And that glorious sight which Stephen saw,³ he had revealed to him when he was about sixteen years old, and he greatly revered his Lord ever since.

The expense is none at all. But praying God for a blessing upon it, I am happy in delivering it safe into your hands, and am sir,

Your friend and servant for Christ's sake,

Damaris Perronet

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/472.

¹Charles Perronet died Aug. 12, 1776. JW had left London on a preaching trip into Cornwall a day or two before. It would have taken some time for news of Perronet's death to reach him (see the letter from Charles Boone dated Aug. 23). So the letter that JW entrusted for personal delivery to the Perronet home (and through them to John Atlay) likely arrived on Sunday, Aug. 25 or Sept. 1. The letter is not known to survive.

²John Montagu (1718–92), 4th Earl of Sandwich, was currently First Lord of the Admiralty. He was well-known for his gambling, and for a long-term extramarital relationship while his wife, Dorothy (Fane) Montagu, was confined in an insane asylum.

³See Acts 7:55.

From Edward Mulso¹

Excise Office, London
September 2, 1776

Die Lunae [Monday], 13 May 1776

Ordered by the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled: that the commissioners of his Majesty's excise do write circular letters to all such persons whom they have reason to suspect to have plate, as also those who have not paid regularly the duty on the same; and lay before this house on the first day of the next session of parliament the names of those persons to whom such letters have gone, specifying those who have and those who have not complied with the requisitions of such letters.

Ashley Cowper, Cler. Parl.

Reverend Sir,

As the commissioners cannot doubt but you have plate for which you have hitherto neglected to make a entry, they have directed me to send you the above copy of the lords' order, and to inform you they expect that you forthwith make due entry of all your plate, such entry to bear date from the commencement of the plate duty, or from such time as you have owned, used, had, or kept any quantity of silver plate chargeable by the act of parliament; as in default hereof the board will be obliged to signify your refusal to their lordships.

I am,

Your most humble servant,

Edward Mulso
Accountant General for Household Plate

N.B. An immediate answer is desired.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/150.

¹Edward Mulso Esq. (1730–82), was Accomptant-General for Household Plate. On May 13, 1776 he presented to the House of Lords 'An Account of the Net Produce of the Duty on Silver Plate, imposed by an Act of the 29th Year of His late Majesty King George the Second, from the Commencement of the said Act, to the 5th of July 1763 inclusive, distinguishing each Year.' In response they issued the order that stands at the head of this letter. See *Journal of the House of Lords*, Vol. 34 (1774–76), 717–18. JW was sent this circular letter as part of broader effort.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

[Otley]

September 6, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am always thankful for your kind letters. Your last came very opportune,² and proved as a cordial to my spirits. I had been, and still am, much exercised. But the friendship you honour me with and the care and love with which you watch over me, greatly encouraged and strengthened me. My heart overflow[ed] with thankfulness and my spirit rejoiced in God my saviour. Much, very much, do I desire to deserve the esteem you favour me with. Continue to help me all you can. Ever point out the most excellent path, and may the Lord help me to walk therein.

The snare I mentioned in my last, which Satan had laid for me, was mysticism. And had I not had the many blessed opportunities of conversing with you freely on these subjects before I reached York, I know not what the event might have been. So much did Mr. [Cornelius] Cayley then talk to me in that train. Since then I have ventured to tell him I cannot think as he does, with more boldness than I could before. For though I could never receive all he said, yet I was sometimes silent, thinking, 'If he is what he says he is, I will not be found to reject God.' That he is a good man, I have no doubt. Many here have been much blessed under his ministry. In particular, he seems to want to make a convert of me. And my mother often tells me, it is well I love you better than Mr. Cayley, else she would greatly fear for me. I feel no desire after extraordinaries. My soul only desires more of that love which hopes, believes, and endures all things.³ And though this does not exempt me from trials, yet I feel a peaceful calm within in the midst of all I meet with. Nor do I ever expect or see it needful to feel my peace interrupted. Mr. Cayley tells me just what Madam Guyon's spiritual statements speak of,⁴ and thinks I am at the top of the mountain, and must be, as it were, all confusion before I am dissolved in God. Could I believe him, the thought would pain me. But my soul—having begun to ascend the ladder—hopes to rise upward until I see my dear redeeming Lord. I feel my soul hungers and thirsts after all the fullness of God. I long to be

Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in God's immensity.⁵

Since I last wrote, I have in the general been called to suffer the will of God. My exercises have been many and various. I have often thought of those words:

Through much distress and pain,
Through many a conflict here,
Through blood you must the entrance gain;
Yet O! disdain to fear.
Courage, your captain cries,
Who all your toil foreknew,
Toil you shall have, yet all despise,
I have o'ercome for you.⁶

²JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, Aug. 12, 1776.

³See 1 Cor. 13:7.

⁴Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de la Motte-Guyon (1648–1717) was a French mystic who advocated a type of Quietism.

⁵Cf. CW, 'Hymn to the Holy Ghost', st. 3, *HSP* (1739), 184.

⁶CW, 'Hymns for Believers, #27', st. 5, *HSP* (1749), 1:233.

So I feel it. My desire and intention at present is to overcome by enduring. The love of Jesus sweetens all, and his grace is still sufficient for me. My way to glory lies through much tribulation. But oh my dear sir, pray for me that I may boldly beneath the bloody banner fight. Sometimes I feel much thankfulness that I am thus honoured; at others, the enemy tells me I shall not long be able to suffer with resignation what I am daily called to. But I look up to the Lord and the tempter flies. My soul seems determined, through the help of God, Satan, the world, and sin to tread down, and take the glorious prize. Through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, I hope to pursue my way.

Many of my outward trials have been occasioned by an afflicting yet gracious providence which has lately happened [to] my dear father. The use of his left side is taken from him by the palsy. He has been very near death, but at present is likely to continue some time. He seems much resigned, is very patient, knowing the Lord doth all things well. It has been a close trial to my dear mother, and from this quarter I have felt much, but my soul stands fast believing in the Lord. I dare not look forward, but live [in] the present moment, ever remembering my Lord has promised, 'As thy day, so thy strength shall be'.⁷ The end of all things is at hand. Soon to pain and suffering, I shall bid a fine *adieu*. And even to suffer the will of Jesus is sweet. I am enabled, in some measure, to live in the spirit of sacrifice. All I have, his mercy freely gave. And if the Lord recall what he so long has entrusted, my heart will yet cry out, 'Thy only will be done.'⁸ I would not choose for myself, or be in any other hands, for ten thousand worlds.

May the Lord abundantly bless my ever dear father. May goodness and mercy follow you all your days. May you be filled with all the fullness of God here, and crowned with an eternal weight of glory hereafter. Your last pleasing charge in the conclusion of your letter will, while memory remains, ever be remembered and constantly fulfilled by, dear sir,

Your ever affectionate, though unworthy, daughter,

Eliz. Ritchie

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

Annotation: none [was 14th].

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁷Deut. 33:25.

⁸See CW, 'The Last Wish', st. 1, *HSP* (1749), 2:24.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

College [Trevecca]
September 8, 1776

Dear Sir,

I am sorry you should choose to give credit to anything so absolutely false as even the supposition of [me] meaning to oppose you in Cornwall.¹ Mr. Kinsman of Plymouth, being ill, requested our help.² Assistance was sent him. And from thence to Cornwall the students received their invitation, which they accepted. And as all cannot believe with either you or us, from the remoteness of our principles to each other, so the liberty of choosing every honest and sensible man justly claims. The purchase of Busveal followed thence.³ The equitable steps taken by me in it relative to yours you are, or may be, well acquainted with from Mrs. Hitchens⁴ and Mr. [Henry] Durbin. These were our introductions, and the services of the gospel the single motive to this moment. And as there are yet thousands of souls, after all your labours, sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, let it be our mutual business to love one another and serve those severally who will be helped by either; instead of quarrelling with me while nothing is more remote from my own heart than giving you or anyone living any cause of offense—therefore my justifying any unchristian conduct to you in word or deed. Nothing could exceed the abandonedness of that mind that could invent so absurd an untruth.

Many have been the interpositions made by me to prevent any attack unkind or severe upon you, or upon any who serve with you in the gospel, believing many to be worthy and excellent men. So that nothing but folly, united with baseness and meanness, could be the cause (while the different views of Scripture truths only subsisted) of this condemnation. And which they must have equally a right for themselves to judge from, as we have. Nothing has been so continually enforced by me, in various ways, to the students as to avoid all disputes or casting the smallest reflection upon you or any of your friends. The Christian character can never be so obscured as by returning railing for railing, or evil for evil, as it is our privilege to suffer all things from all men for the Lord Jesus' sake, committing our souls in well doing to his faithful and kind care for us. I praise the Lord our young men are better employed. And I may assure you better taught also. And what you choose to say or think of their having me for their director (in railing, as on this occasion), I have no objection to while I remain so well satisfied myself of its unjustness upon the subject. Education and principle (next grace protecting me) will be ever my sufficient security. And while you may continue to think otherwise, I shall only with respect to your person and labours ever remain, dear sir,

Your old and faithful friend,

S. H.

Source: manuscript draft for her records; Cambridge, The Cheshunt Foundation, Westminster College, Archives, E4/3/2.

¹Annotated 'copy of Lady Huntingdon's answer to Mr. Jn. Wesley's letter'. The letter of JW raising concern about apparent encroachment by students from Trevecca on his societies that drew this response is not known to survive. But JW's reply of Sept. 15, 1776 is also held at Cambridge.

²Andrew Kinsman (1724–93), a native of Tavistock, was converted by George Whitefield and became the leading supporter of Calvinist Methodism there and later in Plymouth (where he resettled). See *Works*, 22:386 n. 75.

³I.e., the site of Gwennap Pit, in Cornwall

⁴Likely the wife of James Hitchens Jr.

From Hannah Ball

[High Wycombe]
September 24, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I thank you for your kind, encouraging letter,¹ and for giving me the opportunity of revealing the past mercies of God to me. I bless his holy name I can, without hesitation, answer every question you propose. I do not in the least find my zeal abate, but rather increase. I desire to give God all the glory for all that he has done in me or by me. Mean as my services are, they are accepted of him. And he gives me strength both to do and suffer his will. Though I did say that I felt in my illness that I needed more grace to suffer his will that to do it, it was not because I did not feel a sufficiency of grace, but what the Lord was pleased to give me to feel—as I apprehend, to make me have a deeper sympathy with the afflicted, and to excite thankfulness in my when my health and strength returned, which blessed effect I found.

When I was taken ill, I was just come from visiting my friends in the Lord at Wallingford and Watlington [Oxfordshire], and have been made useful among them. I saw the hand of God in my disorder, which came on me as an armed man. But it was a most sovereign remedy to save me from some temptations which the Lord saw I was in great danger of being assaulted with. By this means the enemy of my soul was kept at a proper distance, and I had an opportunity of glorifying God by suffering as well as doing his will. He bore me up above the water floods, and kept my soul in perfect peace. Once or twice I felt the water floods press hard upon me, but had immediate recourse to prayer and found relief. As my disorder was in my head, [the] temptations was not wanting to think of many things to lower my spirits. But still, as thought was injected, I found power to resist and to give myself up to God, and found strength according to my day. Sometimes I was so borne above all that I could, as it were, laugh and sing. At other times I keenly felt all I endured, but without a murmuring thought or desire to have it removed until the Lord pleased.

I bless the Lord I do 'pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks'.² My spirit is so closely united to Jesus that I am not hindered from this by company or business. I do not always feel the same sweetness in my spirit, but I feel power to resist Satan in all his wiles, both pleasing and unpleasing. My soul at present stands fast, believing in the Lord for strength for every future want. I know not how to tell how dear the Lord of life and glory is to me. Words seem too faint to describe the tender uniting love I feel to the Lord Jesus. At this moment methinks I behold him view[ing] me with smiles of approbation. Well may I be lost, for want of words, when I consider his greatness and my unworthiness. But he calls a worm his friend. And, glory be to him, I can call him my Lord. And this thought often raises me above all the difficulties that I meet with, makes me rise superior to every opposing temptation, and enables me to urge my way with strength renewed.

I find I can rejoice with reverence. My soul lieth in the dust. I adore the triune God with self-abasement. I am thankful for the grace that enables me to endure, and remain,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

H. Ball

Source: manuscript copy in her letterbook; MARC, PLP 4/32.1, item #18.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²1 Thess. 5:17–18.

From John Undrell¹

Tiverton, Devon[shire]
September 30, 1776

My Dear Old Friend,

I can assure you that you have not been altogether forgotten by me, although we have been so many miles at a distance from each other. And surely we have not been forgotten in heaven by that kind intercessor who said, 'Behold I have engraven thee upon the palms of mine hands.'² For he is 'a friend that loveth at all times, and sticketh closer than a brother'.³

I hope our dear Lord Jesus will show forth his power in this circuit. What a mercy it is that our *now* good friend, the Rev. Dr. [Thomas] Coke, has enlisted under his banner. Truly he has a good captain, and I trust he will make a *very* good soldier. What will not meekness, gentleness, humility, etc.—in a word, what will not love—overcome or do? Blessed be God for that amiable temper which I have seen in him. I have heard him preach twice at our room in Taunton. N.B., the people love him much for his excellent, for his admirable, temper. And out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. The Lord keep him humble, etc. For 'he that endures unto the end, the same shall be saved'.⁴

As I am now in haste, having 20 miles to ride, I shall conclude with the apostle's words: 'Be steadfast, unmoveable, etc.'⁵ Farewell. My love to your spouse and all friends.

Your friend, brother, and servant in Jesus,

John Undrell

P.S. When the Dr. preaches at Brecknock (which I suppose he will, if it please God), will they not be ready to say or think (unless they are stupid) 'we have seen strange things today'?⁶ Oh that they may not only wonder but believe, with a loving and obedient faith!

If you will choose to favour me with a letter, direct for me at Mrs. Pond's, Confectioner, Taunton.

Source: photocopy of holograph; WWEP Archive [Baker lists as in Methodist Archives, but location not currently known].

¹John Undrell was admitted as an itinerant preacher 'on trial' in 1770 (see *Works*, 10:380). He gained full status the following year and was appointed each year up through 1776 (that year to Devonshire). The 1777 Minutes record that he desisted from travelling (10:465), at which time he settled in Birmingham and took up business interests, which serving at times as a local preacher. His business failed, leaving him bankrupt and some appealed to JW for help; see *WHS* 39 (1973): 145.

²Isa. 49:16.

³Prov. 18:24.

⁴Matt. 24:13.

⁵1 Cor. 15:58.

⁶Luke 5:26. Coke was a native of Brecon, and had recently served as mayor there; so Undrell is connecting to Jesus preaching at Nazareth.

From Cornelius Bayley¹

Kingswood School
October 28, 1776

Reverend Dear Sir,

The best temporal resort is to you who, I have hitherto believed, desire to make all men happy, and particularly those who have thought it a blessing and honour to be under your command. It was this that made me reject several considerable advantages, of which you are not unacquainted, offered me when I came here first, and lately to despise the solicitations of my friends to accept of a better situation, and even to refuse one which I received advice about of you when last with us. And my conduct, together with Mr. Simpson's,² has been manifest not only to you, most dear sir, but also who have had any concern with us which you were pleased to think required, that public commendation you gave us, as also advancing my salary.

But notwithstanding this we are unhappy. Mrs. Mason has used us in such a manner as I can no longer bear. Nor only our persons are abused, but also our characters—not indeed with any affirmations, but with her surmises and imaginations, which indeed to thinking minds have not the least shadow of truth. And not only in the presence of the boys, in whom we expect a spirit of rebellion, though hitherto they have behaved *well*, and a few who, since you left us, I really believe desire truly to devote themselves to God; but also before the servants, who have already refused doing their duty to us. And this not only at home, but they are allowed to go out and there they speak of Mrs. Mason's imaginations of us. So that the school is in danger of contracting unjust aspersions, while we have laboured night and day to clear it from those it had before our coming. There is scarcely a house in Bristol that I have gone into who have not been throwing some part of other of her bad conduct into my face. And I always endeavoured to vindicate her, though I think it is sufficient to keep myself clear. To bring her to any further *eclaircissement*³ I think is unnecessary, for she never attempts to prove or give any reason for her imaginations, only [that] she thinks so. And she has so often acknowledged her fault, and the next quarter of an hour fell into it again. So that parting seems to me the only remedy, before all things go to entire ruin. Petticoat-tyranny I neither can nor will bear; nor would Mr. Wesley wish me to bear it, unless it be until a lawful time of getting from under its yoke, especially of a person who knows not when a thing is well done, much less [is] able to do it well. This is not all, reverend sir, but how is it possible for us to stand up in the name of Jesus to proclaim the everlasting gospel while the people are made to imagine we are not exactly what we profess. These considerations so work upon my mind that I know not whether I can endure it till Christmas. At which time I hope you will give me the liberty of seeking for some place to lay my head where I can rest free from jealousies, surmisings, hatred, and other hellish crimes. Though it should be as some of my betters have done, to live on bread and water. The religion of the holy Jesus cannot make any progress where these are harboured.

¹Cornelius Bayley (1751–1812), born to an artisan family in Shropshire, was educated at the Whitechurch Free [Grammar] School, and proved such a student that when the current master died, Bayley was named his replacement at the age of 17. Since his father was active in Methodist circles Bayley soon came to JW's attention, and by 1773 he had moved to Kingswood in the role of English teacher and later second master. While never a formal Methodist itinerant, Bayley did serve as a local preacher. In 1780 he received ordination as a deacon and began to serve as curate for John Fletcher (while remaining active at Kingswood). He was ordained an elder the following year and served as curate in Deptford with Richard Conyers. See *WHS* 34 (1964): 153–58.

²Thomas Simpson had been appointed by JW as Headmaster of Kingswood by January 1771, where he remained until 1783.

³French for 'elucidation, clarification,' etc.

Once indeed I believed she was a pious, devoted person. But whether Satan has gained the advantage over her, or whether he head is turned, I am not yet able to determine. But whether one or the other, I would be glad to be free, unless your wisdom should think proper to remove her to some other situation, and then I shall think it a happiness to be under your disposal. The Lord God Almighty bless you and prosper your labours, if possible, abundantly more than ever. And when the last solemn hour shall come:

O may the charming accents from above
Breathe down celestial harmony and love:
Eternal joys, in Jesus, on you roll,
And boundless pleasures overwhelm your soul.⁴

Favour me with an immediate answer, and believe that I have been and wish to be, reverend and dear sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

Cornelius Bailey [sic]

Annotation: by JW, 'Mr Baily of S[ister] Mason! / Oct. 28. 1776 / a[nswere]d Nov. 2'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/4.

⁴Cf. Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Devout Soliloquies*, Soliloquy 17, ll. 12–15.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

[Otley]
October 29, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

It has given me some pain that I could not sooner acknowledge the receipt of your last kind letter.¹ When I last wrote, my dear father [John] was ill. He is rather better, though still very lame. But for some weeks my dear mother [Beatrix] has been, and still continues, dangerously ill. What with attending her, and the care of the family which now falls on me, my time has been so employed that I could not before now get opportunity to tell my ever dear and much loved father what I believe you already knew—that the love I feel for you is more strong than ever, and such a one as nature never knew. In God we are united, and pure union my spirit feels with yours. It is, and ever has been, a scale whereby to heavenly love I do ascend; and had I the opportunities you mentioned, my whole heart should without reserve be laid open. Indeed, it already is. Nor do I ever wish to hide anything from you, but count it a great privilege to be permitted from time to time to tell you all that concerns me and to receive your kind instructions.

But you judge right. Trials I have passed through since I saw you, dear sir, that I must pass over in silence. It has been my great consolation that God knew my heart, and that in this respect I was only becoming more like my divine master. I am willing (glory be to him that makes me so) to be as the filth and offscouring of all things.² And if all men, yea even my Father's children, speak evil of me, his will be done. Often, very often, have I offered fortune, friends, reputation, health, yea even life itself, to him that died for me—if he saw that in my being deprived of these his name would be glorified and my soul profited. Nor do I yet retract my feeble offering. No, no; all I have is thine. Yes, my dear redeemer.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
It were a present far too small
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my life, my soul, my all.³

I adore the riches of his grace, who keeps me every moment. I have constant and uninterrupted communion with my God. And though lately very much hurried outwardly, and often deprived of the means of grace, yet he that hath mercy on me does lead me continually. He guides me by the springs of living water, and daily keeps my soul as a well-watered garden.⁴ Every morning brings some fresh discovery of his love; and in the evening love and gratitude fill my heart. I am often lost in wonder, and praise sits silent on my tongue.

About five weeks ago, dear Mrs. [Ann] Clapham, by a fall down stairs, broke her arm. She has recovered but very slowly. The confinement she was obliged to use on the account of her arm has brought on her nervous disorder, which for some time has incapacitated her for the duties of her family. This, added to what the physician who attends her says about the necessity there is for her to live in the country in order to preserve health, has made her almost determined to leave Leeds. She is now looking out for some place near Leeds; and on the account of her health, her relations seem pretty well reconciled. She desired I would mention it to you and would like to know your thought of it. Mrs. Downes has met her people for her [for] some time—so that in this respect providence seems to make her way more plain than

¹JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, Sept. 20, 1776.

²See 1 Cor. 4:13.

³Isaac Watts, 'Crucifixion to the World', st. 4, included by JW in *CPH* (1738), 39.

⁴See Isa. 58:11.

ever before.⁵ And Mrs. Downes seems so well satisfied with Leeds that I think it likely she will continue there. Dear Mrs. Clapham goes on well. She has been sweetly carried on in her afflictions, and though at the first threatened with mortification, could always say 'The will of the Lord be done.' She is a precious, lively soul, and our dear Lord gives us sweet fellowship with himself and with each other. O how manifold are the blessings my dear Lord bestows on his worthless, unworthy worm. How shall I sufficiently praise him for the dear friends to whom his love unites me. Our friendships end not with death, but have their [vevet?] in eternity.

I had a sweet letter from dear Miss [Hester Ann] Roe last week. How am I indebted to you, my dear sir, for her acquaintance. My soul loves her. And animated by her, and all that love my dear Lord, I hope through grace to rise to all the heights of love; that, at least with those dear redeemed ones who have lent their friendly aid to help me on to heaven, I may spend a blessed eternity in the full fruition of God. Then shall you receive a full reward. God shall repay you for all your kindness to me.

We have lately heard that that dear man of God, Mr. [John] Fletcher, is better and talks of coming into Yorkshire for the recovery of his health. Pray is it so? We shall all be truly glad to see him and (except my dear father⁶) I know not who would be a more welcome guest among our societies. In your next, please to tell me when you enter your winter quarters.

May the God of love, with all his fullness, ever fill your precious soul, prays, dear sir,
Your ever affectionate, though unworthy, daughter,

Eliz. Ritchie

Address: 'To / Mr. W–y / London'.

Annotation: another hand, '15th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁵Dorothy Furlly (c. 1731–1807) married John Downes in Bristol on June 26, 1764. After her husband's death she settled in Leeds, and was buried there on Aug. 1, 1807.

⁶I.e., JW, her spiritual father.

Unnamed Reviewer of *Some Observations on Liberty*

[November 1776]

Dr. [Richard] Price is the writer whom Mr. Wesley combats, with much zeal, great good temper, and no small judgment, insisting: that the Americans claim not liberty but independency; that to the former they have an undoubted right, but not to the latter; that both civil and religious liberty they do (or did) enjoy; that before their liberty was taken away by the restraining acts they grievously abused it by smuggling at noon day, Mr. John Hancock in particular; that the colonies are free both with regard to their persons and goods, in short in all the three particulars which Judge Blackstone includes in civil liberty; that since civil societies were formed, no man has a right to be independent; that 'the people', as defined by Dr. Price, have no right to make and unmake their governors, and except in the case of Masaniello (at Naples) never exerted it in any age or nation; that the people of England, for instance, never chose William the Conqueror, Stephen, John, Henry IV, Edward IV, Henry VII, Mary, Elizabeth, or James I, nor did they depose or behead Charles I, or restore Charles II, or elevate William III; that 'all the members of the state' or 'all the individuals' (Dr. Price's words) necessarily [should] include all the men, women, and children; that government is not delegated from the people, but from God, that one country may be subject to the legislature of another, in which it has no voice and over which it has no control, without being in slavery (Pennsylvania for instance, till now); that the government of one country over another may be supported without an armed force, as that of England was both in the islands and North America; that the English settlers in America never had the power of legislating for themselves, and therefore could not give it up; that the English government, according to Dr. Price, is 'completely slavish', there being no 'equal representation' of all that are governed; that every supreme power has a right to make statutes to bind its subjects 'in all cases whatever'; that slavery may be expressed, whatever Dr. Price thinks, in much stronger terms (and Mr. Wesley has expressed it by describing the state of the Negroes); that the colonies did not 'send only to us' what we wanted, or 'receive only from us' what they wanted, or 'allow us to regulate their trade', observing them only as *they* thought best; and that we fought *their* battles, not *they* ours, as we have sad reason to remember. The next paragraph, to exemplify Mr. Wesley's manner of writing, shall be quoted at large.

[here appears §45 of JW's *Some Observations on Liberty*]

Our author proceeds to show that the case of the Americans widely differs from that of the Corsicans, to whom the Dr. compares them, the Corsicans not being colonies from Genoa; and for the same reason, and many others, from that of the Hollanders also, when subject to the Spaniards, and that of the allied, independent states of Italy, at war with Rome; and that the laws and religion of France were not established in Canada *on purpose* to bring up thence an army of French papists, but to secure to them their natural liberty; that neither the Indians nor the Negroes have been instigated to attack the Americans; doubts whether the colonies contain two millions; whether a quarter of the inhabitants of any country are fighting men (usually a sixth part), or whether a quarter of the American fighting men are determined to fight in so bad a cause—not for liberty but independency; proves that the Netherland states were not 'thus circumstance'; and concludes answering Dr. Price's arguments of the Americans not being 'our subjects' but 'fellow subjects', of their not being taxed by themselves, and not obeying our parliament and our laws because they have no voice in the one nor share in making the other, and of none of their freehold land being represented.

With the concluding paragraph, which comes with peculiar propriety from a minister of peace, we most heartily concur: [here quotes the last paragraph and concluding hymn excerpt of §57].

Source: *Gentleman's Magazine* 46 (Nov. 1776): 519–20.

From Hannah Ball

[High Wycombe]
November 11, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your last letter gave me joy and sorrow;¹ joy to receive a letter from you as another proof of the kind care you have for my soul's welfare, and sorrow to hear that so many that was once made pure in heart should so soon cast away the precious gift. My soul mourns over all such. I can and do often carry those precious souls and lay them before the throne of grace, praying that God would again awaken them to the sense of the loss they have sustained and give them again the blessing they (instead of improving) have given up. I believe you gave the reason why they lose the grace when you was here, in your exhortation to this society, who have also suffered great loss out of the number that have received the blessing from time to time.

There is but seven here that have a clear witness that they are now saved from sin, and four removed from us that I believe enjoy the same grace (in all, eleven). This work began the latter end of the year [17]67. Then the Lord set four at liberty; two keep the blessing and two gave it up. We had no more until Mr. [John] Furz came in the year [17]70.² Then three more found power to give God all their hearts and one of the first [was] restored. The next year Mr. [Samuel] Wells came.³ Many was justified and sanctified that year and the next. Since then we have never been long without having witnesses of God's power to save to the utmost. I can recollect thirty-four that have, I believe, had a clear deliverance from sin that have been in society; three at least that are gone to glory that was not in society. I believe if I was to say that forty had been thus saved, I should not exceed what God has done. Some have held the blessing ever since they received it. Others have gave it up and have been restored. Some at this time are waiting at the poolside to be again made whole. We had a love feast last night and the Spirit that seemed to be among us appeared to me to be as one flame ascending upward. My soul has groaned much before the Lord of late for the work of sanctification to revive, fearing it would dwindle away and few would contend for entire sanctification. But [I] am now encouraged to believe the Lord will visit his vineyard once more. We have had for some time a heavy time. The want of earnestness has been evidently felt by them that are alive to God. Blessed be to his holy name, we have some among us that constantly forget the things behind and [are] constantly pressing forward. I still hope we shall see a glorious increase both in number and grace. But when I consider what this society might have been to what it is, I can but mourn before the Lord. Yet at the same time I see cause for thankfulness that we have not been permitted to destroy one another, but have in some degree been kept a loving people. The glory be the Lord's, for to him it is due.

I find at this time my soul alive to God and free from any want. So that I am enabled to run the race that is set before me and trust I shall obtain a crown of never-fading glory. I find the Lord does increase my strength as I stand in need, so that I have no need to complain. For as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, so is the Lord to me. To this strong rock my soul does fly. In every tempestuous hour I find Satan my foe, Jesus my friend. Lately I was tempted to be discouraged, but I considered in the midst of the sharpest attack from the power of darkness that as long as God had strength to give, and I power to depend on him, I would not yield. And from that moment my soul gathered strength, and the enemy of my soul was fast to fly. And I now feel much love, a sweet peace, and settled joy; with a clear sense of salvation from all sin, and a full assurance of hope of being with God in glory.

I am, dear sir,

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²John Furz was assigned to the North Wiltshire circuit at the Aug. 1769 Conference, and moved to the Oxfordshire circuit by the 1770 Conference.

³Samuel Wells was moved to the Oxfordshire circuit by the 1771 Conference.

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

H. Ball

Source: manuscript copy in her letterbook; MARC, PLP 4/32.1, item #23.

From Thomas Rutherford

Dunbar
November 30, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

It pleased the Lord on Wednesday last,¹ a quarter after 6:00 in the morning, to call brother Minethorp home to himself.²

Since I came last to Dunbar (which was six weeks ago) I often visited him and we had much close conversation. He was quite dead to the things of this world and careful only to do everything which he believed was the will of God, that nothing might be neglected which he ought to have done. Besides the greatness of his bodily distress, he was seldom many hours without strong temptations, and most violent conflicts of soul, to which perhaps his natural dispositions and the affliction of his body, particularly his nervous complaints, contributed not a little. He often told me he should soon be gone, but neither I nor any who saw him (except his dear sister, who attended him constantly with the greatest tenderness, and who next to himself knew his case best) thought death so near as it really was.

Friday, sennight, I slept in the room with him, and on Saturday morning he expressed great thankfulness for the refreshing rest he had got. He conversed freely and cheerfully with me that forenoon. In the afternoon he grew worse, and scarce got any rest, but coughed most part of the night. On the Sunday morning, about 8:00, he was seized with a violent pain in his right breast, which threatened to cut his breath. It continued all the day without interruption or abatement, and prevented his going to bed till 3:00 on the Monday morning. Sunday night I was with him, and we called upon the Lord repeatedly, by prayer, in his behalf. Though in an agony, he prayed earnestly and almost incessantly, often using those words: 'Lord remember me?' 'Lord look upon me!' 'Jesus, the sinner's friend, visit me!' I helped him to bed and we thought he should have died instantly. Just then he cried, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' He recovered a little, and was able to lie quiet for the most part till the Monday evening, but could sleep none.

A little after he recovered he said to his sister and me, 'I want nothing now but a waft of my Saviour's love, a fair gale of the Spirit to blow me home! Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!' And again, 'People expect that preachers will say great things when they die, but what can I say? I am only a sinner at the feet of mercy, and it is good to be there.' When I asked him the state of his mind, he said, 'I find peace, but not much joy. There is, as it were, a cloud upon my mind.' He wept and prayed aloud for a visit from his Lord, saying, 'My dear Jesus, come away.' Then he said 'I am ready to say, "Why are his chariot wheels so long a-coming?" O how my soul longs and pants for the Lord!' On Monday night, at 6:00, he in a moment grew so ill that he could neither lie nor sit, so that we were obliged to hold him up in his bed the whole night. And he was in such agony that, though the doors and windows were set open for air, he was bathed in sweat the whole night. He was now but able to speak little, for pain and want of breath. Yet about 1:00 in the Tuesday morning he said, 'All of you look to this piece of work! Don't forget it!' I then asked him if he found his saviour present with him to comfort him. He answered, 'I hope I shall be with the angels and with my saviour!' And added, 'Don't wonder that I am a great suffering, for I am a great sinner.' A little after he cried with a loud voice, 'Father – Redeemer – Come Lord Jesus!' And after that a little, 'Angels and archangels, where are you?' About 9:00 Dr. [James] Hamilton came to see him, to whom he said, 'Look to this piece of work; this is serious work' and pointed for him to go to prayer. We then took him out of bed and sat him in a chair. Towards noon I asked him if he found his mind comfortable. He said, 'Pretty well, but this pain will break patience.' He continued worse and

¹Apparently Nov. 27; but possibly means Nov. 20.

²William Minethorp (d. 1776) appears first in the Minutes, already among the travelling preachers, in 1765 (*Works*, 10:304). He served circuits through 1772, and by 1773 was receiving support from Conference due to his disabilities (see 10:422, 433, 446, 459). His death was recorded officially in the Minutes in 1777 (10:464).

worse. About 9:00 at night, while Dr. Hamilton was at prayer, he appeared just to be going. We continued in prayer and he revived just a little. I again asked him the state of his mind. He said he found more confidence and desired us to pray for him in our hearts and he would meditate. But in a little while [he] said, 'I cannot fix my mind, I am so sick', and signed for us to pray aloud with him. He spoke little more, but grew still weaker. Yet retained his senses and often lifted up his hands and eyes towards heaven, till a quarter after 6:00 in the morning; when he sweetly fell asleep without a throw.

You have the best account I am capable of giving. I shall only add that his last sickness and death was the most affecting, solemn, joyous scene I ever witnessed. I am,

Your obedient son,

Thos. Rutherford

Address: 'The Rev. Mr. John Wesley / at the Foundery in Moorfields'.

Postmark: '4/DE'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Nov. 30. 1776 Tho. Rutherford / Acct. of W. Minethorp's death / a[nswere]d Dec. 6'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/113.

From an Unidentified Correspondent¹

c. December 1776

During his last illness, which was a consumption, he was frequently affected with a sense of his vileness, and of his great unworthiness of the divine favour; but at the same time, expressed an unshaken confidence in the death of Christ.

Through his whole illness he never complained, or showed any signs of discontent; but on the other hand, many of his expressions indicated that he was perfectly resigned to the will of God.

In the morning of the day on which he died, feeling himself much worse, he said, 'This is a good sign,' and at the same time seemed very composed: and desired us to praise God on his account, saying, 'I have not breath to do it.'

To Mrs. Avison he said, 'My dear, do not grieve on my account; but rather rejoice when death arrives: seeing I am sure he will be a messenger of peace to *me*.'

Between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, being able to speak a little better than he had done, during a great part of his illness, he conversed with those about him, concerning God and eternity, for near an hour and a half. He then said, 'I have long prayed, that God may be with me in my last moments; and I now find him to be with me of a truth. O glorious bliss! O sacred enjoyment! I have a hope full of immortality! Therefore praise the Lord on my account; and pray that I may have patience to the last.'

Having continued to speak rather longer than he was able, he lay still a while in a kind of a doze, and seemed to have little or no pain. Then awaking from his slumber, about six o'clock, with two or three groans, he fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

Thus, in spite of a profession which generally exposes to folly and danger, this good man stood his ground, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour, for a number of years, and then went to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb forever and ever!

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 15–16.

¹Titled: 'A short Account of the Death of Mr. Edward Avison, Organist of St. Nicholas, in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne: who died in the year 1776'. Edward Avison (1747–76) was the oldest son of the famous organist Charles Avison (1710–70). Edward died Oct. 19, 1776.

From Cornelius Bayley

Kingswood School
December 6, 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Mr. [Thomas] Lewis assures me that it is your will we should continue at your school, which (if you will make things agreeable) we much desire. Hereby I am encouraged once more to write, being fully conscious of Solomon's proverb 16:15, באור פני-מלך חיים.¹ Wherefore I write in the presence of God and upon my knees.

When I taught the Free School at Whitchurch, Salop, they obliged me to give it up unless I would promise never more to hear you and yours. But for love of you and a good conscience I surrendered. Afterwards Lady Huntingdon offered me much favour if I would go to her college [at Trevecca] as a teacher or to seek ordination, which she promised to assist me in; or, if I should change my mind, and write to her, she would receive me any time with open arms. But her disrespect to you, dear sir, and my dislike to those [Calvinist] notions made me refuse. But now that service which I have so long gloried in, and laboured for its good as much if not more than if it had been my own, I am forced to leave; and only because I cannot have peace and a good conscience.

When I heard your last letter it had an amazing effect upon me,² and I began to think surely religion after all is a vain thing. But when I had laid it before God I was fully convinced that you would not have written so diametrically opposite of your former [letter] without some pretended friend having whispered in your ear since then. I have assurance that some things are laid down to you in a very prejudicial light, and others absolutely false. It has been represented that the reason of our going away is because Mrs. [Thomas] Simpson is not made housekeeper—than which there is nothing more false. Mrs. Simpson is positively against it, and though I myself had often wished she should, yet she never, though you should offer it, willingly consented. And when she did at last yield, if you thought proper, it was only for the sake of peace and harmony (the want of which has ever been the destruction of the school), and this was the last thing proposed to you.

If I may be permitted to speak, dear sir, I can assure < ? ? ?³ has, to the best of my knowledge, never assumed nor wanted to < ? ? > much authority as you or the stewards had given him. And I h(ave? ? oppor)tunity of knowing for more than four years last past.

As to Mr. [Thomas] Simpson's persuading me to leave the school, [it] is what he never did. No, dear sir, there is cause enough without it. Mrs. Mason's usage, which I have mentioned before, is a sufficient reason for me. And if I could have had peace and unanimity, though double the salary of your school had been offered to me, it would not have drawn me away from it. Of which I have had proof enough more than half a dozen times since I came here, and some of them I mentioned in my last. But I don't think an hundred pounds per annum are sufficient to pay for peace, love, joy, and a good character. You have a right dear sir, noone dares dispute it, to appoint whom you please over your own school. But there is no obligation which binds anyone to serve where they cannot enjoy peace. [I] should therefore be glad to know how long time is legal warning, for (through the help of God) we will never do anything contrary to righteousness. And then we must leave the dealings of others with us as our heavenly Father shall permit them.

It was in vain, dear sir, to say any more of Mrs. Mason's conduct, as I know not what falsities she has written or said of us. One more I beg leave to mention. Some day last week, in some of her sober hours, she confessed that she was possessed when she behaved so towards us. However, though witnesses

¹'In the presence of the king's face is life.'

²This was apparently a followup to JW's Nov. 2 answer to Bayley's initial letter of Oct. 28 (as docketed on the latter). Neither the Nov. 2 letter nor this followup are known to survive.

³The lower right corner of the page is missing, affecting 2-4 words each in three lines.

were present, yet when I repeated her confession she said she was 'bewildered'. And because she could find nothing in my conduct in any respect, she must find it in the law of my God. She told me she had wrote to you that glaring untruth, viz., I 'deny perfection'. Whereas I believe, so far as I understand it, even Mr. Wesley himself does not hold it more firmly than I do. I appeal to anyone who ever heard me speak in public or private for five minutes space. But what has this to do in the matter except to take off your attention from the point in hand? Your penetration is too deep not to see that it is impossible for us to live with a person who can tell such known palpable untruths—and it may be an hundred more. When I ask her why she uses me so, she answers, 'Because I must say something for myself.' If this is Christianity, may God deliver me for it; lo I turn to my ungodly friends, who have hated me for being a Methodist.

Do not imagine, reverend sir, that we go away through any disrespect to you. No, so far from it that we would think nothing too great to oblige you in which is not inconsistent with peace and a good conscience. And whoever has hinted the contrary is no friend to you and altogether wrongs us. Our actions since we came prove this, as I am certain you know it too well to think otherwise. If I have taken too great a liberty, reverend sir, attribute it to my ignorance and not want of respect, for it is with a broken heart I write, to think I should leave the school of a person whom I love and honour above all men.

Since I began this Mr. Lewis has been over, and Mrs. Mason has got something new. She says we have thought and I have strove 'to prove her a hypocrite this year past'. Which is as false as the rest. And here she throws the contention. Though I never thought so, nor ever gave the least indication to her or anyone else, whatever I think now. There is no doubt with me but she will find out some other falsehood before March. Nor should I ever desire to live with persons who have not a guard over themselves, let them make what profession or promises they please.

The Lord bless you, dear sir, and direct you to masters who will be as faithful as we have been, and who will have <the needs> of the children as much at heart as we have had.

The Almighty God bless you, dear sir, with every great and heavenly benediction. My soul seems to spring out in breathing this ardent prayer.

When all the springs of life are running low,
And ebbing fast in death, when nature tir'd,
Trembling, and faint, gropes thro' the gloomy vale,
Nor human aid can give the least support;
Then may the cordials of our Jesu's love,
Pour in divine refreshments on you soul,
Then may he smile, whose gentle smile could cheer
The shades of hell, and scatter all its gloom.⁴

So humbly and heartily prays, reverend and dear sir,
Your sincere and obedient servant

Cornelius Bailey [sic]

Address: 'The Revd. Mr. John Wesley / London'.

Postmark: '9/DE'.

Endorsement: by JW 'C[ornelius] Bail[ey]. T[homas]. Simpson ! / Dec. 6. 1776 / a[nswere]d 12'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/2.

⁴Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Devout Soliloquies*, 'Soliloquy on Death'.

From Joseph Benson

Newcastle
December 17,¹ 1776

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I saw Edward Jackson yesterday,² and he has consented to go into the Dales, to supply their want of a preacher for the present, but cannot determine whether he shall continue with them the whole year.

Mr. [Benjamin] Rhodes has undertaken the smuggling business at Sunderland, and meets the classes there next week. But as far as I can see he will find it a very difficult affair. The last time I met the leaders there they seemed, notwithstanding all that has been said and done about it, to be disposed to a man to plead for it; and to discourage our endeavour to put a stop to it, [they] began to give a large detail of the 'mischief' (as they called it) which similar attempts had done to the society in Mr. [Thomas] Oliver's days. But as I would not hear them, and assured them it was and must be our resolution at all events to go through with what we judged our absolute duty, they desisted. But to assist us in this business is what (I dare say) we need not expect them to do. Blessed be God, our leaders and people (I think) in every other place throughout this circuit see things in a different light. At Shields our leaders heartily thanked me for speaking against what they said had long been a burden to their minds, and promised to join heart and hand in endeavouring to eradicate this evil among them.

The fast appointed by the government on Friday last has been observed very devoutly in this town and neighbourhood.³ And as it has already proved a great blessing to the souls of many of God's people, I hope it will be followed with a blessing from the Lord upon our king and country. Such days (I think) are of general use. I wish they were more frequent. A few indeed in this town, who assume to themselves the name of 'patriots' and 'liberty men' made that day a feast day, and instead of fasting at home and praying in the church, had elegant and sumptuous entertainments provided for them in taverns and spent the day in mirth and jollity! But I trust God will humble their pride and disappoint their expectations!

I know it will give you pleasure to be informed that the Lord has wonderfully restored our brother Reed,⁴ who about the time you were last here was sent to the lunatic hospital. It appears we have all partly mistaken his case by imputing his trouble more to a bodily disorder than it seems we should have done. As far as I can judge, there has been extremely little, if anything, of that in it, from first to last. It appears rather to have been owing to the power of Satan, to whom God had given him up to be buffeted for a season, probably because by immersing himself too much in the cares and business of the world he had grieved the Spirit of the Lord and become lukewarm and indifferent in religion. And buffet him he did to purpose. He got such power over him that his faith entirely failed and he sunk into the horrible pit of black despair—a pit so horrible that he still thinks, as he thought all along, that the departed spirits of wicked men cannot suffer more anguish till the day of judgement than he has suffered these nine months. No wonder then that he was haunted night and day with the hateful temptation of putting an end to his

¹The abridged version published in *MM* is dated Dec. 19, which may be when the letter was actually sent; Dec. 17 being when Benson began to draft it.

²Edward Jackson (d. 1806) was currently a class leader and local preacher in Newcastle. He was first admitted 'on trial' as an itinerant preacher in 1777 (see *Works*, 10:464) and would serve for nearly thirty years; see *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1806), 2:324–25; and *MM* 29 (1806): 425–26.

³This is the fast that JW highlights in *A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*, I.16. It was held on Dec. 13, 1776, to implore God's help in the context of the current war between England and the colonists in North America. The 'patriots' mentioned by Benson were Whig supporters of the colonists' claim to fair representation, against the monarch and current parliament.

⁴In his reply of Dec. 24 JW identifies this man as John Reed, who was a leader and local preacher in the Newcastle area.

life, which he actually attempted to do so often that the watchful providence of a gracious God appears most wonderful in his preservation. You may perhaps see a particular account of his deliverances hereafter from himself. At present I shall only say, besides the attempts he made before he was confined, and afterwards in the hospital, about three weeks ago he made his escape fully purposed to end in the river or sea his wretched life. And though he was upon the point of doing it several times, yet he never had power, but was one way or another always prevented. The cry for mercy was all along in his heart, though without any hope. The Lord however had pity upon him, and he was at length enabled to resolve, by the help of God, he would bear the indignation of the Lord (as long as he saw fit to lay it upon him) and attempt to put an end to his wretched life no more, which he knew as a certain way of putting him out of the reach of mercy and sealing up his damnation. He had no sooner formed this resolution (as he expressed it) ‘to assist the devil no longer’—determining if he must have him, he should fetch both body and soul to hell; and set his face to go home—than a gleam of hope shone in upon his mind and gave him some little transient relief. And though it was soon withdrawn for some hours (or days rather), yet by and by it visited him with double power and gradually increased, till with full assurance he could cry out, ‘My Lord and my God’, and again rejoice in God his saviour. Last Thursday night he testified in the general band what God had done for his soul and drew tears of joy from many eyes. And he continues to be unspeakably happy in the Lord. And though when he was in despair he fasted once four days, and another time (he says) eight days without eating any individual thing (meaning this to end his life), and slept little or nothing all the time he has been ill, yet his very body is restored to a wonder and seems as strong and well as ever.⁵

Source: Benson’s manuscript draft; Duke: E. R. Hendrix Papers; and a published abridged version in *Methodist Magazine* 21 (1798): 598–99.⁶

⁵Despite the hope of this current report, Reed’s mental health remained unstable. JW made a point of praying for him during JW’s last visit to Newcastle in May 1790; see *WMM* 1 (1845), 120–21 (quoted in JW, *Journal, Works*, 24:175n).

⁶The published version omits the first two paragraphs, as well as the comments about the ‘patriots’ in the third paragraph. It also has several wording changes in the account of Reed’s illness and recovery. It is unclear whether these changes were made by Benson in the final form mailed to JW, or were the product of editing for publication.

From Rev. James Murray

Newcastle
by December 31, 1776

[p. ii]

PREFACE

Mr. Wesley's observations upon Dr. Price's essay¹ appears to me to contain such dangerous principles with respect to all sorts of government that I could not refrain from pointing out the *awful* and monstrous doctrines set forth in that pamphlet. With respect to our *most gracious king*, the danger of such principles is terrible; as the influence of such sentiments, if they are believed, tends to loose the subjects from all obedience to his government. Mr. Wesley has left nothing to enforce our duty to the civil magistrate except the *sword* and the *gallows*. The obligations of *conscience*, which undoubtedly oblige all men to obey the *laws* and the *magistrate*, are *totally* set aside, and a scheme of *fatalism* introduced which excludes all *moral liberty* and renders *sin* and *duty impossible*.

If either *natural* or *moral liberty* are out of the question concerning civil government, whatever any person performs, he is not an agent. And though he acts never so far wrong, he is not an *offender*, nor sins against any *moral law*.

With regard to all mankind, Mr. Wesley's sentiments are highly pernicious. They tend to banish the thoughts of a *deity* out of the world, and set all those hopes and fears aside, which are the springs of action in the human mind. Mr. Wesley's words are very plain. 'Both physical and moral liberty are beside the present question; and the introducing them can answer no other end than to bewilder, and confuse the reader.'² But what can any man do without them? Is there *any civil liberty* [p. iii] without men have a power to act? Or is obedience to magistrates a duty, unless men are free agents, and accountable to God for disobedience? I should never have expected that any divine in England would have taught *such doctrine*.

If Mr. Wesley can prove that either the Americans or any others of his Majesty's subjects are guilty of a manifest breach of the laws of obedience to his Majesty, I shall not only confess that they are rebels against the king, but in a state of rebellion against the laws of God. But if *physical* and *moral liberty* are not included in the exercise of *civil liberty* there can be neither *obedience* nor *rebellion* in the case, more than *any other animal* is capable of.

Mr. Wesley has, in a point upon which his whole arguments are founded, reduced the *sovereign* and all his subjects to the situation of *mere animals*, and has at once both freed the Americans of rebellion and the government of all oppression.

Whatever be the *causes* or *consequences* of this war, neither party have any account to make in the next world more than the *lions* or *wolves* in the forest when they devour one another.

I should certainly think, setting aside all punctilios of honour on either side of the question, that a speedy reconciliation between Britain and America would be the most blessed event that at present could happen. I would be sorry to rest either *our obedience to government*, or *the liberties of the subjects* upon such a *feeble foundation* as Mr. Wesley has done. I consider magistracy to be an appointment of God, and also an ordinance of man. On both accounts I obey magistrates, and constantly pray for them. But both *magistrates* and *subjects* are as *free agents* ruled by *laws*, and *just government* and *obedience* are reciprocal. Upon [p. iv] this principle both *rebels* and *tyrants* are accountable to God and the laws, and must answer at a *tribunal* where *human casuistry* will have *no effect*. Where Mr. Wesley's pamphlet and mine, and the sentiments contained in both, must *also be accounted for*. I heartily wish *peace* and

¹JW, *Some Observations on Liberty* (1776); his reply to Richard Price (1723–91), *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America* (London: T. Cadell, 1776).

²JW, *Observations*, §3.

prosperity to his Majesty King George, *civil* and *religious liberty* to *all his subjects*. Whoever wishes more for either, in this world, are not their sincere friends.

[p. 3]

**A Compleat Answer to
Mr. Wesley's Observations, etc.**

Reader,

Consider the modest, pious, and peaceable temper of Mr. John Wesley, in his *Observations* on a late tract. See the ancient apostle of Georgia vindicating slavery and oppression in the most violent and indecent manner! See him puffing away vague and uncharitable aspersions without the least shadow of evidence! *You must believe all for gospel that the Rev. Mr. John Wesley passes upon his word*. What he says in his three-penny pamphlet is as *infallibly true* as *many stories in his journals concerning the work of the Spirit of truth*.

This peripatetic evangelist has an old grudge at the Americans, for a well-known cause which his modesty forbids him to mention. He has not forgot the behaviour of Mrs. Williamson and her friends,³ and wants to do all in his power to return the favour. Mr. Wesley is truly a very grateful being.

But let us consider his arguments in his 57 sections. One would have expected an answer to Dr. Price in this performance, and it is reported that [p. 4] Mr. Wesley says it has had a wonderful effect in the way of conviction upon nineteen out of twenty through the nation. It must only have been among the Methodists, or those that have been of the same opinion before; for it will have small effect upon any persons else. The manner in which Mr. Wesley has tortured some of Dr. Price's words is unmannerly in the highest degree, and is unworthy of any well-bred man, to say nothing of a minister, which Mr. Wesley professes to be. His puns and quibbles upon the words 'liberty', 'the people', 'free agents', 'members of the state', are mean in the lowest degree. He knew that Dr. Price has no such meaning as he imputes to his words, yea never used such words as Mr. Wesley ascribes to him.

Mr. Wesley, by excluding moral liberty from the question in debate, has introduced an idea that, if it was put in practice, would render both his and the lives and property of all men very precarious. Let us suppose moral liberty *out of the question*; then man is not accountable to God in his civil capacity (which he cannot be unless he is morally free). If any person shall, in the frenzy of passion, or from a settled principle of revenge, take away Mr. Wesley's life, because he wants to gratify his revenge, will the terror of corporal punishment hinder him to kill Mr. Wesley when he is persuaded that he is not accountable in another life for his political behaviour? A man that will run the risk of fighting a duel, will run this risk also. And if moral liberty is not taken into this question it is not worthwhile to dispute about. How can we obey the powers that be, for conscience sake, without moral liberty? I must own it is beyond my comprehension. If moral liberty comes not into this question, it is manifest that the Americans are free of all crimes in the [p. 5] sight of God, even though they are accounted rebels by Mr. Wesley. Yea more, there cannot be any such crime as rebellion in a moral sense. For if a man is not morally free, he cannot be morally guilty. Mr. Wesley has now introduced a system which dissolves all moral obligation, and has fairly shown that when he calls men to submit to the present government for *conscience sake*—there is no occasion for conscience at all. Can there be conscience without moral liberty? Or a good or an evil action without supposing it? The doctrine of Mr. [David] Hume and all the fatalists is perfect gospel to this. All subjects are bound for conscience sake to obey the powers that be, on pain of damnation, and yet moral liberty has no connection with *this question*. Then men must be damned at all events. There is no help for it, Mr. Wesley has determined it. I am sure that I am not punning upon his words, for he has fairly declared that moral liberty is not *in this question*. As Mr. Wesley has taken this liberty *out of the question*, he is no real friend to government, whatever he pretends. Neither his Majesty nor the ministry have any cause to thank him for his endeavours; for he has plainly informed every man who reads his pamphlet that, provided any wicked person should murder both the king and all his servants, though they deserve to

³Referring to the legal proceedings against JW in Georgia.

be punished as traitors by human authority, yet in the sight of God they are perfectly innocent. Be sure, reader, to mind Mr. Wesley's exhortation 'that moral liberty is out of the question', and therefore obedience to our *most gracious sovereign* is not a moral duty on any occasion. If Mr. Wesley is not a rebel, he has propagated the most rebellious doctrine that ever was printed in England. In the days of Bishop [William] Laud there was some religion in the midst of all contention. But Mr. Wesley has plainly [p. 6] given it all up, and in a few words set us free in all matters of civil policy from moral obligation. I wish this *old profane man* may repent before he dies of this violent insult upon the *laws of God* and the *honour of the king*. This violent enemy to moral liberty in politics says that he 'lays no stress upon the love or the professions of the patriots to the king' (p. 8⁴). But who can believe that he has any good intention when he has so warmly taught doctrines subversive of all government? If those who call themselves the king's friends firmly believe Mr. Wesley's doctrine, I would desire his Majesty to double his guards, and keep Mr. Wesley's pamphlet from among them, otherwise his crown will sit but in a tottering situation upon his head.

This is the man that pleads for his king and his country, and says he is 'in great earnest'.⁵ Amazing! To be in earnest about principles that sap the foundation of all civil government at the same time that he pretends warmly to defend it.

Though every lover of his king and country may not boast with so much pride as Mr. Wesley does, I know many of those whom he speaks evil of that, in case of real necessity, will go greater lengths in serving both than he ever did or every will do, for all his vain boasting. But what is he contending for, when moral liberty is out of the question? He is merely an advocate for stocks and stones, and establishing a civil policy suitable only for brutes or irrational creatures.

The reader will please to remember that as Mr. Wesley has given up all morality in his setting out, that there is no regard due to his stories, which he affirms to be facts, in the sequel of his pamphlet. As Mr. Wesley has given up moral liberty in writing upon politics. He is under no obligation [p. 7] to adhere strictly to truth, nor indeed is there any appearance that he has it in his view. He tells a story of Mr. [John] Hancock which the ministry were never so daring as to publish, for which he produces no proof except his *own word*, which, *morally* speaking, cannot be received. It is something like the old story of his casting out devils out of the people of Newcastle, in the shape of calves, about thirty years ago, and the miracle of his horse foot, when he was upon a journey, which was instantaneously cured by the effect of his prayers. Mr. Hancock is now a notorious smuggler. It is amazing this was never discovered before, and urged against the Americans publicly. It required a man that had given up moral liberty to do this, and none could be found till Mr. Wesley rose out of his fever. Even [Samuel] Johnson and [John] Shebbeare startled at such glaring falsehoods. This political slanderer affirms that the Americans never paid the half of the king's duty, but constantly defrauded him, and the juries acquitted the guilty. Whether were the persons upon the jury, who were upon their oath, or Mr. Wesley the best judges of this matter? Mr. Wesley has given nothing except his own *honest word* for all he has affirmed, though he has given the Americans the genteel character of *thieves*. Our *universal bishop* has, with *great meekness*, scolded the Americans most devoutly. It is a pity that he was not at Philadelphia, that Mr. Hancock might thank him for *his politeness*.

Mr. Wesley mentions the abuse which the people of Boston made of their liberty before they were brought over to England to be tried. But he does not prove a single fact which deserved that treatment. *The word of this good man is sufficient for all things*. [p. 8]

Mr. Wesley appears to be a great enemy to smugglers, and for a good reason, for it is unlawful. But why does he not exclaim against all sorts of smuggling?⁶ I know some of his own people who deal in

⁴JW, *Observations*, §11.

⁵*Ibid.*, §16.

⁶Actually, JW did frequently enjoin his people from smuggling; see *General Rules* (1743), §4, *Works*, 10:71; and his *Word to a Smuggler* (1763).

some smuggled articles, and not in a very secret way. But where has he made good his charge against the Americans? That there are some smugglers in that country is very possible. And so are there at home; and if they are not found guilty by a jury they are acquitted. There have been lately in the *pious kingdom of Scotland* several trials concerning smuggling, when the jury constantly found the charge not proven. Was this to 'ask your fellow whether you are a thief'?⁷ Mr. Wesley must know this, for he came *lately* from *that country*. In this respect the Americans are like other nations, when a thing is not proved they return their verdict *ignoramus*. And where is the harm of that Mr. Wesley?

The grand object of Mr. Wesley's attention is to lead away the view of his readers from the true notion of civil liberty, and to persuade them that they are abundantly free when they are not *galley slaves, in jail, or in chains*. The question is not concerning the *new* or the *old sense* of the word 'liberty', but the true sense thereof in a political view.

Let us then enquire what we mean by being 'free' in society? Does it not mean that such as enter into society intend to enjoy as many of their natural rights as the nature of society will allow?

Does not the community appoint rulers who are only in trust as long as they seek the welfare thereof? And have any a relation to the community as rulers when they betray their trust. Mr. Wesley tells us, as doth the Scriptures, that 'all power is of God',⁸ and who denies it? But the power that is of God is conveyed to rulers through the [p. 9] channel of the people. The power which pastors have is of God, but they receive it by the choice of the people, otherwise they are not their pastors. But the question with Mr. Wesley is, 'Who are the people?' or 'Who are the members of the state?'" Without going so deep into this abstract question as Mr. Wesley and Dr. Price, I consider the members of the state to be such as the laws have accounted so; all who are or shall become legal freemen, and there are few persons of property who may not. As to all men, women, and children, and the several stories concerning free agents which Mr. Wesley has repeated so often, I shall leave them to those who are pleased with them. The laws of the constitution does not admit them, and I shall not insist upon *their legislation*. But whatever makes a freeman in England ought to make one in America. The women and children, in general, are not the legal members of the state, nor do they ask any vote in legislation. But all individuals not legally incapacitated have an undoubted right, and do make their own laws by choosing their representatives. The Americans ask no more, and they ask but what is reasonable.

The intention of representation was originally to secure property and natural rights. With this persons of property were entrusted, and these are the legal members of the political legislature; though in some places all householders who pay a certain rent have a vote in legislation, which is undoubtedly right, and ought to be universal. But the Americans have none of these privileges, and ought not to be taxed by England. I know that Mr. Wesley affirms that there are more in England who have no vote in legislation than who have. But there are two things in which these differ from the Americans. First in that those who impose the taxes or laws upon them bind [p. 10] also themselves, and bear the same burdens. Secondly all persons of substance in England may be free if they please, for forty shillings a year. If men of wealth can purchase this privilege so easily, it is their own blame if they are not legislators in England.

But when the parliament give laws to America they are imposing precepts upon a people who live at a great distance, and whose situation they do not understand; and also the legislators find it their interest to ease themselves by laying a burden upon them.

Whatever the Americans may through necessity have submitted to in their infant state, it is no argument that they should behave as children when they are men. And according to the fundamental laws of the British empire it is not lawful to use them as they have been used. *Magna Charta, the Petition of Rights, the Bill of Rights, and the king's coronation oath* loudly proclaim against such treatment to the subjects of the British empire.

⁷JW, *Observations*, §7.

⁸Rom. 13:1.

⁹JW, *Observations*, §16.

Who 'the people' are the reader may easily perceive, let Mr. Wesley pun as long as he pleases upon the words 'the people'. They are that part of the community which the fundamental laws of the land, by whom so ever made, have given a right of legislation. Before you tax the Americans, place them in the same situation, and then your claim will have some appearance of equity. But at present it has none, but is the *vilest tyranny*. As neither the people in America nor those at home are insisting upon all their natural rights, it is foolish for a grave man like Mr. Wesley to make so much noise concerning the people's claim of right. If every person come to the years of discretion were to claim a vote in legislation, it would not be an error in equity though it might be one in statute law. When Dr. Price speaks of [p. 11] men's natural rights he is showing what the people may do without transgressing the laws of nature and reason, but does not controvert the legal rights of the body politic while they please to continue as they are.

All men are undoubtedly naturally equal. But they may acquire qualifications that may render them superiors or inferiors, and from this consideration give and receive power and honour. But they have no right to assume powers or honours till once they are given by the consent of those who have them to give. Mr. Wesley finds great fault with Dr. Price for saying no man has a right to give away his own liberty. And neither he has, for it is a trust which he ought to hand down to posterity, and he cannot hand it down if he give it away. *Our apostle* makes a mighty argument of laws being made before we were born which we are obliged to obey. Now in a few plain words I must observe that if our forefathers have made laws by which our liberties are taken away, we have a right to break them, and take them again when we are able. And I also affirm that no progenitors can make laws to bind their children but what are just and good. If they should leave their children in chains, they may lawfully break them if they can. What Dr. Price observes is certainly true, that liberty is the unalienable right of every child of man who has not forfeited it to society. And though there be laws which debar some from enjoying their natural rights, which Mr. Wesley has taken notice of (page 14¹⁰), yet he has not proved that it would be unlawful to have them repealed and the bar taken away. And suppose his women and children should put in their claims, I do not see that Mr. Wesley could prove they were guilty of a crime. As to his great fear of anarchy and confusion [p. 12] there does not appear to be much danger in this case; for the women and children would only choose their own representatives, of which there are a good number already in both houses of parliament.

Now I have given Mr. Wesley all that he wants concerning women and children, and shall leave him to manage them in the best manner he can. And [I] freely affirm that all free creatures have a right in legislation, and I durst promise, upon Dr. Price's account, that he will never write against their having that privilege, if Mr. Wesley will only bring it to a bearing. I am so far from thinking, as Mr. Wesley has stated his objection in page 13 that 'women and children have not experience and wisdom to judge of the qualifications necessary for governors',¹¹ that I think them really as well qualified as the greatest part of those who choose them, and heartily wish they were admitted. Mr. Wesley and I shall not differ about trifles of this kind.

Dr. Price has not in all his 'tract', as Mr. Wesley terms it, ever approved of debarring half of the human species from their natural rights, but rather hinted his desire that the laws at home were amended as well as those abroad, and therefore Mr. Wesley in his 16th page has been fighting with a shadow.

Mr. Wesley asks a very foolish question in page 16. 'Is he not a man whether he be rich or poor? Has he not a soul and a body?'¹² The old man seems to have been raving here, for a soul and a body in some cases does not constitute a man *compos mentis*,¹³ in which situation the laws of society says that he ought to be controlled without his consent. In the rest of this page Mr. Wesley makes a great parade concerning a law being null and void to him that did not consent to the making [p. 13] of it; and so it is

¹⁰JW, *Observations*, §21.

¹¹*Ibid.*, §20.

¹²*Ibid.*, §25.

¹³'Mentally competent.'

provided it be oppressive and unjust, and he has a right to complain and endeavour to have it repealed. What Dr. Price says is strictly true, *that none can be governed, but by his own consent*. You govern men as slaves at the galley, by force and constraint, but it will be impossible to gain their obedience without they approve of the law, and that is what Dr. Price intended. You make laws to govern lions, but you must first put them in chains. Rational creatures must be persuaded of the justness of laws before they obey them from the heart. Now Mr. Wesley, what does the argument come to? All power is derived from the people, whether you will or not. If half a million are excluded, whose to blame for that? Such as Mr. Wesley, who from principles of *pride, self, and vain glory* blind the eyes of a great part of mankind. Is this a reason, sir—because the people at home neglect their own interests—that the Americans should do so also to please Mr. Wesley? How is it contrary to reason for the people to choose their own legislatures? Or where have you proved it self-contradictory? I am so far from giving up the people's claim of right, as you suppose Dr. Price must do after you have misrepresented him, that I maintain their claim, and account it just, and think with reason that when they can and please to do it, they have a just right to insist upon it.

When Mr. Wesley comes to his facts, he endeavours to show that the people did not for so many hundred of years choose their king. This subject I shall now consider, and make it appear that there is a great difference between what was done and what was right to have been done, and the reader will see a little more of Mr. Wesley's sophistry, and his desire to enslave mankind. [p. 14]

In the days of King John the people, though they did not formally set him up, they very seriously brought him to a sense of their importance, and made him grant a charter which ever since has been considered as a bulwark against the arbitrary power of both king and parliament. Mr. Wesley puts a question, 'When did the people of England choose their own governors?'¹⁴ To oblige this reverend divine, I will give him a direct answer to his question: in the time of the Saxons, before popery and priest-craft came so much in fashion. Rapin observes that

The Saxons had no king in Germany when they sent their troops to the assistance of the Britons, under the conduct of Hengist. Their territories were divided into twelve provinces, over each of which a head or governor was appointed by the general assembly of the nation wherein the supreme power was lodged. This assembly was called Witen-gemot, that is to say, the assembly of wise-men; and also the Micel Synod, that is, the Great Assembly. Besides the governors of provinces, there were others set over the boroughs.

This is certainly a proof that the people elected their own governors, and that the supreme power was then lodged in a general assembly of the nation. And that whatever happened when Romish superstition and power came to a greater height in this nation, yet from the beginning it was not as Mr. Wesley affirms. But Rapin, after examining this subject on all sides, observes that

There is an argument taken from Henry of Huntington, the historian, who, speaking of the deposing of Sigebert, king of Wessex, expresses himself thus: 'King Sigebert becoming incorrigible, the great men and people of Wessex assembled together in the beginning of the second year of his reign, and deposed him with unanimous consent.' In [p. 15] this place (says Rapin) the people being opposed to the great men, can only mean the commons, and consequently they gave their votes in the general assembly.

This explanation is supported by a passage from another historian, who says, in the reign of Edward the elder were assembled the bishops, abbots, the faithful subjects or vassals, the great men, and the people of the kingdom of Wessex. To these authorities are added another from Ethelwolp's Charter of Tythes, where it is said, these things are granted by the king, barons, and people. These proofs are confirmed by two charters,

¹⁴JW, *Observations*, §28.

which conclude with these words: 'These are the decrees of Sigeric, archbishop of Canterbury, in the court held before king Ethelred, the archbishop of York, the bishops, abbots, senators, the chiefs, and people of the whole country.'

One thing is abundantly plain, that the first Saxon kings were no more than leaders chosen by the people; and the same with the governors which they appointed in Germany.

Kings in process of time, by the assistance of the clergy, extended their power and acted in an arbitrary manner. But from the beginning it was not so. Whether all the people since have attended to their duty in choosing kinds I will not say; yet one thing is certain, they have an original right according to the Saxon laws to do so. The reason why Mr. Wesley wanted to go no further than King John was because he knew he would be set fast, and find what he did not love to see, the most clear arguments against his arbitrary doctrines. The times he refers to were the most ignorant and arbitrary reigns, when popery and slavery was inculcated by the priests, and [p. 16] patronized by princes. Until the Revolution, unless in the times of the commonwealth, there were scarce any ideas of liberty among the greatest part of the people. And the little knowledge they had of the subject was almost driven out of them by a Tory clergy, who harangued them as Mr. Wesley does now, with the doctrines of non-resistance and passive obedience.

Mr. Wesley makes some fine quibbles concerning what is or what is not the parliament; who are the people, and who not, p. 17. Neither the parliament or the people cut off the king's head, he assures us. Yet one thing is certain, he was beheaded by some people in England, and the rest made no opposition. What a few did, many approved; and the event showed what people will do when once they are highly provoked.

The Revolution was undoubtedly a deed of the nation, and has been heartily approved by all true Protestants ever since. Poor and rich have made it a deed of their own by approving of it, except a few of Mr. Wesley's friends, who have sworn to the creed of Archbishop [William] Laud, and the doctrine of [Henry] Sacheverel. Though the convention at the Revolution were the immediate agents in bringing in King William, the nation were concerned, and by their hearty approbation approved of the deed of the convention. Even women and children blessed them for what they did, as well as the electors of legislators.

There is a curious piece of reasoning concerning the power of the sword (p. 18¹⁵), where Mr. Wesley affirms that magistrates receive the power of the sword from God. But granting this to Mr. Wesley, the question is, Who makes them kings? The Almighty does not bring them into the world with crowns on their heads and swords in their [p. 17] hands. There are some agents by whom God makes them kings, and gives them swords. Some people are instruments of this? Either all or some of the nation perform this operation. From hence it will follow that men are the instruments of making magistrates. To whom does the Almighty give this authority? To all, or only some of the nation? Those who claim an exclusive privilege in this operation must show their authority; for I firmly believe that one man has as good a right as another, and all as much as any.

It is a necessary question to be settled: Are kings made for subjects, or subjects for kings? Mr. Wesley seems to hint that subjects are made for governors. This sets aside all sorts of elections, and introduces mere slavery. But I suppose the Almighty formed society before ever he appointed rulers over men. And if the Almighty should please still to mention the magistrates whom he meant to rule over nations, I should heartily desire all persons to rest in his appointment. But the apostle Peter informs us that these powers which are of God are also an ordinance of man. Now the question is, Who are *the men*? Or what part of mankind have the appointment of this ordinance of power? This apostle tells us, that 'the king as supreme, and those appointed by him', are 'ordinances of man',¹⁶ or *society*. So that the highest as well as the lowest degree of power is an ordinance of man, which we are to obey for the Lord's sake. But

¹⁵JW, *Observations*, §30.

¹⁶See 1 Peter 2:13–14.

if the power is not an ordinance of man, but an usurped power, we are not for the *Lord's sake* bound to obey that power.

As Mr. Wesley urges so frequently *that all power is of God, and that the powers that be are of God*, I must in my turn, from equal authority, affirm that those powers or magistrates which are of God [p. 18] are also ordinances of man, appointed by society for the good and welfare of the whole. And what shows them to be the powers *ordained of God* is their being the ordinance and appointment of the community for the *good of the whole*. I must also, in my turn, appeal to common sense as well as Mr. Wesley, and ask whether the apostle who says that the powers *that be are of God*, and the other apostle who affirms that magistrates are ordinances of men, may not be reconciled by observing, that the voice of the people in this particular is the voice of God; and the ordinance of man is a declaration of the power being from God. I will venture to pronounce that this doctrine is more agreeable to Scripture, and common sense, than what Mr. Wesley call so. The conclusion of this matter is that all magistrates who are powers from God are the ordinance of the people, and every other power assumed in society without their consent are no otherwise from God than *punishment for sin*, or *divine indignation*.

Mr. Wesley affirms that Dr. Price's principles are incompatible with practice. And who is to blame for that, dear sir? If you had not excluded moral liberty you might have found them the only true principles that are worthy to be practised. But as you have excluded this out of the question, there is nothing compatible with your practice except violence and oppression. All moral principles are incompatible with the practice of fatalists who exclude moral liberty.

Pray Mr. Wesley, how can you make disobedience to magistrates a sin, when you say there is no moral liberty in that question. For heaven's sake sir, keep some principles of natural religion, if you will give up revelation, otherwise some people will say you are turned atheist. There is [p. 19] but one step between denying moral liberty and atheism. What will a man of such principles not do and say? He has told us that juries at Boston are thieves and perjured persons, who though they are sworn to determine according to truth, yet they pay no regard to it. Pray good sir, where was that jury found which acquitted Captain Preston,¹⁷ whose behaviour was very suspicious? Were they not the inhabitants of Boston, or people of America? I hope there is *one instance* of an honest jury in that country. But I must inform Mr. Wesley, from the authority of a gentleman who was upon the spot at the time when Mr. Wesley says Mr. Hancock sold the smuggled tea, that there never was such a thing done. He affirms that there is not a word of truth in what our *holy man* has said, and I must also tell Mr. Wesley that this gentleman is as violent against the Americans as he is. Thus we find that Drs. on the same side of a question differ on some occasions. But what must the public think of a man who retails lies, and prints the rankest principles of atheism? Reader, is it not a plain principle of *atheism* to exclude *moral liberty* from any thing where duty is concerned? For if there is not moral liberty in all questions where men are called to act, there can be no sin nor moral obligation. No atheist can say more. And some who have been accounted such, have not gone so far. To say there is no moral liberty is the same thing, as saying what the fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'¹⁸

Could the poor deluded mortals who run after Mr. Wesley be once brought to examine his principles, they would shun, as they would do the pestilence, a man of such dangerous influence. Ah, what a shocking thought! No moral liberty in the question concerning our duty to *our king and our* [p. 20] *country*! Are we sure that there is any moral liberty in anything? Take it away in one point of duty, why not in all points? (*Horresco referens.*) I shudder at the thought. For what use are all religious institutions and civil appointments, if Mr. Wesley's doctrine is true? What a monstrous method is this of pleading for his king and his country (and he is in earnest too), to sap the foundation of all morality? By which means no government, nor principles of government, can reach the hearts of the sons of men. Alas Britain! What art thou come to now? A nation of mere animals, a country of stocks and stones. Ye *Sodomites*,

¹⁷Thomas Preston was captain of a British regiment that opened fire on a crowd of civilians in Boston on March 5, 1770. He was defended by John Adams and others at trial, and acquitted.

¹⁸Ps. 14:1.

whoremongers, drunkards, unjust persons, murderers, and liars, here is a discharge in full for all your crimes, under the hand of *The Rev. Mr. John Wesley*. You may now go on and prosper—all that you do proceeds from necessity. You shall lie down with the beasts, and sleep forever, and none shall bring you to any account, or raise you to a reckoning. There are observations on a late tract which will give you perfect ease.

But what shall the righteous do when the foundations are destroyed? They must trust in that providence in which they believe, and pray for Mr. Wesley that his sins may be blotted out, and he brought to a thorough repentance.

What astonishment must it create in the minds of the people of Georgia when they hear that the preceptor and devout suitor of Mrs. Williamson, who was once so strict in heavenly things as to debar her from the Lord's Supper for a defect only in gallantry, has now thrown off all fear of God and given up the principles by which he only can be worshipped? And what must our most gracious sovereign think when he reads this *awful pamphlet*, and sees such arguments as sets [p. 21] his people free from all obedience to their sovereign and the laws? Reader there is no jest in this. I can with as much sincerity as Mr. Wesley say I am *in earnest*, and will do my best endeavour to support that cause by which his Majesty holds his crown, in opposition to all the infidelity and fatalism that Mr. Wesley may publish. Our gracious sovereign is betrayed by this deceitful man, may heaven preserve him from his enemies.

Mr. Wesley in [his] 37th section makes a curious observation upon what he calls a curious one, and says that he knows not if ever he met with it before. It is this; 'The government of one country over another cannot be supported but by a military force.' Our author says this is palpably false. But it is absolutely true, provided the people are not allowed their just share in legislation. While the English government did not interfere with the unalienable rights of the colonies there was no occasion for military force. But Mr. Wesley knows very well that when they intended to deprive them of those rights they sent a military force to do it. But I refuse that what Mr. Wesley says is fact. The government of the sovereign of England over America is not the government of one country over another, but of one sovereign by the consent of the empire over many countries, each country agreeing to have the same executive authority. Allow the Americans always this privilege, and they will not quarrel with you.

In his 38th section Mr. Wesley has paid a genteel compliment to his good friends the Scots, by asserting the English claim of dominion over that nation. I believe the Scotch nation will to a man refuse that England has any claim upon that kingdom in matters of government; for they [p. 22] certainly govern themselves, and have their own laws. Their claim upon Scotland I will also allow is as just as their claim upon America, and so I shall leave Mr. Wesley and the Scots to settle that claim. I shall add, as Mr. Wesley does, 'Ought claims to be admitted without proof?' What is the claim of England over Scotland and America founded upon? We ought to have some satisfaction for such a claim.

Mr. Wesley affirms that the settlers in America never had a power of making laws for themselves. This, like many other of Mr. Wesley's assertions, is far from being fact. Can Mr. Wesley remember no such power in the hands of any of the colonies? They have always had a power of making laws for themselves from the beginning; only their charters bind them to make no laws contrary to those in Great Britain. Perhaps Mr. Wesley accounts this no power. But whatever he may be pleased to call it, every reasonable person will easily perceive that in this particular they had a legal right as well as a natural one to choose their own legislators.

Mr. Wesley affirms what I believe may be very true—viz., that he enjoys all the real liberty he can desire, civil as well as religious.¹⁹ And so does Lord North, and so did Bishop Laud. But Mr. Wesley must know that this is not the case with all his Majesty's subjects. There are many as good friends to government as Mr. Wesley over whose heads some very severe sanctions are hanging, which declare they are not free.

¹⁹JW, *Observations*, §33.

Dr. Price's idea of liberty this arbitrary despot treats as a thing that never existed. 'The liberty you talk of was never found; it never existed yet',²⁰ says Mr. Wesley. I have already shown that it has existed, and did exist in this very nation before [p. 23] the power of priests and princes made an encroachment upon it. The accusation which Mr. Wesley brings against Dr. Price is malicious and uncharitable. He says that 'all his arguments are intended to stir up the inhabitants of Britain against the government.'²¹ If the governors make encroachments upon the rights of the subjects it is but fit to stir up the inhabitants of the nation against them. And it argues no want of respect to government, when a people remonstrate against bad governors. This has always been the practice of arbitrary rulers to brand those with the epithets of rebels who opposed their measures, when they themselves were acting contrary to all law. Mr. Wesley, like all persons who carry combustible things about them, is exceedingly afraid of inflammatory things, and repeats his terror concerning the phlogiston in Dr. Price's pamphlet. But the doctrine in Price's observations on civil liberty is better calculated to promote peace than the slavish sentiments propagated by Mr. Wesley.

Mr. Wesley complains of Dr. Price for affirming that liberty consists 'in being governed by our own wills', and slavery 'in being governed by the will of another'.²² This he calls the 'quintessence of republicanism', and is he says 'too barefaced'. But this decent and grave divine makes a very indecent inference from what he has said before in this paragraph. If freedom consist in a man's being governed by his own will, he compares this liberty with that of the devils in hell. I never knew before that hell was a republic. The Scripture says there is a king in the bottomless pit,²³ and from this one would be made to conclude that it was a monarchy. But Mr. Wesley knows better, and has perhaps been there when his brother was at Boston, and returned with a full purpose [p. 24] to abuse the devils as well as mankind. The reader will by a little consideration easily perceive that Mr. Wesley has not even given the devils their due. For they are so far from being guided by their own will that they are actually reserved in chains till the judgment of the great day. So fond is Mr. Wesley to have a catch of Dr. Price's words that he blunders and tells falsehoods perpetually.

Dr. Price with great justice affirms in his observations, 'that government is a trust, and all its powers a delegation', and Wesley adds 'but not from the people. "There is no power but of God." It is a delegation, namely from God; for rulers are God's ministers, or delegates.'²⁴ If this is true in the sense in which Mr. Wesley would have us to understand it, it is but reasonable they should show their delegation, that we may be able to distinguish between God's delegates and usurpers. For unless we have some criterion to distinguish them, some people may rashly conclude that the American congress are delegates from God, and I really think Mr. Wesley has proved they are. If the texts which he quotes are to be understood in his sense, then wherever there is a supreme power, it must be of God, and people are obliged to obey it for conscience sake. This rambling writer does not know what he would say, but the reader may easily perceive his leading intention—which is to persuade all people that they are born slaves, and ought to remain so.

I cannot conceive for what reason Mr. Wesley finds fault with Oliver Cromwell, and the people who adhered to him. For at that time there was no other power, and according to this writer's doctrine the people were bound to obey him for *conscience sake*. Nay, if Satan were set loose, and were to acquire the supreme authority, the [p. 25] people would be obliged to yield him obedience *on pain of damnation*; for they are fairly excluded from all choice of their own magistrates according to Mr. Wesley, and bound to obey 'the powers that be'.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., §34.

²³See Rev. 9:11.

²⁴JW, *Observations*, §34.

This writer appears, under a mask of friendship, to be one of the greatest enemies to the present government that ever arose in this island. For according to his method of reasoning, if an unhappy revolution should change the sovereign and the government, and a new form be set up, that being for the time the ordinance of God, would make it a sin in the people to endeavour to restore their lawful sovereign for fear of resisting 'the powers that be', and thereby incur damnation. I am afraid this wolf in sheep's clothing intends to make the people ripe for receiving a power which many clergymen of his principles have been longing for ever since the Revolution. Mr. Wesley is the Sacheverel of this age, who labours incessantly to instill into the minds of the people the notions of slavery and non-resistance. All the Tory preachers in the reign of Queen Ann were but triflers to Mr. Wesley. He exceeds all who have gone before him.

Mr. Wesley insists strongly on what the parliament of England has done in times past in taxing the colonies, and concerning their voluntary submission to their taxation. But is it any reason because the colonies yielded obedience to some laws when they saw no intention of encroaching upon their rights, that they should cheerfully comply with laws intended to oppress them? Or because they endured the want of their rights for a season, that they should always do so? Such methods of reasoning may please such as love to oppress, but will have no weight with a lover of truth, or any benevolent person. [p. 26]

The English government has always claimed the right of taxing the colonies, says Mr. Wesley. But that is no argument for the equity of their so doing. Our author proceeds to affirm that the colonies 'were always liable to be taxed by the parliament from their first institution'.²⁵ Upon what principle of reason or equity were they liable? They only could be liable upon two principles: their promise to submit to be taxed by England, or by force. And if one generation had promised, they could not engage for their posterity. The only principle by which they were and are liable is force. A powerful principle indeed! But how reasonable, let everyone judge for himself.

Mr. Wesley takes great pains to justify the war undertaken by government against America, and denies that is undertaken for the sake of supremacy only, 'but to make them lay down the arms they have taken up against their sovereign, and to make them restore what they have illegally and violently taken from their fellow subjects'.²⁶ Mr. Wesley should have told us what they have taken, for I am afraid this is slander like that which he has thrown forth against Mr. Hancock. But to be sure, good Mr. Wesley's word must pass for everything.

But Mr. Wesley has forgot who began this bloody affair. Did the Americans take up arms before that a military force was sent against them, and quartered in their country? Whom were the troops in search of at Lexington? What was the reason of their expedition there? Some have affirmed that it was to seize Mess. [John] Hancock and [John] Adams. What right had they to do that? Was not this an open attack upon the lives and liberties of the colonies? Did it not show the intention of government concerning America?

This advocate for slavery, accounts no man in [p. 27²⁷] bondage, unless he is in jail or under task masters; used as negroes or galley slaves. But he ought to remember that there are degrees of slavery, which every person who has the smallest sense of liberty will shun. Suppose the Americans and the people at home are not in the situation of the French or the Spaniards, is that any reason why they should part with their liberty? I consider liberty to be of such a sacred nature, and so essential to the moral and political happiness of rational creatures, that without it a man is in a worse situation than any other creature. No persons who have not forfeited their liberty by their crimes, can justly be deprived of their civil freedom. Negroes, or men confined to the *mines* or the galleys, may be slaves in a higher degree than those who have their money taken from them without their consent, and are allowed to travel at large. But

²⁵JW, *Observations*, §42.

²⁶*Ibid.*, §43.

²⁷There is a printer error in the first edition that uses the numbering of pp. 25–26 twice in a row, resulting in page numbering from this point that is off by a count of two. We have corrected.

the difference seems to be only in the degree, and not in the nature of the thing. The one is close confinement, the other is jail privilege. There is no liberty implied in either case. So far as the Americans practise slavery, or use tyranny over any people, in that case I give them up. But in those relations in which they stand to Great Britain, they ought to be totally as free as the people at home. Mr. Wesley's whole pamphlet is intended as an apology for the conduct of the ministry in carrying on the war against the Americans, and a vindication of slaughter and bloodshed without proving a crime that deserves it. It would have become him better to have been a messenger of peace, and have performed the office of a reconciler.

I am amazed at the weakness of Mr. Wesley's reasoning concerning the nature of colonies. In attempting to overthrow Dr. Price's parallel drawn between the brave Corsicans and the Americans, he says that 'the Corsicans were not colonies [p. 28] from Genoa, therefore the case is not similar'.²⁸ So it would appear that a government has a right to oppress its own subjects, though it has none to oppress any others. This is making it a very great hardship to be the subjects of a colony; for if they are never so grievously oppressed, they have no right to relieve themselves, if they even can. The case of the Hollanders and that of the Americans is not parallel in the whole extent thereof, and all comparisons come short in some one thing or other. But though the Americans are not so severely persecuted as the Hollanders were, yet it is but right that they should guard against the possibility thereof in its first approaches. The slavery of the United Provinces came not to its height all at once. It had its progress and so might that of the Americans. It would have been rather too long to have waited till Britain had taken away their liberties. What the Dutch did at last, would have been right for them to have done at first. And if the Hollanders did right in the conclusion in throwing off the yoke of Spain, they would not have done wrong in refusing to submit to it at first. According to Mr. Wesley's own account, they might have saved eighteen thousands of their friends from being hanged by the Duke of Alva.

'But the Hollanders were not colonies of Spain, but an independent people—who had as good a right to govern Spain, as Spain had to govern Holland.'²⁹ But Mr. Wesley should remember that they were colonies planted by the Goths, who settled in the more southern parts of the Roman empire, and ought to have been subject to those that planted them. How long this idea of colonization continues without interruption I cannot determine, but there was a time when the Hollanders were colonists from some country. But now they are [p. 29] colonists of none, but a free and independent people. They are, however, still continuing in a state of rebellion against their mother country, wherever it is. And yet all or the most part of the powers in Europe send ambassadors to them, and acknowledge the justness of their rebellion. According to Mr. Wesley the Hollanders ought always to have been subject to their parent state, and the government they were first under, otherwise to have been accounted rebels. But I find the word rebellion is sanctified by power, and often changes its signification. I suppose length of time, and the increase of power and strength, must change both *civil* and *moral liberty*, in Mr. Wesley's opinion.

I do not understand what 'illegal authority the Americans have usurped over their countrymen', or what 'possessions they have robbed them of'; nor do I see it proved that they 'have taken up arms against their king or their mother country'.³⁰ They have indeed taken up arms in their own defence against an invading force, sent from the mother country to oppress them. They have laid restraints upon ministerial creatures among themselves, whom they found betraying them. They have made free with Mr. Hutchinson's possessions, who has, in an eminent manner, been the cause of their troubles and joined that power that now intends to enslave them. But is there anything in this contrary to the laws of self-preservation, *one of the first principles in nature*? Is it not time to prohibit all intercourse with those who *waste their coasts, burn their towns, and kill their wives, old men, and children*? We reckon it illegal in England, because it does not agree with our sanguinary laws, to oppress that loyal and brave people. But

²⁸JW, *Observations*, §46.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., §47.

according to the constitutional laws of this empire, it is doing no [p. 30] more than was done when our liberties were secured at the Revolution. Upon such an illegal footing does the present throne stand, and upon such an illegal right does our most gracious sovereign hold the possession of the crown of this large empire.

It comes ill from the pen of a Protestant minister to defend the establishment of popery in any part of his Majesty's dominions.³¹ The Canada bill is contrary to the laws of this kingdom and his Majesty's coronation oath. I will not affirm that this law was made on purpose to bring an army of French papists against the colonies, but there are strong grounds of suspicion that something like this was intended, though it has not yet answered the purposes of the devisers. The French in Canada have a right to their liberties as British subjects, but not as papists engaged to obey a foreign power whenever the opportunity shall favour them. If their religion was not unfavourable to the rights and lives of all other people, I have no objection to the establishment thereof. But I could wish that the government would remember to do the same thing at home. There are many of his Majesty's Protestant subjects who were never subdued by conquest, and have always been loyal and dutiful, that never received such favours as the papists in Canada. They are left under the terror of threatening laws, on account of their religion, and are for the sake of their principles rendered incapable to serve their sovereign in any office belonging to the crown; while sworn votaries to the Roman pontiff are established in the fullest manner in a part of the British dominions.

It is said that they swear allegiance to his Majesty. True, but does not their religion oblige them to keep no faith to heretics, any longer than they can with impunity break their [p. 31] obligations? What security then have we from their oath? Suppose, as Mr. Wesley says, we had conquered France. If we intended to keep it subject to England, it could have been done no otherwise than by admitting none into places of government except Protestants, and allowing all a free toleration. For while the papists were in power it would be impossible to keep them in submission to a Protestant king or government, who did not reside among them. Mr. Wesley says, 'Ought we not to have allowed them their own laws?'³² In answer to this question I affirm that, unless they had assaulted us, we ought not to have conquered them. And as their being conquered was a punishment of their own injustice, to suffer them to enjoy their possessions under our laws, and their religion by free toleration, is as much as they could reasonably expect. A people that transgress the laws of justice by invading any other people, if they are subdued, may account themselves very civilly used by enjoying what they possess under the laws of the conquerors, though they are not entrusted with the public management of government. The French in Canada were subdued for invading the dominions of Britain, and an English government was placed over them. They at the same time were allowed to keep their private possessions and, by the laws of England, could recover what anyone should take from them. They were also allowed the free exercise of their own religion. Only they were not admitted to any share in the government, nor were their clergy entitled by law to established emoluments. This was no more than their invading the English dominions, and the nature of their religion, required for the safety of all Protestants. But I allow that if they were not the aggressors, Britain has done an unjust thing in conquering [p. 32] them. Mr. Wesley has said for the king and the government more than ever they pretended to say for themselves, namely that 'they can declare before God, that to acquire dominion, or to gratify resentment, is none of their intentions in carrying on the war against the Americans'.³³ I am far from surmising a disrespectful thing of his majesty, and sincerely wish his reign long and prosperous. But the wisest and best of princes have sometimes been misled by ill counsellors, and there is not a very good appearance in the present aspect of affairs.

Our author accuses the Americans of plundering and killing no small number of his majesty's loyal subjects. Who were these, good sir? You mean, I suppose, the troops at Lexington and Bunker's

³¹Referring to *ibid.*, §48.

³²JW, *Observations*, §48.

³³*Ibid.*, §52.

Hill. But who were they seeking there? Their behaviour was not of the most peaceful kind. They were sent to enforce laws made at London, which the Americans had no hand in and did not approve of, and which, by the Massachusetts charter, they were not obliged to obey. If our troops were killed, we must blame them who sent them, and not the Americans. But who killed the Americans, and plundered Boston, Mr. Wesley? The British soldiers had no right to that town, nor Britain either. It belonged to the people of that country, as much as London does to the English. The ground of the quarrel concerning the tea might have been settled without such an experiment. More methods ought at least to have been tried before an hostile army had been sent to Boston. To condemn a whole people at once for the behaviour of a few, was unreasonable; and was not Boston condemned without being heard? Did that town refuse to call the destroyers of the tea to account, or was it ever asked? Did not the English ministry and parliament take all this into their own hand in the [p. 33] first instance, and order the transgressors to be sent to London to be tried? This was striking at the root of the most essential part of their liberty. To this they could not submit without betraying their very chartered rights. Might not Boston have been required to try the offenders, or indemnify the merchants for their tea? If she had refused, there would have been some ground for her *port bill*, or the consequences which might follow. But this was not done. And yet you will lay the blood of the soldiers to the charge of the Americans? Lay it somewhere else, good sir!

Mr. Wesley is keen for putting out the flame of patriotism, but never mentions peace in his whole pamphlet, nor desires the flames of war to be put out. He rather wants to reconcile the minds of the people to the thoughts of war and bloodshed of their brethren. Instead of insisting so much upon the justness of the war, had he shown the justness and necessity of peace and reconciliation between Britain and America, he would have had more of the appearance of a minister of the gospel of peace. Had he confined himself to the telling of stories concerning the justification of the little boys and girls in Ireland, he might have been indulged in his whims. But to come strolling over all the nation, publishing *fire and sword*, *non-resistance* and *passive obedience*, he cannot be justified by either God or man. 'He that condemns the righteous, and justifies the wicked, is an abomination to the Lord.'³⁴

Mr. Wesley has a peculiar knack at telling stories concerning the effects of his ministry. But they frequently have not the smallest degree of probability, and many of his stories in his pamphlet are something like one he told a few years ago in Weardale, where he affirmed that he was once preaching where the people were all black, (I suppose it must [p. 34] have been in Georgia) and that by the influence of his doctrine, in six weeks time, they became all white. So the Ethiopians changed their skin. I set down the story concerning the garret and cellars in London, and what he says of Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, and Manchester,³⁵ among stories of this sort.

But I must now take my leave of Mr. Wesley by putting him in mind that he is an old man, and has a long account to settle. Many sins has he committed in his time, and much guilt has he contracted. Many people has he deceived, and many lies has he printed. I wish him nothing worse however than to become a little child, like one of those little boys and girls in Ireland. For it is of such that the kingdom of heaven is composed. Let him not trust to that airy phantom 'popularity', nor the favour of great men, which soon vanisheth away. If he goes on as he is now doing, I will venture to prophecy that it will be bitterness to him in the latter end.

Source: [James Murray,] *A Compleat Answer to Mr. Wesley's Observations upon Dr. Price's essay on Civil Liberty: wherein the fatalism and infidelity of Mr. Wesley's principles are confuted, and their dangerous tendency with respect to all civil government are pointed out* (Newcastle: T. Robson, 1776).

³⁴Prov. 17:15.

³⁵See JW, *Observations*, §12.

From William Hawes

[Strand]

[c. January 1, 1777]

To the Public,

As Mr. Wesley has published another edition of his *Primitive Physic*, though the numerous errors and absurdities of it have been clearly pointed out, Mr. Hawes, who is thoroughly convinced that it is still a book which can be of no real service whatever, either to the poor or to the rich, takes the liberty of earnestly recommending to the public his *Examination* of Mr. Wesley's publication,¹ which will enable them to judge how little adapted the *Primitive Physic* is to be of any use, that it may be of the most mischievous consequences, and that nothing but that 'love of money which is the root of all evil'² could have induced Mr. Wesley to a republication.

Mr. Hawes has, however, the satisfaction to reflect that he has been the means of rendering a bad book somewhat less pernicious. In the new edition of *Primitive Physic* Mr. Wesley has omitted one hundred and eighty-four of his absurd remedies; he has paid more attention to the doses of medicines, and inserted a few of Mr. Hawes's practical remarks, though without acknowledgment. But the book is still replete with absurdity and ignorance, and cannot be in the least beneficial to the sick, but on the contrary must be productive of great injury, especially in acute diseases, trying absurd remedies which may occasion the death of many persons who, if properly treated at first, would have speedily recovered.

Source: *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Jan 4, 1777), p. 4; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 18, 1777), p. 3.

¹William Hawes, *An Examination of Mr. John Wesley's Primitive Physic, showing that a great number of the prescriptions therein contained are founded on ignorance of the medical art, and of the power and operations of medicines; and that it is a publication calculated to do essential injury to the health of those persons who may place confidence in it* (London: Dodsley, 1776).

²Cf. 1 Tim. 6:10.

From Thomas Wride

Whitehaven
January 13, 1777

Reverend Sir,

Ten or eleven weeks ago I wrote to you about the condition of this circuit, according to the knowledge I then had of it. But having *nothing* to say about the island [Isle of Man], and so little good of other parts, I did not think it worth sending to you. So I gave the letter to the fire. This is the reason (and I hope you will take it as a sufficient one) why you have received no account from me. Today I expect to finish the quarterly visitation *here* (except individuals who did not come at the time appointed), but must postpone the account until I can send it *with* that of the island, which will be as soon as I can obtain it.

On Tuesday last I received a letter from brother [Robert] Empringham, dated December the 10th, in which he writes, 'The Reverend Mr. [Henry] Corlett seems to be very happy with me and the people, but he dare not give me the sacraments. But I stay in the church till he has done giving it to others. The bishop [Richard Richmond] I suppose binds him to deny us the privilege, and if you see expedient you may write to Mr. Wesley to let us know if he will break the satanical bond; which I think he can, with the help of God.'

This circumstance is the reason of my present writing. As to my own thoughts of the matter, I think brother Empringham has in this done the best that he could have done, and to thinking people it may *speak* more than the bishop is aware of. But as it is a point in which I have never been exercised, I thought it needful to have your advice.

Last Thursday I wrote to brother Empringham to desire him to be in Whitehaven on Friday the 24th (wind, etc., permitting) and by the return of the packet on Monday the 27th I intend, God willing, to go for the island.

Would you choose to have the general collection made this year in the *island*, as they are a young people and in general poor? Do you think to call on the island in your way to Ireland? If so, would it not be well to engage a vessel of the island to come for you, and to take you to Dublin or the north? Perhaps this may be of little interruption to your travelling plan as any other way whatever. From, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son,

Thomas Wride

Source: Wride's manuscript draft; kept for his records; MARC, PLP 115/9/31.

From Thomas Wride

Douglas
February 3, 1777

Reverend Sir,

As I think it needful to take the first opportunity to answer your question,¹ so you will receive my haste as a sufficient excuse for the deficiency of my present information. I would willingly give you a full account, but I have not time to methodise the scraps I have got. Nor have I any account of the island, but what I get as I go on. But of this some things are very strange, and may with sobriety be called miraculous. But for the present it may be forborne.

As you intend coming by way of Whitehaven, you will not need a vessel on purpose to bring you to the island, as the packet sails from Whitehaven every Monday in course (wind and tide answering). This will cost but five shillings per head, cabin passage.

I have spoken to our friends at Peel, and they will take care to put you over to Ireland. As to the price, they will demand nothing. They are so glad to hear of your coming that they will do anything they can.

You may choose your place of landing in Ireland when here. They say they can take you from Peel to Portaferry in about six hours, or to or near Newry in about seven hours. They had rather do this than go to Dublin, for fear of the press. But if you still choose Dublin, they will go; only landing you a little short of Dublin, to avoid the press-gang. I suppose if you choose to be landed at Portaferry, you will have Mr. Smith and Mr. [Henry] Corlett to accompany you over.

Last Saturday I spent [a] good part of the afternoon with Mr. Corlett. He appears to be as friendly a man as I have met with. He is looked upon to be as good a scholar as *any* clergyman in the island. He is not ashamed to own or defend us. And yet he is amazingly fearful of the bishop. I suppose he is not well acquainted with ecclesiastical law. But however, if you come over, he says: 'Mr. Wesley shall not preach in the factory' (the place we preach in), 'but he shall have my pulpit.'

We labour under disadvantage for want of the Manx tongue, as many has no English. Yet the word is not lost. I have preached five times at Peel, and I think every time some has been affected so as is hard to relate. They are capable of piety, at least with very little help. I opened the eye of one of them, but it looked as if she was in a deep sleep. When she appeared coming to her reason, her countenance was that of one in solemn rapture. She then opened her eyes and said (in Manx), 'Sweet God!' She took me by the hand and then parted as perfectly composed as if nothing had happened.

On Saturday two others were taken in the same manner, and continuing until preaching was over I had opportunity of a full view of them. Their countenances were inexpressibly pleasant, and sometime before their reason returned they began singing a tune without words, and beating to their own tune, with gestures so expressive of joy and love as I think cannot be expressed in words and would baffle the utmost attempts of the most artful mimic. These things are neither new nor rare. They were stumbling blocks to Mr. Corlett for some time. But now he acknowledges them miraculous.

Haste bids me stop. I am, reverend sir,
Your dutiful son,

Thomas Wride

manuscript draft; kept for his records; MARC, MA 1977/610/139.

¹Wride is replying to JW's letter of Jan. 17, 1777.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
February 6, 1777

Reverend Sir,

I often bless God that I ever knew you, and with joy look beyond this vale of tears to that celestial hill, where I hope soon to meet you. What a prospect does faith open! My Jesus, and my friend! Shall I forever dwell with these? Shall you and I, sir, sit together round the throne, and dwell where Jesus is! What a glorious prospect! I often think nothing is too hard to undergo, nothing too dear to part with, for the blessed prize I see before me.¹

I take the first opportunity in my power to assure my dear and much respected father the charge he has against me in Mr. Taylor's letter is entirely groundless.² Forgive my not writing sooner. Accept my sincere thanks for this kind reproof.³ Forget you, dear sir? Not while memory remains, I never can. Glory be to God I ever knew you. And believe, the more I love my Lord, the better I shall know how to esteem you. When I consider how you are employed, and what a multiplicity of weighty affairs you are daily—yea, hourly—engaged with, I am withheld from writing for fear of intruding too much on your precious time. Indeed, sometimes the pleasure and profit I reap from your valuable advice at times have made me break all bounds. How very unworthy am I of the many favours my gracious Lord bestows. May he abundantly reward you, and may you all his goodness prove.

I bless the Lord for an approaching prospect of your visiting Yorkshire, and should be glad to know when we may expect to see you.⁴ Let us have as much of your time as you can spare us. Ere long we shall meet to part no more. How often does the Lord give me in faith to view that blissful shore! There Jonathan his David meets. There death shall all be done away and bodies part no more. There we shall see him whom unseen we love and in his presence receive our greatest and eternal reward. Yes we shall meet around his gracious throne and dwell where Jesus is. May I then follow the example of my blessed master who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God.⁵ And this I feel the Lord gives me fresh resolutions to do. I still want to begin to live, and am more than ever determined to be, a person of one business. I see not only salvation from sin my privilege, but all the fullness of God; and do long for more of that mind which was in Christ. I want to comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth and depth and height of that love which passeth knowledge.⁶

Yea, I feel a great deadness to all below. Nothing seems worthy notice but what will tend to glorify my God, and my present situation seems to me to be just the place I should be in. Many fiery darts does Satan throw. But when on every side beset, the Lord makes way for my escape and brings me [out] of more than conqueror, by continually giving me power to throw myself by faith into those arms of divine love which always open stand.

I have been much exercised lately with various temptations. But omnipotently near the Lord my keeper stood, and even now the Lord of hosts is with me. I am, of all the ransomed race, the most indebted to my Lord. For he keeps me night and day and waters me every moment. O may I live and die

¹The salutation and opening paragraph are found in the published extract, but not Ritchie's copy for her records. By contrast, the published version omits the next paragraph and abridges elements of the remaining material.

²Thomas Taylor was currently stationed at Keighley, with responsibility for covering Otley.

³The letter from JW containing this reproof is not known to survive.

⁴JW made it to Otley in early May 1777.

⁵See Heb. 12:2.

⁶See Eph. 3:18.

to him alone. Help me, dear sir, to praise my dear redeeming Lord, and still continue to point out the most excellent way. I often feel my soul fixed with holy ambition and long to become one of those hundred and forty and four thousand described in the fourteenth [chapter] of Revelation. Is not this ambition laudable? May I not with safety covet the best gifts? For God knows I care not what I am in the sight of men, so I may but be approved of by God. Lord give me perfect humility, perfect faith, and perfect love.

A taste of these cannot suffice
My soul for all thy fullness cries.⁷

I have lately read Mr. [John] Fletcher's *Last Check*⁸ and felt it as marrow and fatness to my soul. May I run more swiftly the race set before me. I am athirst for the perfection of my dispensation, and praise the Lord who has cast my lot in so fair a ground. I trust the Lord is sweetly carrying on his work among us. Some of us learn the way of faith more perfectly and many seem hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Mr. [Thomas] Taylor kept a watch night with us last Monday and we had a precious time.

[That we may improve by every means is, reverend sir, the unfeigned desire of

Your friend and servant,

E. R.⁹]

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

Annotation: another hand, '16th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6). Cf. JW's published extract, dated Feb. 8, 1777; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 100–01.

⁷Cf. CW, 'Hymn on Matt. 5:6', *Scripture Hymns* (1762), 2:130.

⁸John William Fletcher, *Last Check: A Polemical Essay* (London: R. Hawes, 1775).

⁹This closing is found only in *AM*.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

[Otley]

February 18, 1777

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your kind inquiries¹ are to me another fresh proof of my gracious Lord's kindness to one utterly unworthy of any of the many mercies I daily enjoy. As to my health, it has been much better this last winter than for some time past. The cause has been removed. Sometimes I have still pain in my side and breast, accompanied with shortness of breath. But upon the whole I am much better than I used to be, and sometimes I think it is likely the Lord may prolong my days to a distant period. He has a right to do what he will with his own. May it be to his glory. In heaven my heart and treasure is. Yet while I sojourn here beneath, I dare not ask for my release—or once indulge a wish for death. His holy will be ever done. If he on earth detain me still, I'll bow and bless the grace divine, and suffer all his holy will.

I have not had much conversation with Mr. [Cornelius] Cayley lately. And since the letters I had from you on the subjects he talked about, my mind has not in the least been puzzled with anything he says. I look on him as a good, well-meaning man, but cannot see with his eyes. Methodism is truly scriptural, clear, and plain. Mysticism seems so refined and out of my sight that in seeking to know what it is I should certainly lose myself. I am, through grace, determined to be a simple follower of the lamb. Love is the mark I aim at. And, glory be to God, in the enjoyment of a measure of that love I expect, more of my soul feels a present heaven. Many things happen daily by which Satan means to perplex my mind, but a divine peaceful union I ever feel with the God of love. At present I am oft tempted to reason about what in the simplicity of my heart I always esteemed as a great privilege. This is the being so much with my dear father when in Yorkshire. I was thankful to hear we were to be favoured with your company and shall ever think it a favour of which I am by no means worthy to be with you. But till I see you I cannot tell you the various trials the friendship you favour me with have occasioned since I saw you. And as many—both of my teachers and brethren—are offended, grieved, and tempted, it leaves a fear on my mind lest by going with you again, God should not be glorified. I should like to know your judgment: cannot the same degree of friendship subsist between us if this one thing is given up? Tell me your mind freely, and believe me I love you and ever shall while I see in you the image of him who is the altogether lovely. I should sin against God if I did not. You have been, and still are, a spiritual father to me [and a] guide to my youth. Continue, oh my dear sir, continue in spite of all men and fiends say or do, to teach me the whole truth as it is in Jesus. May I be your obedient scholar and follow with undaunted courage you, as you follow your blessed master.

Glory be to God, though at various times all my innocent nature has been severely tried, yet I have been, and still am, fully saved. My soul feels constantly that God is love and the things I have lately met with make me more nakedly cleave unto Jesus and sink me deep into my centre.

I am honoured with bearing the reproaches of my Lord, and he gives me perfect resignation to his will. By faith I look forward. Soon, very soon, the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. A sunbeam pointing out our every thought. Then to what a share of glory shall you my honoured father be raised? Permit the weakest of your children to say, 'Go on, and soon your soul shall feel its own full joys and hold them fast forever.' You shall receive a full reward.

Until then, may your earthen vessel be filled to the very brim and God so dwell in you that your soul its change may scarcely know—made perfect, first in love—is and shall be the constant prayer of, dear sir,

Your most unworthy, though affectionate, daughter,

E. Ritchie

And pray how does Mr. [John] Fletcher yet?

¹JW apparently replied to her letter of Feb. 6, 1777; but his reply is not known to survive.

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wesley'.

Annotation: another hand, '16th/ 1 lb'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

From Mary Bishop

Bath
March 4, 1777

Reverend Sir,

I thankfully use you as my counsellor and friend, and hope to be favoured with your free thoughts on the subject of this letter.

I have for several years been desired to keep a boarding school, but love of retirement made me refuse it. But the request has of late been so repeatedly, and strongly urged, that I can no longer avoid taking it into consideration. Providence seems to *force* it upon me, and I am afraid of withstanding God. I would fain take Herbert's advice, 'Be useful where thou livest'.¹ And I think my talents are more suited to a boarding-school, and that I should be more useful among children than in one of another kind.

In a day-school there are innumerable hindrances to their moral improvement, for what they learn with me they frequently unlearn at home. But were they always with me, they would be saved from the contagion of bad example, and I should have better opportunities of studying their dispositions and of applying myself accordingly. These, sir, are my reasons for keeping a boarding-school. Yet those against seem to be more weighty. But my difficulties arise from fearing it is *inclination*, rather than *judgment*, that makes the scale preponderate.

The greatest objection is my naturally anxious disposition—not anxious about getting money (I think that is never more to me than matter of *second* consideration), but about 'Doing my duty in that state of life to which it shall please God to call me'.² In a boarding school I should want to be 'All eye, all ear; to see that all things were done decently and in order'.³ And I should be full of uneasy apprehensions when the children were out of my sight—when I could not take them with me to the preaching on winter evenings, nor in bad weather; neither contentedly leave them with a servant. So that I must count upon losing many opportunities of attending public worship. In short, I should make myself their *slave*, rather than their governess, and yet never think I did enough for them. Besides, I must give up many meetings with my Christian friends, the society-meetings on Sunday evenings, visiting the sick, etc.

Another thing I fear (*you* sir will credit the strange assertion) is *prosperity*! I fear I should not stand where many mightier have been slain. I am afraid of engaging too deeply and beyond my necessity in outward things, lest the spirit of the world should insensibly steal upon me. Lest I should be tempted to conform to its maxims and manners in my behaviour, dress, etc., and at last forget that I have been washed from these sins.

Freedom from worldly encumbrances, leisure to attend on God, to serve him in his members,

Ease and alternate labour, friendship, books,⁴

are some of the many privileges for the sake of which I continue single. But though I continue in this *state*, would not these *privileges* be lost as much by keeping a boarding-school, or *more*, than by marrying? Are there any that would be a compensation for them? Ought I to sacrifice myself to the good of others, trusting the Lord to preserve the spark of grace alive in an *ocean*?

Though I entirely approve of infant baptism, and am almost a bigot to our Church liturgy, yet I am often perplexed in hearing my children repeat the catechism; particularly the Creed, etc.: 'Yes verily, and by God's help so I will,' etc. Is it not absolute falsehood in the mouth of a wicked child? And has it not a manifest tendency to make those of a more thoughtful and serious turn conclude that they were born

¹George Herbert, *The Temple* (1633), 12.

²BCP, Catechism.

³See 1 Cor. 14:40.

⁴See James Thompson, *The Seasons*, Spring, ll. 1162–63.

believers? Is it not useless, if not *absurd*, to teach children of six or seven years old the answers to the question on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? Alas, what can they comprehend of that sublime mystery? How crude must be their conceptions (if they have *any*) of those deep and strong expressions! Ought I then, *against my judgment*, to teach it them because their parents expect me so to do?

After thanking you sir for your last favour, may I ask if the concluding lines ('I lament over every pious young woman who is not as active as possible'⁵) are not intended as a reproof for me? If so, please to point out my faults and I will endeavour to prove, by my amendment, that I am, dear sir, affectionately and obediently

Your obliged servant,

M. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 101–04.

⁵See JW to Mary Bishop, Dec. 26, 1776.

‘Erasmus’ to the Printer of the *London Evening Post*

On Mr. John Wesley's *Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*¹

c. March 11, 1777

Sir,

The above advocate of non-resistance and passive-obedience² begins his *Address* with telling us that about a year and an half ago he wrote a little tract entitled *A Calm Address to the American Colonies*. He should have said he copied and then published as his own Dr. Samuel Johnson's *Taxation no Tyranny*. He then boasts of the success he had in spreading, in a few months, an hundred thousand of these his stolen copies [§I.1].

This same pilferer and plagiarist, with his hardened brow, not many weeks before that his publication addressed a crowded audience at the Foundry condemning the measures of the present administration, warned his audience of the alarming state of the public, and spoke with great abhorrence of the American war. Nay, in this new *Address* he owns, ‘he was one of the many who cordially believed the Americans desired nothing but the liberty of Englishmen’ [§I.13]. And yet he tells us that in the year 1737 his brother heard ‘the most serious people, and men of consequence, almost continually crying out, “We must be independent.” And that in 1739 a gentlemen who spent some time at Boston informed him that he frequently heard the same conversation there’ [§I.6]. This accuser of the brethren proceeds to charge the Bostonians with accumulating wealth by defrauding his Majesty of his customs, and the celebrated Mr. Hancock to be one of the greatest dealers in importing whole shiploads of uncustomed goods [§I.8]. But how is all this consistent? He cordially believed against these testimonies.

This jesuitical writer, who has been proved a notorious liar at Bristol by Mr. Evans, etc.³ should rather have taken pains to have covered his cloven feet, or recovered some claim to credit, before he had addressed the people of Old England. In contradiction to the most open facts, he will calumniate and fix an odium on the Americans with all the guilt of rebellion. And moreover, all who look upon the war as unnatural he chargeth with *blasphemy*.

This should not be wondered at,⁴ since it is quite in character for a defender of despotism and a son of Loyola. But what Mr. Wesley meaneth by menacing us with Lauds and Sheldons, and his bidding us beware of the wrath of a patient man [§II.3], is not of easy interpretation unless he himself has the promise of *lawn sleeves*⁵ and the license given him of leading the unmuzzled pack in full cry upon all advocates of liberty. But the evidence which has been produced at Bristol of the ability John Wesley has of uttering known falsehoods will afford us the consolation of his having little credit given him by those who have been acquainted with his true character.

Erasmus⁶

Source: published transcription: *London Evening Post* (Mar. 11–13, 1777), p. 4.

¹I.e., *Bibliography*, No. 359; the first printing just released.

²Note in original: ‘See *A Constitutional Answer to the Calm Address* and [Caleb Evans,] *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley*.’

³Note in original: ‘See [Caleb] Evans's tracts.’

⁴Note in original: ‘For an account of his forefathers, see 2 Cor. 11:13–15.’

⁵One of the symbolic items worn by bishops.

⁶Several of the charges in this essay echo William Moore, who frequently used pseudonyms.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Park Gate¹
March 14, 1777

Your letter, my ever dear and much loved father, caused many fears.² I pray God the consequences you seem to think it is probable would have followed any longer delay in writing may never happen. At present I feel it just the contrary. Nor has my sentiments of, or regard for, you been ever altered. I have had many instructors, but not many fathers. You are still what it has pleased my gracious Lord to make you to me, truly dear in that honoured character. And not only so, but in you I have ever found a faithful and valuable friend, one who has by the blessing of God been more useful and helpful to my soul than any other. And shall I love you less than I did? No, dear sir, I feel to you a purer flame than nature ever knew, a spark of that holy love which the spirits before the throne are filled with. And I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to weaken those ties which souls one in Jesus only know.

I am sensible of the truth of what you observe, but humbly trust the effects of envy, in how specious a form soever it may appear, will not be found to have the effect on me it had on those dear souls you mentioned. Not but my weakness may be, and I am persuaded is, greater than theirs. But if I may judge from my present feelings, all the 'well-meaning people' can say leaves me just in respect to you as they found me. But of this, my dear sir, I did and do still doubt whether or no I ought not to deny myself both the pleasure and profit I have found in riding with you. And though I would endeavour still to be with you when here abouts as much as I can, ought I not to get conveyed some other way, to prevent your good from being evil spoken of?

I am sensible this would deprive me of many gracious opportunities of conversing with you. But I would endeavour to bear it as my cross and look forward to that blessed day when, without any interruption, we shall stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, and together love and praise our adorable saviour, who has loved us and washed us in his own most precious blood. I believe my dear reverend father will be foremost of the sons of light and nearest the eternal throne. Yet though inferior for my station, I shall behold the beatific sight and may, without proving the occasion of others feeling evil, act in simplicity of my heart. No shadow of evil is there. Lord, hasten the happy time when even the church militant shall live on earth the life of heaven.

The closest exercise I have felt on this account has been to find anyone should either think or speak evil of you, my dear sir. I pray God forgive them. Not one unloving thought has arisen in my breast to anyone. But my dear Lord has by these things been proving to me the reality of the work he has graciously wrought in me. I refer the whole to your judgment, but cannot in a letter tell you some particulars which I think you ought to know before you can properly determine what will be the most excellent way, if opened, for me to walk in.

Indeed, my dear sir, I shall rejoice to see you. To think of you does me good, and my heart is the same towards you [as] it ever was. I should be thankful if you can tell me in your next when we may expect to see you in Yorkshire. If you think me shrinking from the cross, freely tell me so. Continue to be my faithful instructor and God shall reward you.

I bless my dear Lord, he gives me still to feel a rich supply for all my wants. I can set to my seal: 'All things work together for good for them that love the Lord.'³ For all the exercises I meet with, I can truly praise him. God is love. My soul proves him so, and continually do I rejoice in the God of my

¹Park Gate was a manor house in Guiseley, Yorkshire; home to Jeremiah and Ann (Haigh) Marshall. Ann was close to Mary Bosanquet, Sarah Crosby, and Elizabeth Hurrell; see *WHS* 5 (1906): 240–44.

²JW's letter, replying to Ritchie's letter of Feb. 18, is not known to survive.

³Rom. 8:28.

salvation.

I came here on Saturday, and indeed my soul has felt a burden for these dear people I am with. Mr. [Jeremiah] M[arshall] declines going to hear any who he has cause to think oppose Mr. [Cornelius] C[ayley]. He hopes things will be what he calls 'properly settled' when you come down. I much want him in the meantime to take up his cross, in going to hear those he disapproves of; telling him the hurt his example will in all probability do to those who are ever waiting for our halting, and the blessing he himself would feel in giving up his own will. But I fear it will not have the desired effect. He tells me 'It is well for those that can do as you say, but I cannot.' May the Lord help him. When you come down, do contrive to come here, as it would hurt Mr. M[arshall] much if you do not.

Glory be to my Lord, he gives me to cast every burden I feel on him who cares for me. And though what I often feel for others gives me sensible pain, yet my own soul remains peaceful and tranquil, fixed in God. I have been for some days in a very peculiar manner humbled in the dust before my dear Lord. Yet to me, in his dear name, are freely given pardon, holiness, and heaven. I feel the free gift of all I enjoy, and Jesus is unspeakably precious. My soul rests in the arms of God, and though storms seem on every side, my soul doubtless cries out,

Secure I am if thou art mine.⁴

And I feel him,

My Jesus to save me continually near,
To pardon and bless me and perfect me here.⁵

May the everlasting arms be ever beneath you, and may the eternal God be your constant refuge. O Lord, fill thy dear servant with perfect love; and may he go on, from strength to strength, until he sees thy face in glory. Your kind reproof for not writing to dear [Hester Ann] Roe I am indebted to you for. Want of time, not inclination, was the sole reason. I bless God and thank you that ever I knew her. But I had wrote better than a week before I received yours. Continue to increase the obligations I am already under by freely reproving, advising, or instructing as you see needful, dear and reverend sir,

Your ever affectionate, though unworthy, daughter,

E. R.

Address: none.

Annotation: another hand, "17th."

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* 11 (1788): 104–05.

⁴CW, 'Hymns for Believers, #31', st. 1, *HSP* (1749), 1:245.

⁵Cf. CW, 'Hymns for Christian Friends, #48', st. 1, *HSP* (1749), 2:323.

‘An Enemy to Hypocrisy’ to the Printer of *St. James’s Chronicle*

c. April 7, 1777

Sir,

I have a particular curiosity to read every book or pamphlet that contains peculiar and extraordinary matter. Under this class I rank John Wesley’s *Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*, just published. In this little treatise we may fairly trace the footsteps of the jesuitical hypocrite and fanatical enthusiast. An odd mixture, you will say; but it will not be difficult to make out the paradox. A few strictures will be sufficient to prove him at least a manifest impostor.

To bring a railing accusation against his American brethren, whose friendship he seemed to have cultivated formerly, he revives an old story of his brother and a gentleman who heard some people at Boston declare, about forty years since, that they must be independent. And this vague discourse of a few people in a single town our grave and eminent divine thinks sufficient cause to fix a stigma upon thirteen colonies, containing three millions of people. O merciful and mild ambassador of heaven!

I pass over his threadbare charge of smuggling carried on in the port of Boston, for what man of sense does not laugh at so ridiculous an accusation, which equally affects our own ports? As if the trifling loss which the king’s revenue might have sustained at the custom house at Boston was not amply repaid by a balance of trade in our favour of two millions!

The Jesuit, after a flourish on the Stamp Act, declares the people of Boston guilty of open rebellion because certain persons of that town threw a parcel of tea into the ocean. And here Wesley is either deplorably ignorant, or guilty of the grossest falsehood. For he says reparation was asked for the injury sustained, but none offered. The truth is the parliament shut up the port of Boston in consequence of the tea being lost, and would hear no petition in favour of the inhabitants whatsoever. They condemned them unheard.

After several bitter, scurrilous, and unjust reflections upon the colonists, the fanatical Jesuit comes to the remedy of all our misfortunes and grievances. At length, says he, the king published a proclamation for a general fast. The good effect of this measure seemed to be instantaneous: ‘We openly acknowledged God, and he openly acknowledged us’ [JW, §16]. The king’s forces took possession of New York. They drove the rebels out of their almost inaccessible posts, etc. They took possession of Rhode Island. And everywhere drove the rebels before them like a flock of sheep. All this success was owing to a fast which did not take place till long after these operations of the king’s troops—viz., on the 13th of December last. Ever since that time, or thereabouts, we may truly say that the Americans have been successful! The defeat at Trenton happened the 26th of December. Various skirmishes between the king’s troops and the rebels have since terminated to the disadvantage of the former. In the Jerseys they have been often defeated in many sharp encounters. Several of the forts which they had taken have been besieged by the provincials and delivered up to them. In short, it is a well-known truth that Howe’s army, from 32,000 effective men, is reduced to less than 15,000.

And now, Mr. Baldwin, I will appeal to the world if this singing ‘Te Deum’ for defeats, losses, and miscarriages be not blasphemous mockery of God, and an impudent imposition upon mankind! What confidence can we place in a man who writes with a purpose to mislead and to deceive? To this impostor may be applied with strict justice the following remarkable words of Scripture: ‘Out of thy own mouth do I condemn thee’¹—thou wicked hypocrite!

Yours, etc.

An Enemy of Hypocrisy

Source: published transcription; *St. James’s Chronicle* (Apr. 8–10, 1777), p. 2.

¹Matt. 12:37.

From W. Jordan¹

April 7, 1777
[p. 5]

Sir,

Permit me to address you in a few lines. I can say in truth that I have had a respect for you for many years, and have frequently heard your brother and some of your preachers with pleasure, and I would hope profit. As to your people, I have ever said there was amongst them a goodly number of sincere Christian people, though they did not see eye to eye with me. For you must know, sir, that I believe the Articles of the Church of England. Yea, the 17th [Article] also;² or in other words, am one of those Methodists that is not in connexion with you.

Now sir, you had not been troubled with this, for I had a favourable opinion of you, but yesterday I saw a pamphlet of yours entitled [p. 6] *A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*. It is true I many times heard people of good understanding say you was a papist. That you was one of the true sons of the pope, and that you would show it at a fit opportunity. All of which appeared to me as spoke in a spirit of bitterness, without a foundation, for I hoped better things of you. But since I saw the said pamphlet I am convinced that I was deceived by you indeed. For you there appear in your true colours, as a Jesuit unmasked. What I chiefly allude to is what you say of the dissenters in general; but what you say of those people that you call Methodists not in connexion with you in particular (on pp. 21–23³). For (oh, could I have thought it!) you say ‘they hate the king and his ministers’, that ‘they speak all manner of evil of them in private, if not in public too’. This appears strange, that you seem to doubt what they do in public, and yet should know so well what they do in private. For you plainly declare that they [p. 7] speak all manner of evil of them in private. This requires some of your jesuitical art to clear up. For how, in the name of wonder, came you to be so wise? Have you an access to their secret chambers? If so, you have no doubt a hand in the plot. Or are you so omniscient as to know their thoughts? Certain it is, you have wronged them greatly, as the Searcher of all hearts knoweth right well.

For my part, I can say in truth, God is witness, that since I have known the worth of religious liberty I have sincerely loved King George, as an instrument in the hands of God of preserving those liberties (from the open attacks and secret designs of wicked men, whether men of no religion, or what is much worse, our popish enemies) inviolable. And all my friends that I have conversed with have ever showed the same respectful, dutiful, thankful spirit. What, sir, are you doing? Are you not [doing] all in your power, stirring up his Majesty and ministers to take away both liberty and life from every Methodist [p. 8] that is not in your connexion? Is there a papist on earth—nay, could the very pope himself—speak more bitterly of any Protestant in Europe? Heaven, yea rather he that ruleth in the heavens, forbid that the king or his ministers should believe you. For the very devil himself could not invent a greater falsehood, or broach a more abominable lie, or speak for worse motives that you I am persuaded do.

For what do your motives by this paper plainly appear to be? Why you are not aiming at a mitre, I believe, for as you say you have one foot in the grave. No, sir, you scorn to strive for so mean a prize. It is the blood of every Methodist that doth not own you for their leader you thirst for. And yet your age will not admit you the wished-for prospect of seeing it shed before your eyes. But as it should seem you are delighted with the pleasing hopes of their blood being shed when you are rotting in your grave, as if nothing like that would have so powerful an effect on the fire of purgatory, or so speedily procure you a release [p. 9] from its painful confines. For shame sir! Consider what you have been doing, and God give

¹The pamphlet itself identifies the author only as ‘W. J.’; ‘Jordan’ has been written in on the title page in manuscript. All that is clear is that the author was a member of the Calvinist wing of Methodism, likely in a city with one of Whitefield’s Tabernacles.

²The Article affirming single Predestination.

³Section II.4.

you repentance before it is too late! For it is Smithfield you wish to see lighted up,⁴ and the very earth drenched with the blood of saints. But remember, sir, blood has a voice to pierce the skies. Do you dare to act a worse part than that of Cain? For you seek not the life of one brother only, but that of thousands and tens of thousands.

Sure I am (if one can speak for the rest) the king has no better subjects than the Methodists that are *not in your connexion*. And the same I am certain may be said of the Dissenters in general. Witness their earnest prayers for his person and family, both public and private, and that respectful manner that they ever speak of him and his. And therefore it is you, and such jesuitical wretches as you, that want to unhinge the present government, want to tear the crown from George's royal head, to set it on that of a popish pretender. But God I [p. 10] hope will disappoint your most sanguine, hateful expectations. For (though I believe the generality of your people are not aware that these are your aims) your design is to set the king against his subjects, as a likely way to set them against him. For you have art enough to know that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.

As to what 'inflammatory libels' the Tabernacle Methodists⁵ have published I know not; I believe *that* also is a lie forged at your own Foundery. But I should not wonder (for I now believe you capable of anything that is truly wicked) was you to write the most treasonable things that hell itself can invent, and sign it a Tabernacle Methodist. But I am almost weary with recapitulating your infamous lies. I shall therefore draw to a close, leaving you and your dreadful production for the present, and praying the Almighty to bless and ever preserve King George and his royal family, to the very latest posterity, from every secret and open enemy.

I lay down my pen, and subscribe myself

A sincere lover of King George and of every real Christian.

[p. 11]

P.S. You threaten that there is a rod in store for us. You say, 'when things of greater moment are settled, they will find a time for you'; i.e., for our correction. But I hope whatever such a wretch as you endeavour to put into the head of our King and ministers, they will be enabled to see through your artful insinuations and clearly discern the jesuitical snake in the grass. May all that love King George, and King Jesus, say Amen.

Source: published transcription; W. Jordan, *W. J. against J. W.; or, Three letters to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, designed as an answer to a pamphlet of his called 'A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England'* ([S.l.]: for the author, 1777), 5–11.

⁴Several Protestants martyred under Queen Mary of Scots were burned at Smithfield.

⁵I.e., Calvinist Methodists, who worshipped at George Whitefield's Tabernacle.

‘Sting’ to the Editor of the *Morning Post*

c. April 10, 1777

Mr. Editor,

Hearing that the *most* Rev. Mr. John Wesley has wrote a second *Calm Address*, as a supplement to that addressed to his American brethren, my curiosity was excited to see what new arguments this true professor of the gospel of peace would advance in justification of acts so diametrically opposite to the doctrine of his master. But before I consider his political essays, I will make a few remarks.

To throw off at once every regard to decency and truth requires an heroism of mind which an apostate can seldom boast—the faint rays of their expiring virtue, or a consciousness of their littleness makes them, as it were, villains by halves. Hence it is that we see them earnest in exculpating themselves from the imputation of the motives that actuate them, even before they are accused. Their protestations are solemn proofs of their guilt, and bear the indelible marks of a conscious shame. These observation are by no men more verified than by those political writers who, once having exposed the cause of liberty and virtue, have turned apostates to power and traitors to mankind. [John] Shebbeare is too contemptible an object for notice. [Samuel] Johnson, having once felt an *effervescent* glow of liberty, attempts to make men believe that he breathes the same patriotic spirit, though he receives the annual wages of his apostasy. The parasitical opponent of Dr. [Richard] Price, having made a sacrifice on the polished altars of liberty, and finding the flame too pure for a sycophantic mind, discards the goddess and turns pander to the slaves of power—yet not without feeling the stings of shame and infamy, which he endeavours to hide in his declaration that he neither courts the smiles or fears of the ministry. Whilst we see him the humble dangler in the suite of Lord Mansfield, and pleased with the office of paragraph-monger to a daily paper.

Mr. Wesley in the same manner assures us he has no private views in writing against the Americans. He attends no great man's table, he says, nor has anything to ask of the king or the ministry. His private vices I will consider in my next.¹ It has not been in his power to refuse a bishopric—that he has yet to give, in proof of his disinterestedness, before we admit of his claim of action from the impulse of conscience. That he attends no great man's table is a falsehood, for if we take a retrospect of a few months we shall see him revelling with some of the religious of M—, and making free libations to Bacchus. His venerable locks prevent the supposition of joining in the sacrifice to Venus, though he might want only play round her altars. No one can doubt his perfect felicity when they recollect the piety of Friar Francis, the devotion of the lady Abbess,² the sanctify of Francis's sister,³ the innocence of her

¹No further letters by ‘Sting’ have been located.

²Note in original: ‘This lady was introduced to the abbot by the late secretary of the society, Paul W—. She had been early led to the altar of the *Graces* by that Adonis, Mr. Ibb—, a mercer. But P—, out of a very tender affection for some particular civilities granted him, persuaded her to leave that *vicious course of life* and enter into the monastery, of which she has continued ever since, and appointed P— her private confessor.

³Note in original: ‘This hood-winked old lady is sister to the abbot, and one of those liberal-minded ladies that regards no distinction of character, therefore makes none, but visits her brother's w[hore] with all the cordiality and friendship as if she were his wife. Though, to the honour of her circle, they are not so regular in their visits as formerly, except to her dependents and the old dowager, Lady Del—.’

little companion,⁴ with the unspotted purity of his Lordship's chaplain.⁵ This, sir, is one of the tables frequented by the *most reverend* Mr. John Wesley (others of equal notoriety I will mention in my next). Some poor lieutenants of the militia may think they shine with reflected greatness in such a circle. But a grave teacher of morals, with one foot in his grave, one would have hoped, for the honour of religion, would not have sanctified vice by countenancing it with his presence, partaking of its excesses, and then have the audacity to declare to the world that 'he attends no great man's table'—when, though according to the *Diaboliad*, he has not chosen the worst, it would be blasphemy to the many virtuous nobles of this kingdom to compliment him for having selected the best.

Sting

Source: published transcription; *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* (Apr. 11, 1777), p. 4.

⁴Note in original: 'This newly initiated nun is the offspring of a most tender connection. After serving a probation to a mantua-maker or a millener, is taken into the society to add to the festivity of the evenings, and to be introduced into the pleasures of M—; and is then to be sent to the flesh market of India, to cool the desires of some lustful Nabob, who will sanctify the prostitution by marriage and crown the debauch with a settlement of pagodas.'

⁵Note in original: 'The last of this virtuous domestic group is the chaplain. He has, according to P. W—, every qualification for the office: can sing a catch, drink and toast his girl, and laugh at the church after sacrament with any Peer's chaplain in Christendom.'

From A. B.

Knowle
April 11, 1777

Reverend Sir,

It is with heart-felt delight I now sit down to comply with the request of my dear departed friend.¹ But though I am unequal to the task, yet as it is her desire, I must and will fulfill it. My friend's esteem for you made her anxious that I should let you know how great things the Lord had done for her, especially as I was a witness of that blessed change.

When I first saw her I was quite a stranger to her. But from the first time I heard of her situation I felt a very strong attachment to her, which soon occasioned a more intimate acquaintance. She also expressed the same affection for me.

When we were together she frequently lamented the many years she had spent in the total neglect of her salvation, which now appeared of too great importance to be any longer trifled with. She was sensible that, blameless as her outward behaviour had been, this alone would not stand the test of the great day! For one thing was yet needful, and she felt her want of it very deeply.

Turning to me one day she said, 'I believe Mrs. R. does not think me so ill as I really am. But oh to be so near death and not to be assured of my salvation, how dreadful is it!' On my turning from her and weeping, she said, 'As you are happy yourself, what do you weep for? O tell me! And show me the way that I may be happy too! But alas, you never had such a hard heart as I have.' I replied, 'You are greatly deceived in me. I should tremble to say my heart is not naturally as hard as yours. But I have reason to bless God, who has changed it in a measure. And your soul is equally precious in his sight, for he would not that any should perish.'

On the Friday before she died (apprehending her dissolution very near) she was in such distress that my heart bled for her! I do not know that I ever longed more for the salvation of my own soul than I did for her's. And dear Mrs. R. also was a faithful friend to her, and entreated her, with many tears, to cry earnestly to God for mercy. She also entreated her not to rest with only hoping that God would receive her, but told her plainly she must know it. On this Miss G[riffiths] said, 'I cannot pray! What shall I do?' In the midst of this extreme distress, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the Lord passed by and proclaimed himself, 'The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful—forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.' She then cried out, 'Jesus has died for me! I know he loves me! I am happy, very happy! It is more than I can bear.' She then praised her great Deliverer and desired us all to do the same.

From this time death was no more a king of terrors to her, but rather a welcome messenger. Therefore she longed to be dissolved, that she might be with Christ! For as Jesus was indeed precious to her believing soul, she exulted in him, while her confidence grew stronger and stronger. 'What a comfort is it', said she, 'that I know Jesus is my redeemer! He has promised to save me. I know I am a child of God, and have not one doubt remaining!' And as she wished to be with Jesus, she frequently asked if we thought she was near her end, and desired us to entreat God to give her patience to wait his appointed time. 'If it be thy will' (she would often say) 'O taken me now! But if no, thy will be done!' She frequently exclaimed, 'How good the Lord is! How tenderly does he deal with me! O he is a loving saviour! I wish I could praise him more!'

For some time before she died she was in a great measure deprived of her senses. But at intervals her reason returned, when she always declared the goodness of God to her soul.

When she was desired to take some drops, to try if she could have a little sleep, she was unwilling, saying, 'If I sleep I shall not give glory to God in my last moments!' Thus having kept her bed for five days, she fell asleep in Jesus, and then went into the joy of her Lord!

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 519–21.

¹She is identified as 'Miss Griffiths' in the title for the letter in *AM*.

From W. Jordan

April 14, 1777
[p. 12]

Sir,

A few days ago I sent you a few lines about your pamphlet called *A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*. And upon reflection I think I might say much more. Therefore I have again taken up my pen, as there are many things in it I omitted to take notice of. For the more I view your production, the more base and wicked you appear.

I shall not even now take any notice of what you say of the American colonies (nor is it my business, for I do not pretend to be a judge of politics, [I] shall leave it therefore to abler heads), save in this one thing, that you speak of their behaviour so far back as the year [seventeen] thirty-seven, 'when your brother was detained at Boston by contrary winds' (p. 6). Yet you say when the unhappy difference commenced, which is not I think more than five years ago, you believed they wanted no more than the [p. 13] liberty of Englishmen (p. 11). Though when your brother was at Boston thirty-five years before that their cry was (or you and your brother lied) that they must shake off the English yoke. Now they did not speak with that ambiguity that you commonly do, for they plainly said (if you speak truth) that they must shake of the English yoke. Now how you could believe them, that they wanted only the liberty of Englishmen, when you knew the contrary upwards of thirty years before, I know not. But a liar should always have a good memory.

I now proceed to take some more notice of what you say of those poor Methodists that are not in your connexion. And what is that? Why some people would be so charitable as to think they were only the words of a superannuated old fellow, and that as such you are really to be pitied. For they think none but a fool or a madman would speak in such terms as you have [p. 14] there done. Therefore [they] think it is to be deplored that you are moving farther from St. Luke's,¹ when you need to be put into it. For I find you are going to have a new Foundry.² But for my part, I cannot judge so very favourable of you. For I rather believe you an artful (though you say artless) jesuitical old fox. And that you mean (for this once) as you say. Though, thank God, you say that you cannot prove. Well, what is it you really do mean? What is it you are so calmly desiring? Why it is this, that the Methodists should be deemed with the Americans, rebels against the king. For you say the point they are aiming at is to unhinge the present government and set up another in its stead. Now sir, if you could prove this it is your duty as a good subject to do it, that they may be dealt with as rebels deserve. But if it is all a lie, and you have greatly wronged a great number of innocent people, what do you deserve? I am really at a loss to find out a punishment equal to your crimes. [p. 15]

I shall therefore lay down my pen for the present, and still subscribe myself

A sincere lover of King George and of every real Christian

Source: published transcription; W. Jordan, *W. J. against J. W.; or, Three letters to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, designed as an answer to a pamphlet of his called 'A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England'* ([S.l.]: for the author, 1777), 12–15.

¹St. Luke's was a hospital for 'lunatics' in London, founded in 1751.

²Planning had commenced on the building of City Road Chapel.

From W. Jordan

April 15, 1777

[p. 16]

Sir,

I am under an obligation by promise to send you another letter. How welcome it may be to you I know not, nor indeed do I greatly care. It is true I had, as I told you in my first letter, a regard for you for many years. And when you or your people have been evil spoken of in my hearing, I ever defended you according to my power, and espoused your cause as my own. But now [that] you have pulled off your mask and showed yourself as an avowed enemy to me and my friends, it is impossible for me to respect you so cordially [as] I have heretofore done. Yet [I] can declare that I should be very sorry to have a hair of your head hurt.

I shall now again take notice of what you say of your *Calm Address* you published a year and a half ago to the American colonies. And what [p. 17] are the wonders you ascribe to it (p. 1)? Why, if we may believe you (which to me is matter of doubt), it did wonders indeed! It even opened the eyes of the blind. At least, it made thousands of those that were so near-sighted they could scarce see across the river Thames see so clear as to discern the conduct and intentions of all the confederate colonies, notwithstanding the amazing difference and disproportion of the Atlantic Ocean and the said river Thames. Well if it be true that that pamphlet had so powerful an effect on the eyesight of thousands, sure I am your last *Calm Address* has so kindly operated on the eyes of all the Methodists in the kingdom that are not in your connexion. They see no more than usual, except an old straight-haired jesuitical fellow doing all in his power to stir up the fire of persecution in this highly-favoured [p. 18] country, and that with great composure and calmness.

I am well aware you think you are of the safe side of the question, because you have given some flattering titles to our king—whom I hope God (that God who sees your designs) will long preserve, safe and happy, on the British throne, and his posterity after him, till time shall be no more, and give him to know his real friends from his enemies. For they cannot, in the very nature of things, be his friends that would set him against his subjects, or his subjects against him.

I can say in truth (God is witness) there is not that man or woman on earth that I would wish to see on the British throne but him that now sways its sceptre. But you, it is very evident, calmly desire to take the advantage of our present situation, as though now was the very fittest time to create a misunderstanding among ourselves at home. That so you may gain your point, set us together by the ears, that a popish pretender might come in unmolested. That popery [p. 19] might once more gain the ascendancy, a popish inquisition be erected in England, and you so happy as to be made one of its holy inquisitors. And oh, should that once be the case, and I so miserable as to fall into your hands, what punishment must I expect! The spit, the gridiron, or the dry pan must be the least that I must suffer. From which, good Lord, deliver this land and me.

I shall now lay down my pen, and still subscribe myself,

A lover of King George and of every real Christian

P.S. I have one favour to beg before I conclude. That is, that when my three letters to you, dear sir, are printed, to be sold as a penny or two-penny pamphlet, that you will please to let [p. 20] them be sold at your Foundry, and honour them with a recommendation from your own mouth in the pulpit.

[When Jordan published his three letters to JW, he added this postscript]

[p. 20]

Sir,

You have set my pen a-going by your wicked *Calm Address*, and I know not when it will stop. Fresh ideas crowd upon my mind as sure as I take your vile piece into my hand. I cannot help comparing you to one of those sons of Belial that was hired by Jezebel to accuse poor Naboth of blaspheming God

and the king, for there is a great similarity betwixt you and these false witnesses. I suppose you have read the account.

Ahab coveted poor Naboth's vineyard, as it lay near and handy to his palace. He therefore proposed to Naboth that he would buy it of him. But Naboth refused to part with it on any [p. 21] terms. Ahab was greatly displeased at this, and his anger took away his stomach, for he refused to eat. Jezebel inquired the cause of his discontent. And when he had informed her, she soon contrived a way to rid him of his troubles. She accordingly ordered a fast to be proclaimed, and Naboth to be set on high, that he might be more visible to the spectators and they see and hear the better the things that were witnessed against him, and agree to his punishment as just and reasonable.

Now sir, in this case you will give me leave to make a comparison. And then I will say Jezebel is the church of Rome. The poor Tabernacle Methodists, whom you as a true son of Belial falsely accuse of blaspheming God and the king, is Naboth. And the pope is that wicked Ahab, that earnestly covets the vineyard of England to be added to his territories. And you, I doubt not, are hired to do that dirty work by some of the true sons of the popish church. Therefore [p. 22] you are a hireling, and not a shepherd. Read the First book of Kings, Chap. 21.

Source: published transcription; W. Jordan, *W. J. against J. W.; or, Three letters to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, designed as an answer to a pamphlet of his called 'A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England'* ([S.l.]: for the author, 1777), 16–22.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
April 24, 1777

Reverend Sir,

Welcome, thrice welcome was your last kind letter.¹ Tears of love and joy overflowed my eyes, and my heart was filled with thankfulness, to find you still favoured with your friendship the unworthiest of all your children.

Since I wrote last the state of my body has been much altered. At that time my complaints seemed just coming on. But as I have often had slight attacks which have soon been removed, I thought little of them. But it has pleased God that they have continued ever since, so that my strength is greatly decayed. I have much pain in my breast and side, which is accompanied with a little short cough. I am generally either hot or cold. My fever is generally very strong in an afternoon, and when it is off I am very feeble, and sometimes so low in body that it is a pain to me either to speak or move. But glory be to God, I have not one anxious thought! To me to live is Christ, and to die would be great gain. Since my body has been weak, my soul has been truly happy. I feel on the wing for heaven. I feel my affections fixed on things above, and my soul sweetly rejoices in hope of that glory to which I am hasting. I rest in the arms divine, and Jesus is to me a satisfying portion.

I cannot, dare not now deny,
The things my God hath freely given,
That happy favour'd soul am I,
Who finds in Christ a present² heaven.
He makes my soul his sweetness know;
He makes my cup with joy o'erflow.³

Praise the Lord, dear sir, for his great goodness to me. And continue to pray for one who is unworthy of your notice. I give you many thanks for your kind reproof. May all the blessings of a covenant God be yours! May peace and love your soul overflow! So prays, reverend sir,

Your affectionate, though unworthy daughter in Christ,

E. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 105–06.

¹JW's letter, replying to Ritchie's of Mar. 14, is not known to survive.

²Orig. "way to"; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

³Cf. CW, 'The Christian', st. 2, *MSP* (1744): 3:272.

From the Rev. Richard Moss

Harbour Island [Bahamas]

April 28, 1777

Reverend Sir,

Last November I received your books, and have distributed as many of them among the Americans as I could. We can hear no news from America. They will tell us nothing if it makes against their own cause, and their newspapers are nothing but lies to deceive the hearts of the simple.

A little before last Christmas several of the merchants came to church to hear me preach, and either through my praying of the king or through something in my exhortation they did not like, they took counsel to decoy me into one of their vessels and carry me into a Letter of Mark¹ which they had riding in the harbor. If that scheme should fail, they resolved to take me out of my own house by night and send me away, supposing they should not have many enemies at Harbour Island when I was gone. But God who dwelleth in the heavens laughed them to scorn, so that I am here yet preaching Christ to sinners, and praying for King George. But how long anyone will be safe in these islands who do not join the Americans, God only knows.

I have heard of several of the missionaries in America² who have been used ill for praying for the king, but have never heard of the name of George Shadford. Neither did I know that any preachers in connexion with you were in America. May God stand by them in the trying hour!

As to pure religion, I fear it is little thought of and less practised either in South or North America.³ I fear that only a thirst for English blood runs through all the colonies. And as to the few Bahamas, they in general are striving every man for his own gain from his quarter, a few in Harbour-Island excepted. Most of the rest, I fear, may be reckoned among those of whom it was said, 'They fear not the Lord, but serve their own gods; both they, and their children, and their children's children. As their fathers did, so do they unto this very day.'⁴

Happy are the religious part of the people in England, for they feed in green pastures, and sit every man under his own vine and under his own figtree, none making them afraid. O that they were wise, and took the advice that Joseph gave to his brethren and not fall out by the way.

May the God of mercy bring me to your remembrance when you are pleading the cause of those who desire an interest in your prayers. My poor prayers are ever for you. May he yet make you a blessing to his church, and late remove you to his blessed kingdom!

I must forever own myself indebted to you, under God, for all the blessings I am endued with, either spiritual or temporal. And conclude, dear sir,

Your most unworthy, but very affectionate and obedient son and servant in the gospel,

Richard Moss

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 158–60.

¹A Letter of Mark (or Marque) was a privateer's ship.

²I.e., Church of England clergy sent to North America under the auspices of the SPG.

³He likely is distinguishing here Canada from the rebellious colonies.

⁴2 Kings 17:41.

From Thomas Wride

Whitehaven
May 10, 1777

Reverend Sir,

I have been in continual expectation of seeing you in the island [Isle of Man]. This was one reason of my not writing to you before. Indeed, want of health has made writing a burden, as I could write but little that would yield any satisfaction. These, with other reasons tedious to name, make me so late in writing.¹

I have been as exact as I could in tracing the uncommon occurrences in [the] island, but sometimes the accounts were so confused that I could make nothing but *confusion* of it.

The first thing of note that I can learn is as follows, as I took it down on the 2nd of May from the mouth of William Clark, and I think it may be depended on.

William Kaughin, mariner, about a fortnight before Christmas last, at that time sailing in a wherry called the *Betty*, with John Clark, captain, William Clark, mate, Charles Cubbin, mariner, and William Sayle, ship's boy. William Kaughin was not only a careless person but a despiser—yea, a persecutor—of religion. Being in Lough Soolagh² in (or near) the county of Derry, it being Sunday, and as they were determined to sail the morning following, mention was made of taking up water for the voyage. But William Clark proposed that it should be deferred until after midnight, to avoid Sabbath breaking. William Kaughin was much displeased at the proposal, and *would* and *did* do it then. William Clark being gone into the cabin to read, did not observe it until they were gone about it. So that night, the water on board, William Kaughin *taking* and *making* every opportunity to despise William Clark for being 'so godly'; saying that he was so religious as not to fetch water on a Sunday, 'I'll warrant you haven't drank it'; etc., etc. etc.

In the morning they weighed anchor and made for Douglas (in the Isle of Man). But, by contrary winds, were driven to Geah³ (an island in the north of Scotland). Casting anchor, they remained there about a fortnight. Having been about a week at Geah, William Kaughin was on shore, where he was informed they were impressing of seamen. When he came on board he appeared very uneasy and wishing to be on shore again, being (as he said) afraid something would happen. All attempts to pacify him were vain. So that William Clark (being weary of so troublesome a person) declared himself willing to put him on shore. Kaughin went into the yawl (as they apprehended) to be put on shore, but they (in compassion to his family) did not follow him.

The crew went to 'sight the anchor'. They called for Kaughin to come and help. But he making no reply, they looked upon it as his ill humour and done it without him. Finding the anchor clear, they dropped it again. All this time Kaughin continued in the yawl. In about an hour and half time they called to him again to come on board. But he making no reply, William Sayle went down into the yawl and found Kaughin 'dead' (at least to appearance). Sayle informing the crew of it, they got him on board as fast as they could, and used their best endeavours to recover him. But finding it vain, they went and brought the crew of another vessel (the *Cornelius*), but *they* could not discover 'a drop of breath in him'.

The first sign of life was a dreadful groan, and for a quarter of an hour more [he] seemed dead as before. He then gave another dreadful groan, and in a horrid, lamentable tone cried out 'Sweet Jesus, save my soul!' Thus he continued crying out for about the space of a quarter of an hour. They then put him to bed, where he began to give an account of what had passed as: He saw two devils in the shape of bears (one on each side of him) going to take him to hell. Near him he saw smoke coming up out of the ground, and smelled an 'ugly smell'. He saw William Clark (with a Bible in his hand), and with him Isabel

¹Wride did not receive JW's letter of May 7 until May 12.

²This may be Wride's mishearing of Lough Swilly, just west of Derry.

³Likely means Isle of Gigha.

Halsey, Margaret Halsey, Catherine Cannell, and Catherine Cowell (so she was called, but her name by marriage is 'White'), all of the Peel society. They were all five together and near to a 'fine gate', but separated from him (Kaughin) by a small river. He thought his soul should be saved if he could touch the Bible which William Clark had in his hand.

A white man appeared at a distance, and as he drew near he showed himself displeased at the devils. And lifting his hand in a threatening manner [he] said, 'I desire you to let that man alone. He is not yours yet.' Upon which the devils left him. Being at liberty, he attempted to go to William Clark and the women before mentioned, but the white man told him that he must not yet, but go back again first 'and go and pay the shilling that you promised to the poor. You and that man behind you promised a shilling to the poor when you were in distress of weather, but have not paid it.' He looked back and saw behind him an old shipmate (William Nichol), in company with whom the vow above mentioned was made six or seven years before.

In the gate above mentioned was a small round hole, through which came the likeness of a dove, but smaller. It came flying over the shoulder of William Clark, in a straight line, and struck him on the breast 'and' (as he expressed it) 'restored his life'.

[an obscured line ...] than him earnestly advising them against making promises, for fear of not performing them; and told them of a disagreeable road he had been in (before the devils met him), full of briars and thorns.

Sometime before this William Sayle was reading of Proverbs, the 16th [chapter], and terrified at his own thoughts of the 4th verse. [He] says to William Clark, 'Lord bless me Bill, look at this! This beats the 9th [chapter] of Revelation.' William Clark endeavoured to set him right by laying before him the promises and mercy of God in Christ Jesus. William Sayle endeavoured to maintain his *gloomy* thoughts of the *horrible decree*.

This contest was now brought to, or rather acted over in, the view and hearing of Kaughin. The white man decided it, saying 'Clark is in the right, and Sayle is entirely wrong'; upon which Sayle ran away. There was at *this* time a distance between Clark and Kaughin. Kaughin could not read; he [saw?] letters and that was all. He knew not what they had disputed about. But yet he could see into William Clark's book (white in the vision), and could retain an idea of the chapter, so as to know it at sight, and told them the chapter begun with a 'T'.

He was no longer a persecutor, no longer an hinderer of his wife, but glad to join society. Nor did he cease to seek the Lord until he found peace, which was about the beginning of April. His walk since, as far as I have learned, is as becometh the gospel.

This is the first and most remarkable thing of the kind that has come to my knowledge in the islands. But it has been followed with some things most disagreeable (I doubt diabolical), of which in my next I shall trouble you with some unpleasing accounts.

It was my design to stay in the island until the 2nd of June, but brother Seed⁴ coming so much sooner than I expected and had by letter appointed, and meeting me at Douglas on last Tuesday morning, I left the island on Wednesday evening and got to Whitehaven on Thursday at noon.

There is one place in the island called Daughby [i.e., now called Dalby] a society of about 84 persons who has a strong inclination to have a preacher resident among them. They want to have brother Empringham among them.⁵ They talk of sending for him and his wife. This affair is made as secret; but in order to get into it, I have desired Elizabeth Clark (of Peel) to adopt their measures and join in a letter to

⁴Richard Seed (d. 1805) was admitted on trial as an itinerant preacher in 1768 (see *Works*, 10:353). He was assigned to Whitehaven at the 1776 Conference, along with Wride. While Seed went supernumerary in 1780 (10:509) for health reasons, he returned to full appointment in 1788 and served up to his death. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1805), 2:270.

⁵Robert Empringham (d. 1792) first appears in the *Minutes* was in 1771 (*Works*, 10:396). He served 1771–78, took a three year break, and returned in 1782 to serve until his death. He too was currently assigned at Whitehaven.

that purpose if asked. I told her she need not be afraid to put it upon the issue of having him *constantly* 'provided Mr. Wesley approves of it'. Sister Clark does not approve of the scheme. But if you receive a letter to the purpose hinted, you will please to look on it not as her *desire*. She is instructed thus to do, in order to disconcert the plan, which she is prudent enough to see is likely to be unprofitable.

The societies in the island contain about 300 members. Please to give me credit for a few days longer, and I hope to send you more particulars. I am, reverend sir,

Your devoted son,

Thomas Wride

Source: Wride's manuscript copy for his records; MARC, PLP 115/9/33.

From Capel Lofft¹

[London, Lincoln's Inn]
c. May 20, 1777²

[p. 1]

**Observations on the Second Pamphlet of Mr. John Wesley
Entitled *A Calm Address***

A person who believes himself not singular, in being surprised at many things contained in a late publication under the name of *A Calm Address*, the second of that title, has thought it not improper to throw out a few remarks upon it. Being one of those to whom it is directed (an inhabitant of Englan) and a little doubting whether any other under that description will take notice of it, except certain of the author's friends and acquaintance (whom the writer of these leaves understands to be pretty numerous), and does not intend to diminish any reasonable attachment to his person, nor to disturb him in his religious tenets, or in the propagation of them; but merely to consider in a fair light some of his assertions concerning the colonies, and a few of his political doctrines, [p. 2] and to make some observations not immediately within the line of Mr. Wesley's publication.

Mr. Wesley, and all who concern themselves in his behalf may rest satisfied that the man who has these remarks to offer has, perhaps, less acquaintance with even his person than ninety-five in a hundred in this and the neighbouring islands, having seen him but once and that very cursorily and accidentally. Neither does he quarrel with Mr. Wesley for being an Arminian; nor with any other man for being a Calvinist. He is one of those who hopes and believes that many of both parties will sit down together in heaven. He knows and esteems some worthy men, as he believes, both of the followers of Arminius and adherents to Calvin, and is persuaded in his conscience that the Bible and its divine Author are fully sufficient to save men and make them eternally happy on the terms of faith and obedience, if neither Calvin nor Arminius had ever been born or any dispute existed about their different opinions. If any farther curiosity is to be gratified, the writer of these remarks neither challenges to himself the distinction of a Whig, nor is by any means ambitious of that of a Tory. He does not care if he should never be called a patriot, and hopes to bear it contentedly if he should, on the contrary, be called an author of sedition. Next to being a slave, he has no desire to be hanged. And if his country is not to be ruined, which he earnestly prays it may not, he had rather share its prosperity than be ruined himself. He wishes to be a good man, a good citizen. But however flattering these titles, he desires not to be called by them, though he thinks them not less ennobling than a [p. 3] temporal or what is termed upon earth a *spiritual* peerage. He wishes, however, both orders of lords easy on their wool-packs, so far as individually any of them rightly endeavours the ease and security of the public. If he courts any party, it is, he hopes, the party of truth. He knows that will, and no other can, compensate to him. If he covets any appellation it is that of a Christian.

He has, he confesses, not much property in England, and none in America. But enough for his present wishes in either. He has not one acquaintance in the congress, or in the provincial army. Yet he makes no scruple to acknowledge there are characters whom he respects in both. He has no friend nor enemy, as far as he knows, in the king's army in America. He is in no man's pay, which is just the situation he likes. His stature, his visage, and his name, he presumes, are all equally indifferent to Mr. Wesley and the public. But there is no secret or enigma in his name. Nor has he any reason to wish to conceal it on this occasion but a sense of its insignificance. The publisher has full leave to satisfy any enquirers upon this head, if there shall be any. If Mr. Wesley's religious ascendance only had been exerted amongst more than forty thousand, as the writer has been informed, who belong to his society, or

¹Capel Lofft (1751–1824) was an English lawyer, minor political figure, and miscellaneous writer. This was one of his first publications, as he had been called to the bar only in 1775.

²First advertised in *London Evening Post* (May 22–24, 1777), p. 3.

any just influence for the production of peace and union, his doctrines would probably have been left, for me, to his own conscience and the judgment of his hearers. And his influence would have had the praise of honest men. I know his doctrines in religion but very imperfectly and very doubtfully. But when I consider [p. 4] an influence directed to men's minds in a manner which I apprehend has a natural tendency to produce disunion and confusion, and to draw no trivial consequences upon our political state, it seems time to say a little. Mr. Wesley, it is true, is but an individual. But by the multitude of his followers he in some respect differs from other private individuals. And I fear a single, if it were the weakest, hand may do more harm in our present situation, by irritating to war and enmity, than many and wise men are likely to effect of good. An end, however, to which the weakest are bound to labour.

There is yet another circumstance: that Mr. Wesley's known connection, in religious principles, with a person in a high post of ministerial confidence, gives something of a more authoritative cast to what is said by him on this occasion, and affords reason for remarking on certain particulars which might derive a degree of currency from this circumstance, beyond their intrinsic value or standard weight.

Having dispatched these preliminaries, I have but one or two general observations, and afterwards propose to spend but little of my own or of any reader's time upon the contents of this *Calm Address*.

It is a melancholy thing to consider that perhaps there never was a political dissension carried to any length (and yet liberty, and even government, cannot subsist without them) in which the honest and moderate, on both sides, did not sometimes forget themselves too much; and the bulk of both parties almost wholly forget that their opposites or themselves were men. [p. 5]

The object of this second *Address* is professedly to give information, to prevent misunderstandings or to remove them, and to heal the root of bitterness and rancour. A man who endeavours this, one should think, has much blame to impute justly to his hearers or readers if he does not easily clear himself of any imputation or suspicion of private views.

On the head of information, what is contained in the sixth page,³ as happening *forty years* ago, is rather remarkable. But as it appears to have slept pretty near half a century, it is pity a minister of the gospel of peace should take occasion at this crisis to revive it. It is impossible to judge of the extent of the words mentioned, with respect to their meaning and the temper with which they were spoken, and whether they were private or public sentiments, unless we had the occasion on which they were spoken, the names, persons, and characters of the speakers—the place—by which I do not mean so widely as the town of Boston—and many other things before us.

This would be true if we were trying the matter before a court of justice. If the persons were all present, who none of them probably will hear the charge until it has taken root (if it takes any at all) against them, and who it is highly probable are all of them to a man dead. Everything is to be presumed in favour of defendants charged extra judicially, without name, at the distance of time of near forty years, at the distance of space of almost half the globe. [p. 6]

However, in 1739 it is acknowledged they had no formed design, nor so much as any measures concerted on the head of independence; which indeed is easily to be believed by their not availing themselves of so favourable a juncture, and so great distress abroad, and domestic consternation as fell upon us in less than five years from that time. And I may add from their general behaviour, till the Stamp Act; and even after its repeal, notwithstanding the *declaratory*, till the unhappy attempts concerning the tea duty.

By the lenity, or rather the wise non-interposition of our government, by the industry of the inhabitants and the blessing of providence on their soil and unremitting labours, they grew, they multiplied, they were rising into wealth; and our wealth *quietly* and *insensibly*, but *rapidly, constantly*, and *necessarily* grew with theirs. They were protected in infancy; no matter for whose sake, I will hope from mutual duty and mutual interest. They returned the protection in confidence, in love of our customs and manufactures, in a pride, not of independence but of a free and natural dependence, a dear and mutually beneficial connexion. They were not sparing of supplies, of men, of their best blood. You will

³JW, *Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*, I.6.

say in their own cause; our late prudent and good king was pleased to say in his, in the cause of Great Britain, in the common cause. He was pleased to thank, and to desire his parliament in part to reward, their vigorous efforts and affectionate zeal. And the parliament was not backward in recognizing the propriety and justice of this message, by an actual grant accordingly. [p. 7]

The practice of smuggling is the usual consequence of clogs laid upon trade. It does not seem quite equal to say it was fit [that] we who complained of it should be the exclusive judges when, by whom, and to what extent it was practised. And that twelve *probi et legales homines* (honest and lawful men) in a province were not to be expected to be on a panel together to try a cause. Not even, as it should seem, in any of the provinces of the whole continent of America, amongst near three millions of inhabitants (at least more than two). That the farther from witnesses, the nearer to the truth. The farther from the fact, the nearer to evidence of the fact. The farther the accused from defence, the nearer to justice. I do not mean that Mr. Wesley says this. But he does not seem, nor possibly the makers of the act, to have a full sense of its tendency. Those who have, and who approve it still, if there are any, they know their own hearts, I hope, and to their own hearts I leave them. I will not urge upon the matter whether it looked like a general act of outlawry. It certainly was not an act of partiality in their favour, and might rather excite prejudices which before they had not than remove or mitigate any which they had.

The *smallness* of the stamp duty makes no part of the question. It is the *right*. And yet more (if more can be) the manner, the necessary consequences in theory, the probable consequence is practise. To cry before one is hurt was not the conduct of the Americans, if there be any hurt in the Stamp Act. They think there *was*; and if there was no other evidence, I *must* think [p. 8] upon *that* there *is*. It is hurt enough when a *great people*, for years together and at the utmost peril, persists in opinion that they are hurt. Other people who were not immediately to be hurt by the Stamp Act thought as the Americans. Lawyers thought it. Men in the highest confidence in government thought it. Men of unquestioned abilities; men who gave the best evidence of the sincerity of their thoughts, the sacrifice of their emoluments, of their honours, of their public stations which they filled with reputation to themselves and satisfaction to the community. But to crown all, the makers of the act thought it; or why did they *repeal* it? So that I know not what party in the kingdom is not now precluded from saying consistently that there was no hurt in the Stamp Act.

But why where the Americans in a hurry? If the consequences that might flow were so terrible, they were not come. The ultimate consequences were not, they did not choose waiting for them. Neither would any of us choose to wait till we had received our death's wound, before we cried for mercy or expostulated with any who might offer the blow. And if a friend or a parent were to lift a dagger against me in the dark, it would be kind to us both that he should be informed of his error rather by my cry before the stroke than by my death.

That all men out of place are desirous of being in by all means at the expense of any infamy or any risk to themselves and their country, Mr. Wesley I presume will not say. If it ever came to this, there would be no room for *Calm Addresses* or any addresses to any purpose. If it is [p. 9] the peculiar characteristic of those who are against continuing the present war, and against fomenting its causes, they have been several years pursuing promotion very blindly in the road that leads absolutely to the opposite. A road which appears to have cost some men their places, which signifies little; and the public the men, which signifies rather more. Places of the highest trust and honour. Wise men who would hunt promotion in a track, by which such men have lost it! And which as I understand has led hardly any man to any place at all in this country, hardly even the *meanest*.

But the English had conquered Canada for the Americans, which as a lord in Charles II's days use to say of a good act, when all things were marketable, was a service to be sure that deserved a subsidy. Have the English the greater share in the benefits of the conquest, or the British Americans, or the Canadese? England says none it seems. British America will say much the same for her part. The conquered Canadese must answer for themselves. '*Capta victorem cepit*'⁴ may be the motto perhaps of

⁴'The captives have conquered their captors.'

Canada. The conquered may have had a better bargain than the conquerors. But whoever has the benefits, or if nobody, which is not a new thing in a conquest, we know who had some share with us in the toils and dangers. I need not remind my countrymen of the 'great event', in the words of the brave Sir Jeffery Amherst, who speaks of it in his letter upon the occasion in those very terms, of the reduction of Niagara by Sir William Johnson, then resident in America, and with a body of the American militia, which gloriously indeed turned the tide of our affairs. I will say nothing [p. 10] of Nova Scotia, conquered some years before. Nothing of Louisburg. Nor the consequent acquisition of Cape Breton. I will not call down the glorious and I trust happy spirit of Wolfe. I will not call Montgomery, his brother in the war, to answer what was performed at Quebec, or whether the Americans had some distinguished share in the dangers and the honours of that day. History I believe will tell us. And to Mr. Wesley, as an attentive reader of history and an historical writer, it is needless I apprehend to refer on this head. And I think in almost the last action of importance in that province (till the late ever-memorable siege) the Americans had some concern in the repulse of near a treble body of French, who attempted to retake Quebec when garrisoned by General Murray.

It is strange if men of republican notions should as such speak contemptuously of the English government, which I take in its *true constitution*, and in the *form* of it, even yet is much a truer republic than most of antiquity—having an executive magistrate for life, and a succession with some express conditions, as in the proviso against a popish successor, and others implied, resulting from the nature and uses of the settlement, limited by the people. At the Revolution, concerning the liberty of which era Mr. Wesley makes no dispute, the share of the people in public government was evident. And government here, when in its most settled state I apprehend must stagnate or be subverted, were it not for republicanism the most active principle of its constituent parts. It was that which fixed the house of Hanover on the throne, and has maintained the prerogatives of that house for three successions for the same reason [p. 11] for which it gave them—the liberties of the people. It is true and loyal republicanism which I trust will defend it still against secret enemies and mistaken friends, with a zeal proportioned to the occasion. What are the constituent parts of our government? Any child might answer and tell you: king, lords and commons. The commons are far from constituting that fancied equilibrium, which if it subsisted would utterly suspend all the powers and functions of government. They very far overbalance the weight, however, respectable of the hereditary council. From these, the commons, alone can originate the supplies of money which are the nerves of the executive power, and which those only are thought proper to give who are chosen by them who are to pay and who are also themselves to pay. But republicanism, patriotism, liberty, and several other words not formerly of ill name are of late so unfortunate as to mean, in their common application to men and things, nothing that they used to mean. Or if they mean the same, *those* who use them reproachfully might be rather suspected of wishing us a *new* constitution than those who speak of them with reverence.

There is something observed of the *equity* of a duty on America, that the colonies might bear a part of the burden. If it is equitable that every part of the British Empire should contribute to the general support, is it therefore equitable of necessity that we who are but a part, and very far from the largest in extent of country, though at present more numerous, should judge for the whole what, by whom, when, how long, for what purposes, under what management, in what proportions shall be contributed. [p. 12]

The smallness of the duty upon tea has been already considered. It was indeed the very ground of suspicion. It was too small to be regarded in itself. It could only be demanded and could only be withheld on the principle of its being an earnest of a demand, whenever it should be thought fit, of all and more than all. Even as much more as the want of information, and other circumstances in a *distant* government, to say not a word more, might exact.

The prevention made to the dispersing of the tea will entirely take its complexion from the principles of the cause. It is but an accessory to that, and it seems improper to consider it as proving any thing in any other view. It is either no crime at all, or but a consequence, trivial in comparison of many others and by no means sufficient to bear the weight of the war. A more particular answer I have good authority to hope will be given soon.

The Americans, as long as redress in this country remained anywhere unbesought, it is possible assured themselves it would not be unfound. They petitioned the *throne*. In this they did what is not denied even to convicted felons. It were injustice if it should. To exclude access to the ear of mercy is an injustice. But they petitioned not as felons, not as criminals, but as free men, as a loyal people, as entitled to the constitution and privileges of British subjects. They petitioned the *parliament*. They did what the *meanest individual* has a *right*, and if he believes there is occasion a *duty* to do. What even aliens and foreign enemies have done with success when they had a claim of justice, or a plea of equitable [p. 13] indulgence. They tried next to gain an ear by speaking as brethren to their brethren. This is their fraud, their hypocrisy and malice! Could they divine they should not be heard! Not heard in all their declarations of loyalty and affection, of readiness to answer the desires of government as they had done before, repeatedly and most satisfactorily to us in a free and a constitutional way—a method approved by our acceptance, and recognized by a compensation ordered by act of parliament. They wanted to do it of *free consent* and *largely*. We said it was better to have a *little without consent*. That we had nothing to say to their affection, and for answer to their notions of *right* we had arguments indeed of *substantial force*.

Mr. Wesley was deceived, he says, by their hypocrisy in talking ‘that they desired nothing but the liberty of Englishmen, many’ he says, ‘in England *cordially believed them*. *I myself*, says Mr. Wesley, ‘for one’.⁵ How does he know who they were who *affected* only to believe them, who he says were *many more*. With a *perhaps* that they were in the secret. These many more, perhaps, some men believe did not *affect* in the matter. And I believe the many, and the many more which Mr. Wesley thus separates, but which were joined in voice, and for anything that appears, sincerity of intention, would amount to some number. Mr. Wesley, however, since the year 1737, to wit in the year 1774 or thereabouts, when the *Congress* appeared with all its formidable encroachments, described in the 11th page,⁶ Mr. Wesley was *one* amongst many *cordial* believers of the sincerity of the Americans. As [p. 14] to their allegiance of which they talked, and their saying that the liberty of Englishmen was all that they desired, Mr. Wesley had great opportunity of being informed in these matters. I trace no remarkable partiality to the Americans in his manner of writing. He was jealous of contrary sentiments in that people, he gives us to know at last, in the year 1737 and 1739. And we may give certainly as much credit to his evidence for the Americans, as he can expect should be given to it against them. The evidence then is that so late as when the congress first met, he *cordially believed*—I repeat it with due regard to the credit such a testimony must carry with it upon this head—that they ‘desired nothing but the liberty of Englishmen’. Mr. Wesley does not tell us that this was an unnatural or an unreasonable desire for British subjects, for colonies that came from England.

The era of the congress’ meeting I do not exactly fix to a month. It will be pretty nearly traced by recollecting when their ordinary assemblies were suspended. In September 1774 however I believe they first met.

I will here say a little more than Mr. Wesley, concerning the *congress*, relative to which body I think there are some mistakes, both as to its supposed novelty and other matters.

I believe the congress is a body not *wholly new* in British America as to the form. For I understand such a body consisting of deputies from several of the provinces met in the year 1754 at Albany, to settle the quota of each province for carrying on the war, in conjunction with Great Britain, and as British subjects. Unhappily the [p. 15] fatal difference of the times has found a different employment for the congress that now subsists. And I think not so agreeable to their wishes, either in the beginning or since, as the former against *natural* enemies; nor so agreeable to ours. But if the original plan of such a convention had been executed in happier times, the thing itself I apprehend might have been friendly to government, to this nation and to America; and for our mutual tranquillity and union, and their safety against foreign enemies. Perhaps from hence forward under any event of the war, under any plan of government, it will be found necessary that something of this kind should always subsist. I am

⁵JW, *Calm Address*, I.13.

⁶*Ibid.*, I.12.

assured this is nearly the opinion of some far better qualified to judge upon this subject than the writer of these sheets pretends to be. The genius of the people, the extent of the country, and the openness of their coast to their enemies and ours, which we have experienced more than once, seem to point to it.

As the *novelty* of the congress is much urged (though if the body were ever so novel, the occasion which produced it now might well vie with it in that respect) so the *tyranny* of the congress is a ready topic on this side the water. If we believe it, and if America has so grievously offended, why do we not leave her to her domestic tyrants, and suffer her to punish herself (which a nation in the way of doing it does more expeditiously and effectually than any other can for her), rather than be at all this expense and hazard to punish her? This question has been asked often. I do not find it has ever been answered. It may be said for the sake of our [p. 16] friends who are under the resentment of the congress. We are doubling the miseries and dangers of those friends. Peace only can secure their tranquillity, and it seems as if the same happy event, though hardly to be hoped, yet always to be endeavoured, would effectually disappoint all who wish ill to this nation, where and whosoever. It is probable at this time those friends are within General Howe's lines, as I understand that General Washington has not only given them leave, but required them to retire thither. And no doubt the colonies have gladly discharged themselves of the trouble of maintaining them. Whether they will fare better with General Howe and his army than they did while in the midst of these implacable enemies, and Mr. Wesley's hydra of tyranny the congress, I will not attempt to pronounce. If they speak as handsomely of their new neighbours as some of them did of their old, while amongst them, they will not be very unlucky if they come no worse off. But there are a kind of names which it is only courtesy to give to the major part by vast odds—and perhaps in property as well as numbers—of our countrymen in America, though they might not be silken enough to adapt themselves to our delicate ears at home if spoken of us. And surely Mr. Wesley has found names for the colonies, which he would not have approved two or three years ago, in that cordial good opinion which he so lately held concerning them.

But if Mr. Wesley cordially believed in 1774 that the colonies desired nothing but the liberties of Englishmen, what has altered his opinion of [p. 17] their desire? He does not tell us particularly, but connects distant events with all the rapidity of our tragic poet, and without embarrassing the reader with dates. Mixes the taking up of arms and the declaration of independence, as simultaneous events, all at an instant. The declaration of independence, however, was not made till last year about the middle; not a great deal more than half a year ago. The taking up of arms is about two years and an half ago. Some events between, if they had fallen into Mr. Wesley's part of the subject, might have been worth mentioning by a gentleman curious in tracing connections between natural causes and their effects. Whether the omission of dates and circumstances be more '*plain and artless*'⁷ than the mention of them is a point which I leave to orators to determine. I have been told it is a point of rhetoric in a popular discourse to take a great deal of pains, in order to satisfy an audience that they shall hear nothing but what is simple and plain. I am not orator enough to say anything about it, but leave my readers to judge for themselves.

As to the supposed *original intention of independence*—the colonies repeatedly, solemnly, and as with one voice, declared they did not wish for independence. We found them in fact very ill prepared for it. With so many men, it was long before an army of theirs appeared. With so much shipping, it was a long while before an armed vessel of theirs appeared. With our troops amongst them, and not always very civil to the Yankees, as some of us affect to call them, it [p. 18] was long before they fought. Though vilified as wanting spirit, they had some reason to say they were determined to behave as men. They did behave with a resolute patience; though insulted and abused, they *wished for a reconciliation*. They declared this wish in the address of the twelve united colonies, voted and subscribed at Philadelphia by their respective deputies on the 8th of June 1775. And though defamed as seditious, they professed themselves ready to obey the laws—which I apprehend means every kind of *constitutional* obedience. Though charged with rebellion, they offered themselves as men cheerfully consenting to bleed in defence

⁷JW, *Plain Account*, I.5.

of their sovereign, in a righteous cause.⁸ What was there in this that had been rendered incredible in their actions? They had obeyed, without disputing or examining their validity, laws not very light or mild, and not so clearly constitutional as that it can be said fairly no wise and honest man competent to judge of the subject ever questioned their equity or agreement with the constitution. They obeyed laws, or shall I say acts or ordinances, or by what name is it decent for me to call them, of yet more extensive and heavy pressure than those to which I alluded. They long contented themselves with repeated fruitless petitions. They fought—witness our victories and triumphs, our enlargement of territory and commerce, our unexampled glory, our security and envied union—they had fought for us. They had expended treasure beyond their strength, and not little nor despicable blood, the blood of free [p. 19] and brave men, of Britons not degenerate from their ancestors. They had been lavish of these in the common cause. In absolute dependence they thought there was slavery. Absolute independence they said they did not desire. It is pretty plain they had not prepared as men desiring it, and it seems almost equally plain that men desiring it might and would have been better prepared. Their old constitutional dependence, known and habitual on both sides, and of which neither appears to have had reason to repent, they said was what they desired. They continued to say it when they appeared very strong, as strong perhaps as they are now or ever were, and when our little force seemed entirely in their power. What may have altered their conduct and declaration since may become government to *think*, better than me to suggest. Beyond was much difficulty and danger, infinite odium, precarious and remote advantage, if any advantage to be hoped; and at the risk of advantages beyond comparison greater than those that could be thus attained. Do we see into some secret motives beyond their declarations and actions, beyond their situation itself, testifying to these?

I will beg leave to tell a story without application to one person or another. The less it applies to any I am sure the better. Some material circumstances in it, happily for us, are utterly inapplicable. The story however is curious. In the year 1562, in the kingdom of France, after the massacre of the Protestants on the 13th of May, 400 were condemned by regular process. One of these was Mr. Teronde, a gentleman of irreproachable behaviour. After the [p. 20] evidence against him was closed, Mr. Bonail a member of the Lit de Justice, the court which tried him, arose and said, ‘Mr. Teronde, the court throughout your trial have not found you guilty in any respect.’ Well says my reader, I am heartily glad of it. But what was you about when you put this man in the list of the condemned? Have patience with me till I have told my story out, and then we will correct what blunders may have been committed in the telling of it. ‘The court have not found you guilty in any respect, nevertheless’—let us attend to this sage judge; nevertheless what? Do they send him to the Bastile or to the gallows? No surely. Or desire him to keep his apartment, to avoid suspicion. No such thing—‘being very well satisfied of your inward conscience’ (what an happy thing to have judges who took his conscience so mercifully into the account!) ‘and that you would have been very glad that your miserable and reprobate sect had gained the ascendant’ (miserable and reprobate sect! Rather hard words! But honest and charitable men have sometimes their prejudices. They reprimand you, that I suppose is the sentence. No truly. They wish you to be better persuaded. No, that is not it.) ‘they condemn you to be beheaded, and that all your estates whatsoever be confiscated.’ And the sentence was executed. But as by our constitution our judges and our parliament do not take upon them the same sagacity with this judge, any gentleman who writes in vindication of what is done amongst us will do it most satisfactorily by giving a distinct and candid state of the facts upon which we ground our conduct. And I [p. 21] think the omission of material events, and the overpassing of important circumstances, hinders what is the truest justice in all parties and to all causes, the enabling them and the world, so far as it is concerned, to judge the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth from the evidence.

Well. But the declaration of independence is past. So it is. Whatever might have prevented it, at length it *is* past! And whatever is the consequence of it, a curious point of speculation, it will be on the theatre of the world. And if it were barely a point of speculation, one might know better what to say of it.

⁸Note in original: ‘Address 28th July 1775’.

Taking the liberty to suppose a case a thousand years ago, we should probably all agree that the merits of the declaration would depend on two points: whether in any case it could be just; and if it could, then whether in the case which had happened it was necessary. But it is not a thousand years off, it is in a manner yesterday. It is not a bare point of speculation, it is a point of great importance. All that seems to follow from this is that, the facts being nearer, we may see them if we please the more clearly; and the thing being of great importance, we ought to consider it more attentively and impartially.

But supposing all this to be clearly decided in the way most agreeable to administration. Supposing all Europe to be agreed that the declaration was unnecessary. Supposing we go farther and say that no necessity could justify it. It is past. Omnipotence will not cause it not to have been. But even weak human prudence, joined with sincerity, may possibly do much to cure or to abate the evil of its consequences, or to [p. 22] prevent their increase. When we look for a remedy, we are apt I believe (Mr. Wesley's medical researches will say how this is) to look back to the constitution of the patient and the early symptoms of the disease. Of the American constitution we may judge with a pretty tolerable guess from our own. We know, as to ourselves, whether severity or kindness will go farthest. If this ran in the blood, the climate, the political constitutions of a people, there is reason from all these why it should be the same with the Americans. But there is a stronger reason. The evidence of all times and countries proves, and each man's heart I believe testifies to himself, unless miserably corrupted, that this principle is a part of our common nature: the principle of being more effectually retained by lenity than rigour; by love which acts at hand and within us, and upon our affections to the interests of which we are most sensible, than by rigour and force which act from without, and often at a great distance, and with a weakness proportionable to these and many contingent circumstances, as well as to the limited nature of human power, and the resistance which they excite from contrary force. We know which has hitherto been most successful with colonies. Might it not be the part of a good physician to try the effect of an approved remedy; so easy, so adapted to the habit of his patient; so suited to the symptoms of the disease. If this be not worth the while, may it not be yet less to go on, cutting and scarifying parts which we think are more inflamed than enough already, and which will do more credit and service to the other members and to the whole [p. 23] body by being beautiful, in strength, and entire than by being deformed by violence, broken, and maimed. If we never should regain them, would it be politic to persist in our present course, at the risk of leaving them in this state, to cherish resentment against us by remembrance of their wounds or to fall a prey to our common enemy? If we do regain them the more entire in every sense, most assuredly the better. Can we ask our hearts and answer that it is probable war will effect this? It is strange that we do not seem to take a distinction between force and power, things as different as the mild and irresistible attraction which pervades, unites, and governs nature, is different from the stretching of a rack.

If it appears with such evidence of words, of actions, of circumstances, preceding, concomitant and subsequent, and lastly from the nature of the thing, that independence was not the original object; if it appears that a concurrence of unhappy circumstances not without blame on our part has produced the declaration; if we have every reason to believe that our anger will not improve events to our advantage, let the original cause or event turn out as they will; it is natural to consider what it is which brings all this resentment on the Americans. They differ from us, or some of us shall I say, on a topic concerning the rights of government and the natural rights of men; which latter will be supposed by most men something more than ideal, and not wholly and absolutely abandoned by entering into society. They differ upon a principle, a fundamental principle, of our common constitution. I am [p. 24] afraid I shall not be able to state the terms of the dispute without seeming to decide it when I say that all of us who do not admit the constitution of this government to be of right and of fact absolute acknowledge, that both points, of right and of fact, do apply to ourselves in the manner in which the Americans claim them. So that we *are not* nor *ought* to be governed in the manner by which we are endeavouring to govern them, absolutely without our consent and expressly against it. And that we acknowledge America was not held of the king personally, as Hanover; nor of the king, or king and people of England, by right of conquest, whatever that means; but was dependent on the king, as head of the constitution, *according to the constitution*. That is, not at the royal pleasure, say the Americans—whatever respect we had to the person and character of the king. Nor at the pleasure of any council, of less or greater number, of one rank or another, appointed

by the king, or by our fellow-subjects in England, without our consent. But they who allege that the Americans are subject to be *taxed* and *bound in all cases whatsoever*, by the *Parliament here*, say they are bound by a council appointed at the pleasure of the king or his predecessors in conjunction with another council appointed here in England by us, if you speak the best of the appointment, the fellow-subjects of the Americans—but not a man of either chosen or removable by the Americans themselves—with the assent of the king. If they do not rightly understand this to be according to the true principles of government and of our common constitution, they err with very [p. 25] wise men of former ages, and not of this only. And I know not how, for my part, to help them out of their error. It merits some indulgence, and not very vehement resentment, especially from Mr. Wesley, if it be true that but in the year 1770 Mr. Wesley ‘did not defend the measures that had been taken with regard to America’; and was pleased to add, ‘I doubt whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence.’⁹ If he suspected so strongly as to declare this, in a publication not meant to favour the complaints of opposition, that imprudence, illegality, and iniquity was at the root, how is it that he is grown so fond of the branches? War, blood, desolation, the rending asunder of the empire, and its collision against itself, these have sprung from that root which he then thought evil at a time when the most sagacious men rather conjectured or feared these evils, on too probable grounds of fear, than foresaw them with a clear assurance of their happening. At least it was before we saw them with our eyes, and before so many thousands of both countries had felt them in their fortunes, in their lives, in all upon earth that was dear and valuable to them. The very thing that would probably have made the author of the plan reject it made Mr. Wesley assured that it was *right*, expedient, and necessary; when before, at a time of less experience, on which account more favourable sentiments of it might not have been so wonderful, he appears to have thought as ill of it as it is almost possible for [p. 26] the worst enemy to speak of any the worst measures which can be contrived. And even considerably later than the year 1770, it should seem from circumstances that have appeared in print, Mr. Wesley continued to express the same or stronger sentiments, if possible, as to the rights of the colonies and against the conduct of our government towards them.¹⁰ This might draw some compassion for his dark American brethren, partners with him in an error so natural. Especially when they could neither read nor publish epitomes of that admirable work called *Taxation no Tyranny*, which had so happy an effect in opening the eyes of Mr. Wesley—though on his publishing his first *Calm Address*, in the first edition of it, I think he forgot to refer the public to that marvellous court oculist who had done this cure; or to take any notice of the medicine, or of his reducing it from that Galenical mass of hard ingredients and collyriums to cover up the eyes and monstrous boluses of words to be swallowed, to his pretty light chemical extract of the essence, which without confinement or the trouble of thinking about it, opened men’s eyes in the manner of a charm, by convincing them they could see nothing, or saw all things by contraries, and that the best way of being quick-sighted was to follow other men with their eyes shut, and with no fear of a ditch, let who would lead or drive them; for that the people of England are no more fit to judge of the goodness or badness of any administration than a set of [p. 27] coal-heavers to judge of the art of making treaties, or how the balance of power is to be maintained in Europe.¹¹ And that all the colonies are as fairly included in England, by virtual representation, as Truro in Cornwall. And that the representative bodies, the council and governor of the several provinces, are all one with the churchwarden, sidesmen, and ten or twenty parishioners of a country vestry, met to settle a parish rate or their proportion of a venison pasty.¹²

⁹Note in original: ‘*Free Thoughts on Public Affairs*, printed by J. and W. Oliver, in Bartholomew-close’.

¹⁰Note in original: ‘Vide [Caleb Evans’s] *Letter to Mr. Wesley*, published by Mr. Dilly, 1775’.

¹¹Note in original: ‘Vide *Free Thoughts*, pp. 22–23 [VI.4] and the first and second *Calm Address*’.

¹²Note in original: ‘See *Taxation no Tyranny*; or in lieu thereof, the first *Calm Address*’.

Mr. Wesley might the rather have spoken with some regard to the colonies, because he says they were misled by people in England, where at the time of publishing the *Free Thoughts* he seemed to despair of finding *twenty* men of honesty, temper, and common sense to make up an administration. Where, without asking so much as Christian, he did not expect to find this little number to be entrusted with public affairs, possessed of Roman integrity. And this is our country, according to Mr. Wesley! This the idea of the best possible administration to be had in it, the country and administration which is to have absolute dominion over the properties, the lives, the liberties of all the inhabitants of the thirteen British colonies in North America; and, by parity of reason, over Ireland, the East Indies, and all the West India islands dependent on the crown of Great Britain; about six or seven millions of British subjects, not including England and Scotland. A country this of ours where the people, [p. 28] one should think from his manner of speaking, have no more judgment about affairs of government than asses about the talents of their drivers, and the best men that can be found for public business, not so many as twenty, with the honesty of pagans. Unless since 1770 he has found us as much reformed as our colonies are grown worse, in his account of them. However in this country Dr. Johnson, Mr. Wesley, and some others have arisen in these deplorable times—men that will leave our unhappy country for not more, at the worst, than seventeen, to seek out of the twenty men attached to no party, and wishing nothing but the general good; though a good as paradoxical to common apprehensions, in the case of half the parties whose happiness is to be thus promoted, as that of the stoical wise man who was to be free in chains and in the galleys, rich without a penny to call his own, and at ease in the burning bull.

Mr. Wesley was perhaps one of those in England who had a share in operating the delusion of which he so feelingly complains. Since if he doubted whether the measures with regard to America were capable of being defended by any man on the foot of law, equity, or prudence, any man would suppose they could not be defended at all, in Mr. Wesley's opinion at least. So far, therefore, as that might have any weight amongst any of them, the ports not being shut till about four years after, he might succeed in satisfying any that doubted it that the measures of government with regard to the colonies were against law, equity, and prudence. [p. 29] They have not had means, he acknowledges in the outset, to be informed by him of his latter opinion, namely, that the contrary of all this is true.

I do not mean to be personal on this head. Mr. Wesley's authority may not be much in America. I know not how much it is in England. But with the bulk of his followers his authority must probably serve in the place of reason. Why should it not, when he writes to them on politics, to tell them that they cannot judge whether an administration or an act of administration be one thing or another? At the same time I should lie against friendship and sincerity if I were to say that there is not one honest and sensible man who thinks better of Mr. Wesley than I do. And I should offend against charity if I were to say there may not be many worthy and well-disposed men amongst his followers. But a great part are certainly as little likely to be politicians as Mr. Wesley, who had a very good right to say that 'he was no politician', that 'politics were out of his province'.¹³ But not so good a one, after this fair confession, to treat a whole people across the sea, and perhaps more than half of the people at home, with so many hard words for not approving measures which, if they deserve to be approved, must deserve it on principles of very refined politics indeed. But peace and charity are within every man's province.

However, to those who rest the issue of such a cause on Mr. Wesley's opinion, one can only say, pay what respect you please to that opinion of Mr. Wesley, which at present appears to be the last. But do not forget that you still owe [p. 30] some to an opinion of a contrary nature, but more favourable to peace and union, which came into the public under the same sanction. And that second thoughts are some times the best, but are not the *surest* when they stand in opposition to former, in print and published as well as the others by the same author; especially when the latter speaks war and resentment, and the former better and more desirable things.

A little however both on the principles of government in general and of our constitution in particular. And let me only observe that in France or Turkey it is a secret even to ministers, and an

¹³JW, *Free Thoughts*, I.1.

impenetrable mystery to the people, what the constitution is. It is the will of the prince, the humour of the day, the law of the moment. It is a constitution where nothing is constituted. But in a free country it is not a riddle of politics to know the constitution. Every man knows it. It proceeds from the people. It is kept in order and repair by the people. The great springs that move it are supplied and constantly renewed by the people. There is no minister who can answer to an impeachment of the commons that there are refinements of policy which the commons cannot understand. There is no *commission* from *any* power in any instance that will bear a man out, whether he be commoner or peer, whether he act of his own head or by order under the privy-signet or sign manual, or great seal, whether he be ecclesiastic or secular, civil or military, in an act contrary to the constitution by common consent established.

Nothing is accounted in our government a commission but what the law authorizes and warrants. He is [p. 31] liable to be proceeded against as the highest criminal who presumeth to act in the virtue of any other. An illegal commission is so far from conveying a power to any man to act that it is a greater crime to do anything upon the imaginary authority of it than it would be to commit the same fact without all colour and pretence of power and warrant. Seeing the injury of one case doth affect and terminate in him that receives it; whereas in the other it affects both the king, the government, and the whole body of people.¹⁴

Ship money was levied by writ under the great seal. And even as to the supreme legislature of the state, which is sovereign within the state, the king, lords, and commons (or in other words the royal power of the nation for executive justice which the king represents) being personally present, the judicial powers of the lords with their share of the legislature, the great legislative power of the commons of England, Wales and Scotland present by their representatives for the countries and boroughs of these several countries, and in their name and behalf; it may with the strictest justice be affirmed that there are things which it *cannot do*. That natural reason, *justice*, religion, our constitution, our right of liberty and of property, allow and *require* us not to confound the idea of a *supreme* with that of an *arbitrary* legislature.¹⁵ So true it is in the words of Cicero, a Roman, a senator, a member of the most powerful and most imperious assembly, that the world ever beheld, [p. 32] that there are rights which neither senate nor people can affect. I will yet repeat the words in my title-page. The *rights of liberty* are such as neither the *violence* of times, nor the *power* of magistrates, nor the *authority* of the *whole people*, which in other cases are *sovereign*, can shake or impair. If then the people of England are *able* to know the constitution, if it is their right and their duty to know it, if any man of common reason and honesty may teach what it is to those who know it not, and any with common sense and a few minutes attention may learn what their security by the constitution is, for all that is dear and venerable among men, if by this security we hold what our fathers have delivered with their blood 'The liberty of Englishmen'; let us inquire a little generally what is the true meaning of that expression.

An Englishman is one who lives under a constitution, the very *end* of which has been justly defined to be *liberty*.¹⁶ And he is governed or ought to be as such, by laws of his own consent through members representative, freely chosen *agents* on his behalf and that of the public.

It is true, as Mr. [Edmund] Burke observes, such a member *is not* an agent in such manner as one employed to maintain the *adversative* interests of the parties sending him *against* the interests of the *community*. But this does not destroy the duty, nor take away the effect of his particular representative

¹⁴*A Collection of State Tracts, Published on Occasion of the Late Revolution in 1688 and During the Reign of King William 3* (London, 1705), 1:139.

¹⁵Note in original: 'Vide Sommers's *Judgement of Whole Kingdoms*, Sharp's *Declaration of the Right of the People*, p. 184, and a pamphlet published by Almon, entitled, *Take your Choice*, p. 53.'

¹⁶Note in original: 'Vide [Montesquieu] *Spirit of the Laws*, b. XI. c. 6.'

trust. For the parties who send would, if they had personally been assembled, have been subject to the same obligation of promoting the general interest. And when any *new device* [p. 33] affecting the *general constitution* is in debate, I cannot see how a representative can prudently decline to consult the sentiments of his constituent upon it of his own accord, voluntarily and seasonably. Much less I doubt can plain understanding teach one to comprehend how he can justify rejecting the sentiments of his constituents upon such a matter, when they think it expedient and necessary to inform him of them, and to commit them to him as their representative. It is not to be presumed they will enjoin an unjust or dishonest thing. If they do, it requires no depth of political casuistry to understand that no trust however strict, no authority, though of the whole world, no pretence of convenience, of expediency, of necessity, is a warrant to a man to commit injustice. But in other cases men are not free if a will contrary to theirs stand in the place of their will, from the mouth of him whom they have chosen to be the depository but not the master or disposer of their unalienable right of free judgment and free agency in whatever concerns their interest as members of society. It matters not to say that our physical liberty is limited—for we cannot fly, nor move more than a certain weight proportioned to the force of our muscles. It matters not to enquire into the limits of our moral liberty. Reason assures us, our conscience assures us, revelation assures us that to be a moral agent necessarily must imply a freedom of the will, for without that all is irrational chance or physical necessity. We feel, and the word of God seconds our feelings, that we are accountable beings. And so far as we are *accountable*, so far it is necessarily supposed [p. 34] that we have *moral* liberty. We know our civil liberty must be of such a kind as will consist with our physical and moral liberty. But it would be surely unaccountable to say that we must submit this civil liberty to be moulded and restrained by men like ourselves, without any share of our concurrence, for no better reason than that after all our natural liberty of acting is not boundless, and our moral liberty of acting is the liberty of rational but imperfect creatures, and such as are degenerate from their primitive excellence. To hold our civil liberty cheap upon this account would be to resolve on a kind of annihilation, and to make ourselves even worse than nothing, because we cannot be everything; to debase ourselves beneath the worms because we cannot be equal to the deity. A people governed, or to speak more properly governing, by the representatives of their own choice is enslaved if their will is one and that of their representatives another. A part of a people is proportionably in the same case if their particular representative disposes of their interests at his will; even as a people, or part of a people, must lose their freedom when they neither consent to laws to be made immediately themselves or mediately, at least tacitly, by their representatives. The reason why a member of one county or borough is said to represent all the rest in a general sense, I apprehend to be this: The union of all the counties and boroughs *represented*, but no farther, in *one* society or *political body*. I question whether it will be found on candid enquiry that the *real* force of the maxim extends so much as to any *one* point farther than this principle. Every [p. 35] inhabitant of England is seized, per my *et per tout*,¹⁷ to use the words of the venerable Littleton on a more private occasion, in parcel and in the whole, as joint tenant with every other inhabitant of those liberties to which all have one title, indefeasible but by their own act. Which they hold not of men, but of God and nature; of which society is the guarantee, and all government *truly* so called only a *mode of carrying the trust into the execution*, established by free and common consent of the society, that is of the major part at least, and established for the *joint* benefit of *each* and *all* the individuals who compose the society. These in England choose their respective representatives as particular trustees, but still to act without prejudice to the general trust which all are bound to maintain, the interests of the joint estate in the community formed by these several parts thus represented. And they have delegated the executive power to one trustee of a distinct nature, whom for the prudence and faithfulness to his trust which the constitution presumes, and the people expect from him, they have called the king,¹⁸ a word of Saxon etymology, intimating and reminding the great magistrate who bears it of that wisdom and justice wherein was comprehended the whole that our ancestors in their simple politics understood by cunning, from which

¹⁷‘By the half and by the whole.’

¹⁸Note in original: ‘I. Instit, b.2. f. 85.’

then honourable word that title of trust and honour seems to have been derived by abbreviation. This magistrate is obliged to commit the several distinct and subordinate branches of his great office to certain secondary and inferior powers, known and authorized [p. 36] by law, properly qualified, and accountable to them and the people. The representatives being from all parts of the island, chosen by their respective electors, have an immediate and particular trust with respect to them. And the joint and blended interests of the whole body thus united by the representation of its parts are of such a nature as that every county, borough, and man in England, and of course every representative, is bound by the laws of society and justice, and of liberty itself, to hold them sacred and not to prefer particular convenience to the good of the community. But *how* that good is to be promoted, and how to effect it most *fully*, and at the same time most consistently with private convenience, this is proper for each particular county and borough and their several individuals to consider; and to choose wise and faithful men, who from situation and other circumstances may best understand and be best qualified to maintain those lesser interests in harmony with those of the whole, which are sure to be promoted best by a due proportion of the legislative power, flowing from all the parts, and a free communication through the whole of all the intelligences and vital succours necessary for the well-being of the system. And the representative members may be compared to nerves, veins, and arteries, conveying the spirits which minister to the senses and the animating juices which support the life and health of the entire body, and which knit them in a union of wants, enjoyment, mutual assistance, and common benefits. But they act in this relation as the nerves, veins, and arteries of their *own* body, and not of another; of their own and [p. 37] not of a distinct political society, which requires those and all the necessary powers of self-support and self-government to be included within itself.

The objection that, if nobody is to be bound by a law but he who consents to a law, many are never bound at all because they never consent, the minority are never bound at all because they even dissent, and that others will not be bound in the case of a penal law or a law that they think burdens them because no man is likely to consent to be punished, seems to be a fallacy in all its parts. For the majority and minority have consented to be of *one* political society or *community*. When a community is met and debates its own interests, it is the implied consent of all that what is agreed by the major part to be the interest of the community shall be the law of the community, because the *greatest good of the community* that can be attained *without injustice to another political society, or to individuals* is the *common law* which nature and reason, justice and common sense appoint. And as no man has a right to force another man to submit to his arbitrary sense of what is best for that other, each is the proper and the only judge for himself. And the greater part consequently judges what is best for themselves, and what the greater part judges best for itself the community adopts as law; the law of the community being the greater good of the whole and what is good for the greater part, of which they must be the judges, cannot but be allowed a more general good than what is supposed to be good by the only less. They must either split into two societies, or the least part of this one society must agree to the [p. 38] other. The one side has no pretence to make its superior discretion, real or supposed, the absolute rule of right and just to the contrary. Therefore which side shall give way can only be settled by considering which side has the fewest voices; all the voices severally having an equal right, and something being necessary to be done. And those who were the minor part will have the same right in their turns, when upon another question they may have more on their side, and so become the greater. And unless there be great corruption in a state, taking the word in its largest sense for any kind of undue influence, the same men will hardly be in danger of being very frequently, and in points of great importance, outvoted. A community in a fair state is capable enough of deciding upon its own great interests, which, for the most part, are plain and simple and within itself. And in such a state the less number will confidently and willingly acquiesce in the sense of the greater. One cannot take an instance too natural and familiar to illustrate a principle founded in nature and common sense, and the instance I am going to mention will be the very principle and practice upon a smaller scale.

If five men met and were considering together on the best way to take in order to arrive, in company with each other, at a place which was the object of their joint intentions—suppose some particular spot where they heard Mr. Wesley was to preach—and suppose there were three roads to the

intended placed, three of the men chose one road, one another road, and the fifth another. It is plain if they agreed to go *together* [p. 39] to this place, that is, to go in a society, that the less number would do reasonably, as companions, to be determined by the greater. They might indeed take their several roads, but then so far it would no longer be one society. And thus the smaller number dissenting at first may be conceived to assent afterwards, for the sake of attaining the end desired, and of keeping at the same time society with the greater. And this they might do without unsaying, in words, their dissent formerly given, by only following the others. Now, upon the greater scale, to take a community of ten thousand people. Their end as a society is the *common good*, for which they came into society; and as individuals each man's good in particular, consistent with the general good. Everyone will not be of the same opinion as to the road to be taken. But as to the end of their journey, all point to the same: each man's good in particular, and that of the community in general. They differ about the road. Six thousand are for one way, four thousand for another. Well, are the four thousand and the six thousand to stand still, and go no way? No surely. Are they to divide into two societies from one? Perhaps they do not suppose it worth their while. Then it is possible the four thousand will acquiesce in the opinion of the six thousand as to the road, and thus the consent of the majority becomes that of the whole, which is tacitly implied, if the less number continues in the society. But a larger political society has no such right with a smaller distinct political society out of it, either by consent express or presumed. And therefore no right to determine [p. 40] the will of that society, any more than if I am in one party with twenty men, and Mr. Wesley with seven, I have a right to dictate to the less company the road they shall take.

Many will smile at these comparisons. But as men who would compare fractions of great sums reduce them mutually to the lowest common denomination, or as a man who would judge of grain takes an handful out of the sack as a sample, it seemed the most obvious way of illustrating the principles of great societies to take the smallest, as the number of a society does not vary the rights. As to those who are said not to consent at all—a man may consent not only by his deputy, chosen and authorized by himself, but by letting a matter which concerns him pass, and saying nothing against it, when he is under no moral restraint from using his free voice. If he is under a natural incapacity, a thing cannot be said to be done against consent of that which has not by nature any power of consenting, as in the case of children; who afterwards tacitly consent, by remaining in the society. As to the objection of penal or burdensome laws, many a man, it is likely, would be inclined to be a thief, without allowing a law to restrain thievery, were it not that then other people would have the same privilege, and where he could once rob, he might be robbed a thousand times over. So that such a man (and the observation is not new) may very well consent to a law which does not bring him punishment, unless he pleases to run the risk of violating the consent given, and will give him protection in his life and property, under the security of the whole force of the society. Besides that, [p. 41] if he rather chose to rob, the greater part of the society would not be of a mind to let him. Some men would like, perhaps, to pay no money to the public support, only that they feel such support necessary for their well-being in the society in which they live, and that others in that society stand upon the same footing of duty and advantage, and that he must either leave the society and find one where he may live without contributing anything to his own *support*, or must pay the quota agreed by the major part of their own society and to be borne in common. But the force of this argument lies *within* the *society*.¹⁹

¹⁹Note in original: 'By a political society I mean a number of men united together with a design of administering their affairs in common, and conducting themselves on the principles of that design. Thus far is indeed a definition which will agree with a nation. But it will also apply to a corporation, or even a more private assembly met upon their joint concerns. It is farther necessary to the idea of political society, in the sense of a nation, which is here intended that we should define it a body of men, united for the management of national affairs in common, in such manner as they shall judge best, and by their common resolution, according to the form of the constitution which they have chosen ordain to be *law*. It is plain therefore a nation cannot be included in another nation, otherwise it would be induced *imperium in imperio*, an empire within an empire, an evil which all wise nations have ever constantly avoided. And

Besides that, the objection as to the sense of the greater part of the society in which he had chosen to reside would recur here also. [p. 42]

The consequences, in point of fact, that would arise from admitting objections about consent are hardly worth considering, if the objection itself be found wholly groundless. But having first endeavoured fairly to discuss the principles of the objection, I think it will now be fair to show its inconsistencies from the consequences.

In the first place, the majority of the legislators would not be bound by laws of their own making, for the very reason that common sense would appear to dictate that they are bound—because clearly and expressly they gave their own consent, and the objection says a man is not bound by a law unless it be law independently of his consent. It *is law after* he has consented with others that it should, *and remains law* till the consent of the majority dissolves it, *independently* of any *new* consent or dissent of the *individual*. This seems to me to be the true solution of the fallacy couched in this objection.

Next the Old Testament will have been a nullity to the people of the Jews, in its first institution, for it is clearly a law with the sanction of penalties, and the authority of the Supreme Legislator. And it is as clearly a covenant to which all the people expressly give their consent, Exodus 19:8. And again more particularly Joshua 24, where the people are reminded of the difficulties of the covenant into which they offered to enter, and solemnly stipulate with one voice to observe it in the whole.

Again, the New Testament—with reverence and trembling I speak it—would, I apprehend, be a nullity to us Christians if a law founded in [p. 43] consent were not a law. For no doubt the law of Christianity is founded in the *free consent* of those who receive it, and is called expressly a *covenant*. And yet it hath a judge, a judgment, penalties of infinite extent, and infinite rewards. Three of these can belong properly to nothing but law; the fourth is not necessary to a law, but neither is it repugnant to it.

But it may be said both these are laws independent of consent. For if a man, with proper evidence of its truth, had refused submission to the Jewish revelation, he would not have been clear of guilt. And so yet more strongly of the Christian. He would have been guilty of violating the eternal truth, to which his conscience consents—that a man cannot upon reasonable evidence of a revelation from God *wilfully* reject it, and be blameless. But this would stand upon a different footing, and not be the same crime as that of a man who *embraced* the Jewish or Christian *covenant*, and *then broke* them. The operation however of the law, in both cases, results from the *tacit consent* of the conscience as to the one, and the *express* consent as to the *other*. Another consequence would be this: all kings have been by consent or force; force cannot make a right, consent it is said does not; therefore no king would have any right at all.²⁰ [p. 44]

After all however, let the liberty of Englishmen be what it may, and whether he and a vast number of others, some of them very able politicians and I would say, if not absurd, honest statesmen, and the Americans themselves were right or wrong in thinking that the English colonies in America were

every body of men, living without the local limits of any particular state, is either a nation in the largest and freest sense of political society, or a mere company of traders, a mere garrison, a camp, or the like, or it is a body of slaves. Of these three, if the British colonies cannot be the middle class merely, a company of three millions nearly of traders, then let every man say honestly which he thinks they ought to be of the other two.'

²⁰Note in original: 'It may be said there is a third by divine right—but this will be confined to the nation of the Jews. And the first was a king whom the nation asked and God punished them with their wish, which in their peculiar situation was rebellion against him. David had the concurrent choice of the people. When Rehoboam followed oppressive advice, God forbade the king and his people to war against their brethren of the ten tribes. To Nebuchadnezzar indeed, the people having enslaved themselves at home, were given into temporary servitude abroad. Divine right, where it means anything like common sense, will imply consent, for no nation can be supposed to believe in God, and not to consent to a king whom he should by *express revelation* appoint. Divine right, as commonly used on this subject, means every wrong and iniquity—that is, it means an absolute contradiction. Vide L. Sommers, pp. 35–38.'

contending for the liberty of Englishmen, Mr. Wesley seems to be much dissatisfied that any man should not be fond of our prosecution of the American war. In point of *justice* I will not throw away words in saying what has been so often and so fruitlessly said, by some of the ablest and possibly some of the best men in the kingdom.

With regard to the *prudence* of the war in the beginning, to spend many words more upon that would be idle. I shall just observe that allowing the Americans *plentifully furnished with provisions from the resources they had within themselves*, multiplied exceedingly, proportionably increased in wealth, their shipping numerous, their trade, notwithstanding the acts of navigation, already extended to almost every part of Europe before the war between us and them, and themselves accustomed to *perfect liberty, civil and religious*, and as soon as the war began *plentifully supplied with all sorts of arms and ammunition* by our good allies the Dutch and the French—and all this description flows from Mr. Wesley's own pen, [p. 45] and may be found in his 9th, 10th, and 12th pages—all this before the war redounded to the honour and benefit of Britain. The happiness of such colonies one should have supposed the parent state must have been desirous not to disturb, with parental exultation looking on the blessings of her offspring. And one should think, take it all together, that there could be, nearly in the words of the Roman historian, *non alia in terris gens quam magis inimicam nolis aut amicam velis*. No nation in the world whose enmity one should less have chosen, or whose affection this country should have more desired to retain.

As to the former parts of the description, I very little question them; only observing that it was pretty plain when the Stamp Act came to be executed that the wealth of America did not consist in cash.

As to the latter concerning our good allies, it was time I should have thought to have ceased hostilities in love to ourselves, if not to the colonies, and in disappointment of the ambitious perfidy of these good allies. I always thought this one of the strongest arguments against the war, if it be a point of prudence not to set our national existence upon the cast for the diversion and emolument and aggrandizement of our natural enemies. I doubted not the fact before. I cannot doubt it thus verified. I fear this word *natural* enemies has passed my pen too often without explanation. I do not mean by it that there is any nation which another is necessitated by its nature to hate or justified in hating. I consider all men, blacks or whites, Europeans or [p. 46] Africans, Asiatics or Americans, as produced by one Almighty and all-gracious Father from one seed, brethren by creation and yet more by redemption.²¹ But I mean by natural enemies such as one ought in charity to love as men, and as nations to do every good office to them consistent with our safety, who yet from rivalry of power, ancient and repeated quarrels, and mutual opposition of political interests (which I fear are too often carried on, till they cease to *be* interests) are in a likely state to make war upon each other. Some writer has lately objected to this term of natural enemies, applied to nations, as unchristian. In its proper sense, such at least as it appears to me, I do not apprehend it is in the least unchristian. The same writer makes this a reason why we ought to be at least as resentful against the colonies in our operations of war as against France or Spain, because one is no more a natural enemy than the other. True, in the supposed sense which the writer gives to the word. But there are natural and prudential reasons why we should be more solicitous to promote the interests, to support the rights, and to be indulgent to the errors of the one than of the other. As to resentment in war, it is to be wished that war did not exist. It might have been hoped that justice and charity would have been so powerful amongst men, as that civil wars [p. 47] should not exist at *this* day in Christian countries. But while they do it is most desirable in all wars, particularly in these, that resentment should have as little place on either side as is possible.

And as Plutarch in a passage cited by Grotius commends the conduct of the war between the Corinthians and the people of Megara, for being carried on *ἡμέρως καὶ συγγενικῶς*, *mildly and as a*

²¹Note in original: 'Vide Sharp's *Limitation of Slavery*—a work which I believe has been the chief instrument under providence of banishing the infamous practice of retaining negroes as slaves in this country; which practice received its death's-wound by the great decision, in the case of Somerset E. T. 1772 B. R. Perish slavery, and that speedily and for ever, in every part of the globe!'

dispute between kindred, in like manner whenever differences so unhappy as to produce a war arise between Christian states, the conduct on each side, especially when they are kindred states and of kindred constitution and religion, requires at least equal moderation and humanity. It is some comfort in such a wretched situation that the conduct of this most unhappy war has been hitherto milder on the whole, even on the severest side, than it was justly feared it would have been; or than if it continues, it is likely to be on either. I mean as to our military operations, excepting always when speaking of lenity those acts at home which produced and accompanied the war. And yet how terrible, I had almost said how merciless, is the very mildness of war, even were we to take it at the best with no more than its natural and necessary consequences. It behoves us, while we *reprove*, to consider with more care and tenderness than in the case of any individuals however dear to us,²² remembering what is so well said by a learned and humane author, 'Whatever equity is incumbent as a [p. 48] duty, or whatever humanity commended as becoming in the case of *individuals*, is much more towards a *people*, or parts of a people, by how much the *injury* or the *benefit* towards *many* is more conspicuous and of *greater* importance.'²³

But now the war is begun, a little from the topics of human prudence as to its continuance. I dare not retouch what has been so justly drawn already, but I would offer a little on some new facts.

I have just now heard from a friend, on whose veracity I can thoroughly rely, some particulars relative to the state of the army in America. That most of the officers and the greater part of the soldiers were exceedingly enfeebled; vast numbers having been taken off by sickness, much more than those who had fallen by the sword. That the loss upon the whole since General Howe arrived with the troops at Boston (and the General, I understand, came there on the 15th of June 1775) was no less than *ten thousand* men. That they had been constantly obliged to keep the strictest vigilance, and make provision against surprises and ambuscades, every mile of ground they marched, having enough experienced from several by which different parts of the army had suffered, the adroitness and activity of the provincials. That when his Majesty's soldiers could meet with an [p. 49] opportunity of coming to an action with reasonable advantage, they had behaved very well and bravely. From these facts together concerning his Majesty's army I think we may collect fairly, on the whole, without discredit to the General or to the men, that they knew not how to conduct themselves in so peculiarly embarrassing a situation. If they did not fight with the Americans, they had still to fight with fatigues, with difficulties, and disease. If they fought and met with any disadvantage, they weakened themselves yet more. If they conquered, it was not generally to be expected without loss. To make slaughter of the provincials they were not inclined, if they did gain an advantage. They remembered against whom they were fighting, and could not but feel as Englishmen in a conflict of such a kind.

I am glad to hear it, as mitigating the disgrace of the carnage on Long Island, which Mr. Wesley may be rather glad upon the whole cannot be imputed to the fact,²⁴ without reversing the order of time. And concerning which I am happy to find additional arguments, besides the national character of our troops and the personal of their commander, that it is not to be imputed to the general disposition of the English, nor one would hope even of the foreign troops. But still it confirms strongly the remark already made, that inhumanity ever stalks in the rear or van of war, or will have its time and place when war is gone forth. Let the men in general who conduct the war be ever so sensible of the calls of nature, or the

²²Note in original: 'Where a government conducts itself on contrary principles, the excellent author on *Crimes and Punishments* observes, thus "*Gli attentati dunque contre la sicurezza e libertà dei cittadini sono uno de' maggiori delitti, e toto questa classe cadono non solo gli assassini, e i furti degli uomini plebei, ma quelli ancora dei grandi e dei magistrati l' influenza dei quali agisce ad una maggior distanza et con maggior vigore distruggendo nei sudditi le idee, de giustizia e di dovere, etsostituendo del dirtto del più forte, del pari pericolo finalmente in chi lo esercita e in chi lo soffre. Dei delitti e delle pene. sec. 8.*"

²³Note in original: 'Grot[ius]. de Jure Belli, etc. l. 3. c. 15'.

²⁴See JW, *Calm Address*, I.16.

peculiar impulses of sympathy between kindred nations which have been sharers of the [p. 50] same constitution, companions in arms, partners in danger, in honour, in distress, and in prosperity. How much more if foreigners are made parties to the quarrel? I am loath to speak of Russians; what shall I say of the savages of India?

I suppose the loss on the American part to be considerable. Though probably not near so great in proportion to their numbers, considering that they are in their own country, under an air habitual to their constitutions, a great part of them at least (for the southern provinces have yet had but little of the burden, I mean so far as appears by the last public accounts), their native provisions about them; a circulation of them to and fro, by permission to depart and return, which while it enables them to look to their families and their affairs, and in a good measure at least may be presumed to take off the effect of the war on husbandry and manufacture, keeps them in spirits and in health. But after all, I suppose the American loss to be considerable. What is the BALANCE of the ACCOUNT *on our side*? Loss of men, by sickness, and fatigue, and the sword. The strength of the strong and the spirits of the brave debilitated by disease. Perplexity—the hand fighting against the feelings of the heart. Perpetual watchings and continual decay. And if we ask *for what?* great numbers in this kingdom, and many of them men of sense, men of character, men of public trust and reputation, will answer for nothing or worse than nothing. For these evils, and unspeakably more and greater, some morally certain, others in too probable expectation. For [p. 51] dishonour, whether in victory or defeat. For incredible loss either way, perhaps for ruin. If I ask the other part of the nation, they will tell me—for the honour of our arms (which I thought no nation in the world suspected); to maintain the honour of consistency in certain acts, of which almost all men are now agreed it is a pity the first was ever past; for maintaining the honour of administration. And some will tell me, for fear of being ruined by an event which, if it does ruin us, will be the strangest that ever ruined a nation; and ours the first that was ever so ruined—*Peace among ourselves*.

If on the American side: the sword and desolation of their country, loss of peace, suspension of settled government, suspension of commerce, the indignation of their king and of their English brethren called down upon them. Things apparently *not desirable*, and in my apprehension as apparently *not sought by them*. But *for what?* they say. And there are others less interested, or whose interests or prejudices, which are generally more persuasive, might be supposed on the other side. For our *liberty*, for our national existence; for all that makes life a life or society not to be a curse.

For nothing that would have lessened your commerce, your wealth, your glory; for nothing that would have made a man of you less free, or less happy; for nothing that would have sullied one jewel of the crown; for nothing that would have lessened the dignity of the mother state; for nothing that would have impaired our old and constitutional dependence. We presume to say it as a kindred nation for *your* [p. 52] *happiness as well as ours*. For nothing new, nothing untried; our old state but very recently *innovated*; for nothing but what the law of our common constitution, of nature, of nations, and of eternal justice, of policy and mutual interests, of self-preservation, on our part, justifies and demands. If they err in this, what fact, what probability will allow us to doubt of their sincerity? Sincere or not sincere, in the wrong or in the right, the experiment of allowing a just, or indulging a mistaken claim of such a kind so earnestly, so humbly, so affectionately sought, had been cheap to all appearances.

We are told much of the cruelty of our American brethren, as if it was for our honour to have it published if it were true. Or as if it adds anything but harm to take up such a charge, on such grounds as Mr. Wesley has done, and to support it, which was the best he could in such a vague and declamatory manner. What are the facts? The ordinary consequences of a war; especially that worst of all visible plagues with which the divine justice visits the sins of nations—a civil war.

Is nothing so much our interest as to inflame our prejudices so as to shut out the hope of peace, but by ruin to one or both?

I will not ask which party it was that burnt to ashes the first town that was consumed in America. Nor under what circumstances, nor in what manner, nor for what purpose, even in the beginning of the contest between brethren. I will not ask which side it was that bombarded and set on fire the town of Norfolk. The enquiry would be frivolous. Wherever the unjust [p. 53] occasion of the war has been given, to the same account must be placed the miserable consequences of this and every other war. Each side

still remaining chargeable for all that is done in the prosecution of it beyond the line of natural justice and humanity. Injustice, cruelty, or treachery too often happen in the management of a war. And more or less I fear always, when a war is conducted by the best generals, between nations under the conduct of the most civilized humanity, even in the best side, in the best cause, and with the best general intentions. In a great and an armed multitude did any man ever dream that there were no wicked men, or that the wisdom of the wisest, the humanity of the bravest, the virtue of the best could in every instance restrain the *evil fire* agitated by the contest, fed with new fuel from the war, and excited by opportunity? I fear, without reproach to our generals or our men, our country has but too much occasion for such an apology. But though injustice in a war, according to its degree and the consent in it, reflects on the justest cause, and makes a war, originally ill-founded, yet more exceedingly unjust, the fairest conduct can never give justice to an unjust quarrel. It is said, upon grounds of probable authority, that the congress used their efforts to keep the savages of India perfectly neutral. O that I had the same to say of my country! I fear we shall have now infinitely more than enough of their work on one side; perhaps on both. But abstracted from this, whoever were originally and wilfully in the wrong, or setting out in a mistake, persist against conviction, if there are such and whosoever they are, they [p. 54] are the authors of all the unutterable misery that has already, and the inconceivably more that may be produced. So much reason is there to be averse to war, in which the best side has so much to regret on its own behalf, and even on that of its enemies—miserable name when shall it ever cease amongst men, brethren, and Christians?—and the worst side has so heavy and dreadful an account to render. It is also to be considered, I repeat again, that a perseverance beyond the *necessary ends*, even of a just war, though it may still continue just in the sight of men partial to their own actions, will alter its quality in the sight of the God of Hosts, who at the same time appears to us under the Christian dispensation in the person of his Son, by the equally glorious and far most amiable of titles, The Prince of PEACE.

What liberty there is in America, I must be there to know. Where there are armies combatting on both sides, swords clashing, cannon playing, war thundering, death and desolation ravaging, in the bowels of a fruitful and for some years an undisturbed country; when we have destroyed their accustomed government, and things from a state of peace are brought into a state which always participates of confusion; it would be wild to expect all the fruits of a peaceful establishment, and a settled government. But it does not seem a conclusive proof that any set of men have overturned the liberties of their country to show us, by way of argument of it, something that, to my understanding, proves little more than this, that they have not found the secret of making war precisely the same thing with peace. [p. 55]

As to our *liberty*, we derived it not, if we mean the *right*, from our forefathers or from the revolution. We had it from God, from the nature of man, and the nature and ends of society. We respect human authority so far as it is founded in *public consent* and directed by that principle to public utility. We pay all due honour to those men, in whatever time, whose wisdom, under God, has contrived, whose fortitude has defended or reasserted, and whose justice has administered means subservient to the enjoyment of our religious and civil liberties. But God forbid that we should ascribe to any other than *him*, the *giver of all good*, our only *Lord* in a true and absolute sense, the *wise* and *sole Potentate*—that we should attribute to any other our praise and gratitude due eternally for the gift of this most glorious, unspeakable the *supreme* of blessings.

And this naturally leads me, having spoken of the *right*, to follow the track and speak a little concerning our *enjoyment* of present liberty. I will spare diving very deep into the matter. The king can take nothing but ‘according to law’. I will not at this moment enquire into the state of the representative and legislative body. I will not enquire whether it can ever happen that a course of law may perfectly consist with a course of oppression. But the business is, what our *security* may be for that liberty. It is not liberty, but a mild servitude, if it depends on other men, though the wisest and the best, whether we shall have it or have it not. And the death of a single man may at any time change such a precarious and apparent liberty into the bitterest, the most deplorable and total [p. 56] servitude. However be our security what it may, it appears to be a better than we offer to the Americans.

Then, as to the administration of justice, we pay merited thanks to the chief executive magistrate for the more full and complete establishment of the judges in their just and constitutional and necessary

independence, for the fixing of their salaries; and for the appointment of wise and worthy men, whom the public reveres as such, and of whom more than one name will readily occur. We owe much respect to an impartiality suitable to the circumstances and characters of which we have been speaking. We are still happy in the continuance of that ancient bulwark of our liberties, an *English Fury*. And may they never forget their ample and just rights, but keep constantly in mind the duty that they owe, and the power and most awful trust reposed in them, their duty to their oath, to themselves, to their posterity, to the public liberty and justice. They cannot fall but with the ruin of the constitution. They cannot desert any part of their rights and privileges, vested in them by the constitution on behalf of the public and of individuals, without precipitating that decay. But if we looked for such independence of judges, such powers of juries, in the colonies after the passing of some late acts of parliament, what did we find then? What think? What did we then feel?

If we enjoy a stable security for our civil and religious liberties, if we enjoy but the present use of them, however precarious, in whatever state we are, in whatever we shall be, we ought [p. 57] certainly to praise God in our lips, in our hearts, and in all our actions. And I do not know whether one of the most acceptable modes of praise is not to pray, and earnestly to endeavour the extension of *peace, liberty*, and all these blessings to all mankind.

It is natural too for an Englishman, though in a degree infinitely subordinate to what he owes to God. For how much nearer is a worm of the earth, how unspeakably beyond comparison nearer, to the greatest and best of men, than man or the highest and the purest of all created intelligences, to their all-perfect and uncomprehensible Creator. It is natural for an Englishman, with a just sense of this difference, to honour the *king* as the first executive magistrate, and the guardian and adopted father of a free people. But the king is then truly honoured when '*his throne is established in righteousness*'.²⁵ And if men see anything in the conduct of his ministry which they are apprehensive has a tendency to shake that *pillar of the throne* and of *all society*, it is the true honesty of a man, it is the *loyalty* of an Englishman, it is the obedience and benevolence of a Christian, to represent his apprehensions of this tendency, after he has duly considered them, with respect but with sincerity and an honest zeal. A ministry may not have intended or been aware. They have their means, when the matter is fairly represented, of rectifying errors. In default of that the king has his. I will not say in default of this—but common sense forces one to understand the dreadful consequences of a necessity, against which the constitution has not provided an ordinary and [p. 58] express remedy, because while the constitution subsists, at least while its necessary functions are not suspended or perverted, it cannot happen. Thus much I will say, errors which are the lot (and I wish they were the most disgraceful lot of humanity—but there is yet behind wilful negligence and malicious obstinacy, with which I now would charge none, and against which I pray for myself and all), but errors to which humanity is necessarily subject, however exalted, however cultivated, however guarded with wisdom and virtue, may be rectified when both sides do their best to discover where and what they are, and how they may be cured. In such a case with due perseverance, they must almost necessarily be so far avoided as to prevent very great mistakes, or permanent misconduct and fatal consequences.

But if under the notion of honouring the king everything is to be taken for granted that passes in administration, men must honour government at the expense of their understandings and consciences, at the expense of everything dear and valuable to them, and finally at the expense of government itself. And perhaps it will be found to have happened rarely that errors once adopted and *tacitly* approved have rectified themselves in any other way than by the effect of a proverb, upon which I do not wish we should rest by waiting till affairs are come to that point, in which it is said they will mend. For that is very true which the philosophic poet hath said, there is no marking the limits or estimating the velocity of evil and misery in their progress, '*the worst is not, while we can say "This is the worst."*'²⁶ I honour the king and [p. 59] sincerely pray for his peace, and the peace of all men. I wish well to every administration, so far as

²⁵Cf. Ps. 89:14.

²⁶Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ll. 2279–80.

it wishes well to justice and serves faithfully the public. I would not be forward to praise even the best ministers; they are men, they are fallible. They have erred and they will err again. Their payment is not the praise of individuals, but the approbation of their own conscience, the approbation of the public.

When their scene is closed by death, then let history praise such as have deserved it, by saying what they did. And God has in reserve for such men as shall truly have deserved it in the imperfect sense in which man can merit any thing at the hands of his Maker, he has in reserve for them, his praise and imperishable reward in the presence of men, and angels at the Great Day when every man shall receive *according to his works*. There is enough to abate our desire of all the things in the earth, other than the good of its inhabitants.²⁷ For my own part I have nothing to desire for myself from any favours of any administration. I have not ability or inclination to [p. 60] make compliments to the present. I should sit down with silent gratitude under the best: nowhere better contented in personal situation than where I am at present; but not a little rejoiced in any good to the community, and alike an enemy to its evil, from whatever men it might come, or on whomsoever it might fall. I am but one amongst millions in wishing for the common good peace and securit, which at present if they are procured at all, we must owe in all probability to the present ministry as instruments. Who I am persuaded are not likely to see anything that I have said in such a light as to pay me for it. It is ten to one whether they hear anything of this amidst so many more valuable words, and amidst things beyond estimation which seem to have passed and to be passing as shades before their eyes. If they do, they will perceive that I have been no advocate for their measures, no stickler for their schemes.

Nor should I be over-warm in my encomiums, though I should wonder at their good fortune and admire a providence so much better to us than ourselves, if they were now to bring back things, shall I say to no worse a point than they were at before a sword was drawn, a guinea spent of so many hundred thousands, or a drop of blood of so much and so valuable spilt already! Though all this is but a partial idea of the destruction already fallen on us and on our brethren, and yet dreadfully impending. But to bring us back as if this had never been is literally impossible. I shall be glad for their sakes, a little for my own, and most of all for the [p. 61] public, if we sit down, though with much bloodshed and dissension already, yet even now with some end of these; and though with great and irreparable loss, yet without absolute ruin. Not to let us be ruined, if it is still in their power to prevent it, would be an act more popular, for aught I know, than to have made us masters of all the glory and commerce of the world would have been, in an administration conducting itself on a different plan. Yet I do not mean to say that glory and commerce would not attend this exertion of our ministry for their own and our preservation. I believe they would, but the first point is a just and honourable security rather than the utmost danger without honour.

As to Mr. Wesley addressing himself to the members of the established Church, to the religious dissenters in general, to his own particular followers, and to others who he says are vulgarly called Methodists but have no connection with them,²⁸ I would say a little with regard to each of these.

²⁷Note in original: 'To endeavour the good of one's fellow men is certainly a part of our duty towards God, by which I mean moral no less than religious virtue. And concerning our duty in general, it is very fair to say, "All anxiety, except about this, every human being will soon know to be folly unspeakable" (vide *The Third Dissertation* of Dr. Price). A treasure not easily to be valued according to its worth. A source of unspeakable joy and consolation to all who have a true feeling of the social affections, a just regard to the importance of their end, and a taste for piety and virtue. I hope it will not be thought this note is foreign to politics. If my reader does not see the connection, I think it will be no presumption to say that his are not the head and the heart to which the affairs of a nation would be safely entrusted.'

²⁸JW, *Calm Address*, II.1–4.

The first he reminds of subjection 'to the higher powers' as men who are agreed 'there is no power but of God'.²⁹ There is no true power but of God, there is nothing *truly powerful* but what is *just*. All beside is of kin either to *violence* or *error*, and I need not say where either of these are *there* is *impotence*.³⁰ Every just governor will be cheerfully obeyed by good men, and an unjust governor in what he commands justly so long as in fact he governs. But our Saviour before Pilate, the apostles before the [p. 62] Grand National Council, Paul before Ananias have left us an example to honour magistracy, but in a subordinate degree to truth and justice. The corrupt power of Ananias unjustly abused Paul would not acknowledge as the power an high priest, at least so far as that act of injustice. This seems to be the true meaning of his answer when reproved, for by his vestments, his seat, his attendants, by the very answer which occasioned the reproof, he could not but know that in fact he was high priest.³¹

It is true that all the powers that are most certainly are ordained of God in a general sense, for he is the God of order and peace.³² And power is but another expression—I mean true power—for wisdom, goodness, and justice, liberty, and virtue, and happiness. But is it therefore a charge against the clergy that they do not speak what perhaps they do not think, because the powers that be, in Mr. Wesley's sense, are incensed against the Americans? Are the clergy therefore obliged to call them rebels? Is it seriously contended that the ministers of the gospel of peace, that protestant ministers, are bound to mount the pulpit with political censures and anathemas in their hands? Have they any such commission from their great Master? 'How shall I curse' (said one) 'whom God hath not cursed?'³³ And yet he was not a teacher of Christianity. 'They speak with tenderness'³⁴—this is the charge against some of them. They speak with tenderness of those who were so lately bone of our bone [p. 63] and flesh of our flesh; and who are still, at the least, *men*. They do not speak with *resentment* of them. Is not the flame up? Are not death and desolation abroad? Heaven knows, and we cannot think but with horror where may be their next step. Is there need for a breath to blow the coals? May the breath of heaven quench them! Or for a single voice to cry havoc, and waken one fury more to join the dreadful train of civil hatred and war? 'The base clamours of the vulgar'³⁵ is another expression. It does not become Mr. Wesley to despise a multitude, though neither rich nor learned. Let him beware of exciting mistakenly, negligently, or in any way, *false* clamours, for all such are base, from any quarter. But the expressions remind me of some that are similar if not the same, said to have been used by Lord Strafford with respect to a voice which soon sounded higher and of more importance in his ears.³⁶ His fate is left on record, an useful admonition that the friends of ministers should not advise them, as they tender their honour and safety, the peace of their country, and the good of their own consciences, to treat with contempt every voice upon political subjects that does not sound from the court, or re-echo court sounds. And if Michael the archangel would not speak falsely, even of Satan, nor bring a railing accusation against him, let us take heed how we accuse our already enough-accused and much-suffering brethren.

But though they were not bound to preach against the Americans, perhaps something else is suggested that might be incumbent. There was a proclamation—suppose it an act of parliament. But if a [p. 64] man was sick in his bed, lame with the gout upon him; O! why then the infirmity of his body

²⁹Rom. 13:1.

³⁰Note in original: 'Vide Dr. Price on Providence.'

³¹Note in original: 'Vide Sharp's *Laws of Passive Obedience*, p. 57.'

³²Note in original: 'Sommers's *Judgment of Whole Kingdoms*, p. 99. s. 112.'

³³Num. 23:8.

³⁴JW, *Calm Address*, II.2.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶William Howard, 1st Viscount Stafford, was one of the Roman Catholic nobility charged with attempting to assassinate Charles II.

would excuse him. Suppose the infirmity of his conscience, what shall we say to that? Unless, indeed, he finds a remedy for it in the *Calm Address*. There are who would call such a *scruple*, as it is termed, by a better name than infirmity. But will charity call it worse?

And this leads me to say a little about the fast, since Mr. Wesley has rested a great deal upon it.³⁷ If all that the fast had required of us had been to humble ourselves before Almighty God, for the sins of our nation, I believe numbers who thought themselves bound in conscience to absent from the fast that was appointed, and myself for one, would have heartily joined in such a fast, resting in the great and important purpose of *national humiliation*. If, added to this, the fast had called upon us to pray for peace and for the healing of our unhappy divisions, speedily and effectually, I hardly think any honest man would have objected to that, had it rested *there*. Unhappily no man could attend the fast in spirit and in truth, without making himself a party to measures which, whatever they may be to those who think them right, would certainly be highly sinful in him who should appear to adopt them, believing or doubting that they are wrong. And without affirming some things of his brethren (for such are all men without resorting to any particular relation) which could not fail to whet heart against heart, sword against sword, and people against people; things which it is possible he could not know; and perhaps in the case of many a man, things which he did not believe. Without charging any hypocrisy on the [p. 65] keepers of the fast, or vindicating those who turned it into a feast, I would wish to learn how those who in their conscience disapproved the war could have kept it in the form appointed, without hypocrisy.

Our success, we are told, is evidence that God is well-pleased with our fast. Then from late advices which tend the contrary way in the affair of Trenton and Brunswick, we should be led to draw the contrary conclusion. But all such inference from temporary success is very fallacious. We may judge something, with awful adoration of the inscrutable ways of providence, from the ultimate event. But our true and immediate way, and it concerns us all, is to look for the justice of the cause in the cause itself, and to judge of its expediency by an infallible rule no farther than we shall be clearly and fully satisfied of its justice.

And here give me leave to add a word to show what a very able man, who did not think slightly of the power of princes, thought of the necessity of a government making it appear evidently to their subjects that the war in which they engaged them was most strictly just.³⁸ He says the justificatory causes of a war ought to be publicly set forth, and that they ought also to be *clear* and *evident*, *clarae et evidentes*. Because, he says, if the subjects believe the war to be unjust, they ought by all means to abstain from it (*abstinere omnino debent*). They *ought*, he says, *to obey God rather than man*, and that not only according to the apostles, but even in the opinion of Socrates before his judges, almost in the [p. 66] same words. And if they are put upon a war, but doubtful in their opinion of it, he fears it is a snare upon their consciences. If our cause be just therefore we may believe God approves that and our fast, even though we should be unprosperous; if otherwise, conquest would not evidence his approbation on our part.

But, besides, supposing success a proof of the sincerity and acceptance of our fast, the dates happen unfortunately in the matter. Long Island was taken the 27th of August 1776, necessarily after the landing of the troops that took it, and with such a superiority of numbers that the retreat appears a good deal more wonderful than the victory. New York was taken about the middle of September, I believe on the 15th. The fast was kept the 13th of December, having been proclaimed about six weeks before. And yet from this very time, the time of keeping the fast—when we did, I mean those who kept it, what Mr. Wesley calls *openly* acknowledging God, and adds that he openly acknowledged us—from this very time, says Mr. Wesley, the tide turned! So much for the consequences of keeping a fast, which preceded even the appointment of that fast.

Let me farther observe as to the posts and entrenchments mentioned that the whole affair of King's Bridge and the White Plains extends no lower than the 2nd of November; Fort Washington, the 16th; and Fort Lee, the 17th of the same month; and Rhode Island, the 8th of December. All prior to the

³⁷JW, *Calm Address*, I.16.

³⁸Note in original: '[Hugo] Grotius.'

fast of which they are all made consequences. Mr. Wesley is at liberty to make what he pleases of the former part of the scampering of our army about the Jerseys. [p. 67]

Unhappily too for the observation, the outposts at Trenton were driven in by the provincials on the 25th of December. And on the 26th the three regiments of Hessians were taken prisoners by the provincials. Does this look like a proof that they *cannot* fight, or that 'the hand of God is upon them' in an adverse sense? It is true not many were killed on either side. And in that sense may the hand of God be on both for good to keep us from cutting one another's throats. And on the 3d of January 1777 Lord Cornwallis's two regiments, the 17th and 55th, were surprised in the Jerseys.

The Americans also fasted and prayed. The 16th of March 1775 was set apart as a day of fasting and prayer, and as well as I can understand was solemnly kept as such in all the provinces. I fear this act of national humiliation on their part has been too much ridiculed by us at home. I do not know, however, by what right we should call it hypocrisy. One thing I must observe. It was kept a full month before the battle of Lexington.³⁹ And perhaps there might be a propriety in suing to the God of *peace* in the beginning of things, before the commencement of civil bloodshed on their part (for in the action of Williamsburg 10th October 1775, they defended themselves against the savages), and when it might be hoped that so dreadful a calamity might yet be averted. I am sorry to add that at Boston on this very day, in the time of the solemn worship of our (then, at least) fellow-subjects and Christians, upon so awful an occasion, and [p. 68] which it might have been expected from its nature and momentous importance would have been very differently treated, a party of the 4th regiment, when the people were assembled, is said upon credible authority in public print to have pitched two marquee tents within ten yards of their place of worship, with three drums and three fifes beating and playing during the whole time of divine service.⁴⁰

Thus much as to the clergy of the Church of England, and with regard to our fasts on both sides. With regard to the *dissenters*, I have subscribed the articles; and perhaps shall never have occasion to subscribe them again. I frequent the communion, and join constantly in the religious worship of the established Church. I have seen in occasional attendance strong, and to me very convincing, evidence of piety, wisdom, and virtue in the places where public worship is offered by the dissenters. Is some tenderness amiss to other men, to *these* men's consciences? My acquaintance is very small and very limited with the dissenting ministers. It might be improper, I am persuaded it is unnecessary, to draw out of the narrow circle of my private connections the names of one or two—and my personal acquaintance with their ministers will reach no farther—whom I believe to be honest, virtuous, and truly pious men; good men, good subjects, good citizens—in a word, *Christians*. I take it there are *very many* in the body of dissenters from what I know of some, and have read or heard or may [p. 69] reasonably suppose of others, of like character. Be it as it may, they are fellow professors with us of Christianity, and their ministers fellow labourers with those of the established Church in the preaching of the gospel. As men and citizens they have the same duties and the same rights with the rest of us. We need not be admonished that while there is a sort of ambition in the world, there will be Sacheverells to be found.⁴¹ But one should think our present state was miserable enough to content any enemies we may have acquired abroad, any rivals that may be near us, without its being heightened by an intimation of what may be done to aggravate it at home. 'With me there is no *sacred person*' but the Supreme, though I am sensible it is not right to *revile* the meanest; and therefore, most certainly, still less the king.

The measure of *esteem* with regard to public persons is not so very frequently, I believe, much below par to their conduct in a public character. He who would prove it in any instance, should take a more even course than barely to insinuate. And when the accused are no less than the *whole body of dissenters* (at least if a part be meant, none are discriminated, unless your followers), it is unkind to a very

³⁹Note in original: '19th April 1775.'

⁴⁰Note in original: '*Gent. Mag.* 1775.'

⁴¹See JW, *Calm Address*, II.3.

large and, give me leave to say, respectable body, and uncourteous to the royal person of whom you suggest these things.

You threaten strange effects from the royal nod. Which, as we have a Christian and not a Turkish prince, not an Amurath but a George, seems misplaced. The nod of royalty here may indicate favour, but I should hardly expect you would have introduced it as a signal of [p. 70] vengeance. If his Majesty had the power of letting loose the winds and the sea from their caverns by his nod, would you hint that it might be proper for him one day or other to let them loose and to deluge and overflow the island to silence clamours? Yet the winds and sea, earthquakes and pestilence, famine and conflagration are but temporary and, as it were, innocent evil, compared with intolerance, spiritual pride, and persecution. Do not admonish peaceable and worthy men, who bless God and pray for the *king*, and for the peace and happiness of all his subjects, do not warn them of a truth they too well feel—that when they walk most pleasantly and smoothly they walk on glass; and underneath, the devouring pit, gaping for their little all—their liberties, and their consciences. Do not tempt the executive magistrate to desert the common duty of protection, which he owes to all his subjects; and not least to those who ask neither office nor dignities, and whom the strictness of the laws, very ill-placed perhaps, excludes from these and deprives the public of the service of able and honest men. Religious dignities I believe are little to their taste. Other posts of trust and honour are barred to them—I speak of discredit and not of disappointment—and are open to others who differ, not in ceremonies perhaps, but possibly in points of more material consideration. Yet far be it from me to say that even these latter ought to be excluded, so long as their principles or characters are not plainly inimical to civil society, or to the essential parts of our constitution. Do not raise the ghosts of Laud and Sheldon to alarm quiet men, and [p. 71] honest consciences. Gardiner and Bonner would kill the body. The slower and more ensnaring cruelty of *intolerance* has, perhaps oftener than what is commonly called persecution, contributed to kill the soul. Peace however to those prelates—that peace they denied to others. But never may their like arise again in this country, especially under the auspices of his present Majesty, to ‘rule’ our Christian brethren, our fellow Englishmen, ‘with a rod of iron or drive them out of the land’. Such a rod might be lifted, but it would perhaps break the arm of the lifter. Or it would break the nation in sunder. Such a furnace might be kindled, but might it not be expected that, like the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, it would consume the kindlers?

A little with regard to Mr. Wesley’s particular followers, with whom, myself being not one of them, [I] cannot expect an equal degree of credit. As it depends somewhat upon freedom of judgment, and popular liberty, that they are permitted to be his followers at all, justly permitted I allow, though I apprehend more properly by the general law of toleration, founded in the good policy, humanity, Christian charity, and natural justice than by any particular *acts of toleration*, it may be expected both of him and them that they be well-disposed to the same freedom in others. Good sense will prevail whenever it has its free course. So that I have little pain about doctrines that are preached when the Bible is open and opinions are not persecuted.

With regard to those who are called Methodists, but have no connection with Mr. Wesley or his followers, neither is the writer of these [p. 72] sheets one of these. But he has a little to say in the words of one of them, who is attached to the dissenting interest, and who also thinks well of the generality of Calvin’s opinions, though he will not call himself a Calvinist, lest he should make himself an implicit disciple of man in derogation to the liberty of his own conscience and the authority of Christ, the Author and sole Master of our Faith.

Part of what he says is this,

I could tell Mr. Wesley there is not a man living whom I hate, though there are whose principles I detest. I do not however allude to Mr. Wesley’s religious sentiments. Far from it, I could wish disputes in matters *often beyond human comprehension* did not run so high. Unity of sentiment amongst mankind appears to me absurd to expect. How unwarrantable are those who speak, if not with contempt at least with disrespect, of all who differ from them in religious opinions, and in those too that are the most

inexplicable. I would ask those men in the name of *candour*, what power on earth is to decide in those matters of conscience, or what power in the name of *commonsense* ought to determine. The right of private judgment belongs to all, and in spite of everything a man will and ought to think for himself. I have often thought Mr. Wesley has as little reason to pique himself on being as he supposes a churchman as any man living. Witness the licensed houses for religious worship, the number of itinerant preachers, etc. Not that I think his conduct is unjustifiable in all this. No, the laws of toleration allow it; and what is more, the law of reason. But I would have [p. 73] him remember that he is indebted to the same laws for his protection in the exercise of these just liberties, in which however he certainly deviates from the Church of England as that very respectable body of people called dissenters. And considering this, how intolerant is it, not to say unfavourable to himself and his followers, to express himself in a language implying a kind of triumph, that penal laws, with respect to religion, hang over their heads, the very existence of which is not a little inconsistent with Protestant principles, and the execution of which would be a return to the shocking practice of the Church of Rome, consequent upon popish maxims. That it is highly reasonable they should be repealed, I apprehend those at the head of public affairs as well as the generality of Protestants are very well convinced. Why they are not must be left to them to answer.⁴²

At least, my worthy correspondent observes, without urging at the present crisis, at the same time without waving this, one should suppose administration can never mean to have the public understand that penal laws in [p. 74] religious matters, are intended to be enforced against Protestant dissenters, while they are relaxing (and justly too) even against papists—especially for supposed political offences, which if there are neither statute nor common laws to punish them, common to them and to other men, ought not to be punished by going out of the limits of toleration. And leaves it to Mr. Wesley to consider, what sort of compliment he pays to government by insinuating that such a thing may be intended? As well as what degree of propriety there is in it, whilst he and everyone continues to enjoy in fact full liberty of conscience whatever the security may be? And it is well observed, the same parliament which established our civil and religious liberties as a people at large, and appointed that illustrious defender of them under whose reign the succession of the House of Hanover as most friendly to these sacred rights was established, the same parliament secured the toleration to dissenters.

As to the principles of those who are not Mr. Wesley's Methodists, but Methodists of another description, my worthy correspondent thinks he is enough acquainted with the sentiments and conversation of a great part of them to disbelieve the general accusation of them as 'hating the king and all his ministers', 'hating an Arminian', 'cordially hating Mr. Wesley and all his followers, as dreadful heretics'.⁴³ I am not acquainted with their religious or with their political opinions. But knowing them to be men, and supposing them to be Christians, I think on both, or either consideration, they are not to be held up as objects of detestation as men and citizens, upon mere and very vague assertion. [p. 75]

⁴²Note in original: 'See an excellent writer, and, I believe, a yet more excellent man. "It may seem ungenerous to urge experience at this time of day, when nobody is hurt (meaning bodily hurt, or such like as afterwards is explained) for conscience sake. But let not so unkind an imputation be cast on hearts filled with unspotted loyalty, and profoundly devoted to the spirit of the present government. The truth is, the laws do not conform with the spirit of the legislators (the rigour of the old laws, some of them still subsisting, with the present practice of toleration). All that the late petitioners plead for is to have the former harmonized with the latter."' [Robert Robinson,] *Arcana; or, the Principles of the late Petitioners to Parliament, for Relief in Matters of Subscription*, Letter the 7th, p. 92 printed at Cambridge in 1774, and sold there by Fletcher and Hodson, and by Mr. Dilly and other Booksellers in London.' [Lofft may be suggesting that Robinson is also the person who sent the letter from which he is quoting.]

⁴³JW, *Calm Address*, II.4.

The same correspondent believes, as does the writer of this, who has declared it already, that those are likely to be no bad friends to the family on the throne, who are friends to those principles upon which it was established. But on the contrary, as good friends at least as their accusers, who seem to maintain principles of passive obedience and divine right, which have in their consequences dispossessed many kings, but I believe never contributed much to the establishment of any on the throne of these kingdoms—and which it was hoped were banished with that branch of Stuarts who gained from these boasted prerogatives nothing but disgrace and ruin.

There is a curious passage about certain people who are supposed to *blaspheme* God or the king. The common meaning of the word to blaspheme, in its present use, in our language is well-known. It is not so general as it is in the Greek; nor perhaps as it was at the time of our translation of the Bible. It is now appropriated with us to denote insults against the Supreme Majesty of heaven. It is not so well, to say the mildest, to apply it to human majesty. It is true it is in our translation, but there was no necessity to quote a text in that place. If there was supposed to be any, it would have been as well to have corrected that word. It is not the word used in my copy of the Septuagint, or of the original Hebrew, in the passage from which I suppose it is taken; being the only one in which I find the words blaspheme God and the King in our translation. The passage is 1 Kings 21:10 the words in the Sept. [εὐλόγησε Θεὸν καὶ Βασιλέα] in the Hebrew [ברכת אלהים ומלך] literally [p. 76] Naboth bending the knee to God (or gods) and the king. But where the word [ברך] is used as to signify a crime or reproach, it generally means departing from or abandoning.⁴⁴ The crime laid to Naboth's charge probably was against not the true God, but the idolatries of Ahab and Jezebel, and against the king. For aught that appears, Naboth was a pious and a loyal man. Though he was not for passive obedience. If it had been charged as a crime against the true God, it would probably have been with the incommunicable name [יהוה] Jehovah expressed; as it is in the 24th of Leviticus, where the punishment of this blasphemy under the theocracy of the Jews is expressed.

I am sorry that the close of the *Address* should suggest what appears very unfit to compose matters. That if we continue our unsuccessful but earnest intercessions (which I suppose are the things called 'libels' in the *Calm Address*, and said to be designed for the purpose of 'unhinging the present government'⁴⁵), there are those on every side who are ready to swallow us up; who wait only for a convenient season, and then will certainly do it—according, I mean, to the insinuation of the *Calm Address*—except the king, more merciful than Charles the Ninth of France, refuses to give the word of *permission*, which the author of that *Address* seems to imagine is all [p. 77] these men want to do all the mischief that hands can execute, or heart desire. There are statutes, armies, ministers, informers, executioners in red coats, and in all coats, ready in abundance. I as little doubt it as Mr. Wesley or Mr. [John] Fletcher can. I do not wish to live, if ever our king can be so wrought upon as to be induced to use them against the persons and for the purposes but too plainly menaced by Mr. Wesley—and, let me say, *presumptuously* and in a manner I should hope as little pleasing to his Majesty as kind or just to the persons who are addressed.

I would not have it thought, however, that petulant men wrote all they could in confidence of impunity. Perhaps the men who wrote saw danger possible enough to themselves, but saw their duty and the necessity. And I trust for all such that, however men may mock or revile, the King of kings will maintain them in safety, or support them in their calamity (which if ever it comes I wish may not reach beyond the men). And give them joy and consolation in suffering—if it should be his will that they should suffer when their fear cometh. Let us fear God truly, and there is no doubt that we shall fear nothing else either more or less than becomes us.

⁴⁴Note in original: 'Vide note on the eighth sermon of the second volume of the translation now publishing by subscription of *Select Sermons* of Saurin, lately made by the learning and ingenuity of the Rev. Robert Robinson, and printed by Messrs. Fletcher and Hodson, Cambridge, where and at Mr. Dilly's, subscriptions are taken in.'

⁴⁵JW, *Calm Address*, II.4.

Having now done with the principal parts of the *Calm Address*, and taken up more time than I intended, I have only this excuse to offer. I saw in the charge against America facts without dates, conclusions without premises, assertions in abundance with no reason given to support them; many of the assertions, in my idea, far from self-evident, to say the best; many of the facts unintelligible without addition of dates and [p. 78] circumstances; and some of them by the not inserting of these, made in very material points to signify the direct contrary of what they were, as far as I could apprehend of them in themselves, and in the plain artless evidence of them; many of the conclusions built upon no apparent foundation, and of the highest importance. And where reasons, which is rarely, were given, some of them seemed to me to be such as if admitted would overthrow the natural rights of men, the foundations of government, and particularly of ours, and our civil and religious liberties, together with the establishment of that illustrious family to whom the protection of these blessings has been entrusted. I was not of authority enough, nor of inclination to be as concise in my manner of answering these things, otherwise I might have answered in this half page, by giving my mere assertion as evidence of their tendency. I have endeavoured to reason upon these points; how justly is submitted to the public. Honestly I am sure. If I have been prolix, I have been so with a contrary desire. For I thought nothing so chargeable with this fault as a discourse of two syllables, if it treated such a subject superficially, and had rather too much should be found in parts than that the whole should be too much, by being nothing to the purpose.

Source: Capel Lofft, *Observations on Mr. Wesley's Second Calm Address, and incidentally on other writings upon the American question* (London: E. & C. Dilly, 1777), 1–78.

From Thomas Wride

Taukin [?]
May 24, 1777

Reverend Sir,

My last of the 10th gave you an account of William Kaughin. After him, a daughter of William Leece of Daughby [Dalby] fell down almost lifeless. When she came to herself, she told her father and [others] that she had seen strange things such as she would never declare. Four more girls frequently had these impulses. But the accounts were so confused I could never get regular information. Sometimes for want of the principals; at other times for want of interpreters (for these five girls all spoke Manx), and they are very shy of giving an account in answer to questions.

The general account, the best I could get it, was they did see a broad road in which were crowds of travellers in various companies, [and] a narrow road in which were few persons. The narrow road led up to a gate, exceeding beautiful. In general they knew those who were in the narrow road. Among them were several of the preachers—I think all that had (in their days) been in the island. I had a place among them at first, but being too liberal of my cautions (to them), they could not find me for the future.

Those who were in the narrow road were dressed in all white, but some exceedingly so. And at every new vision (for they had many), they were farther advanced in the road, and some were not far from the gate. Such as were in the broad road were very black and in a miserable condition. A white man was with them, while in the visions, and he explained to them from time to time (as they needed) the things they saw. Some were in the broad way and were kept therein by 'wearing of ribbons', and all that wear ribbons were incapable of the narrow way except they did burn them. Indeed, many were so affrighted that they (when they heard of the danger) burned all the ribbons they had. But by and by they went still farther, for silk of any shape was as bad.

Hitherto I said but little. I used my ears but hoped for the best, endeavouring to show from time [to time] that religion consisted in *love*. But remembering London, and having been *near* the waters of [George] Bell, I really feared what afterward came to pass. Visions were not only thought to be great privileges, but for want of visions the grace of such as was before deemed gracious began to be questioned. Evil reasonings and evil judgments were so common that silence in me must have been criminal. Private cautions were utterly insufficient. I thought it my indispensable duty to speak plain—the more so as it appeared that one John E— did from time to time countenance them with all his might, pride and self-interest (bear with the thought, till the proof be given) prompting him thereto.

I had no reason to suppose but that some lost their senses for a season while in these fits or trances. But on the other hand, I not only feared some were counterfeited, but I had reasons to conclude it with regard to one ____ of [South] Barrule. She had for some time had these fits and did sing while in them, but did tell when in them what was passing, and after she came out of them would tell many things which I cannot but own seemed no more worth regarding than fairy tales. She said she saw a great number of preachers going in the narrow road, and Mr. Wesley was the foremost of the company. On being asked what sort of a man Mr. Wesley was, she said he was 'an old man'. But being pressed for particulars she said 'He was a great man'. As I could by no means think she was right, I took upon me to try her by slapping my hand near her. She started every time. I several times blowed in her face and it manifestly affected her every time. I tickled her on the face with a hair, and she could not help discovering her sensation and frequently laughing. And yet, after all, she obstinately stood to it that she did not feel nor hear at any part of the time. The same night she made another effort, but now she did not seem to notice things as much as before. Therefore I took a live coal from the hearth and brought it hastily toward her face. But she very nimbly drew back her head, and laughing said (in Manx) 'the preacher is going to burn me'. A month after she seemed resolved not to mind the fire, for as she lay on the ground and I brought the fire near, she lay as if she was insensible. But leaving the coal on the ground near her face, she drew back her head before she was hurt.

At Castletown ____ frequently falls down, either in class-meeting or society meeting. He seldom moves from the time he falls until he is about to rise again. One time at society meeting he lay until we

broke up. I tried him but blowing in his face and clapping my hands. It was plain that he both heard and felt. And upon enquiry he did not deny either. I asked him what made him fall. He said, 'Love. I was overcome with love.' This man appears to be of a tender conscience and of but few words, so I see no reason to suspect him of any fraud.

Source: Wride's manuscript copy in letterbook; MARC, MA 1977/610/140a.

From an Unidentified Correspondent¹

c. June 1777

On the Saturday before his death he [Joseph Guilford] got out of bed, and desired his wife to join with him in prayer; when he prayed in the most ardent manner she ever heard, particularly for the prosperity of Zion. His wife [Sarah], being fearful that through the extreme weakness of his body he would exhaust himself too much, desired him to desist for a time. He replied, 'Let me alone; for I never before had such sweet communion with Jesus. I see the heavens opened. I shall soon join that glorious company above.' When he got into bed, he spent the whole night in prayer and praise. He sung an anthem, wherein are these words: 'In thy presence is life: heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'² His soul was so swallowed up in God, that he got no sleep the whole night. From that time, there was such a remarkable change in him, that while in the world, he seemed to live out of it: continually having his conversation in heaven, feeling no pain either of body or mind.

The day before he died, he was seemingly cheerful and well in body, and continued so most of the night. A little before daybreak he sat up in bed and desired his wife to sing a hymn. Being weary she desired to repose herself. On which he said, 'What cannot you sing with me one night?' She then joined with him in singing the following hymn, 'Come let us ascend, my companion and friend,'³ And after repeating several solemn verses he composed himself to rest for near two hours. When he awoke, he desired his wife to get him a little breakfast. He was remarkably cheerful, had an uncommon good appetite, said he was quite well, and sitting up in bed he repeated several verses of a hymn.

He then got up and walked across the room, with uplifted eyes to heaven; and leaning on his wife's shoulder said, 'As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death'; and instantly, without either sigh or groan, resigned his happy spirit into the arms of his Beloved.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 23–24.

¹Titled: 'A Brief Account of Mr. J[oseph] Guilford, from Saturday the 10th of May, 1777, to the Friday following'. Guilford had been a soldier, was converted under the influence of Thomas Olivers, and became an itinerant in 1761; see Atmore, *Memorial*, 169–71.

²An anthem based on Ps. 30, found in A collection of Anthems, as the same are now performed in his Majesty's Chapels Royal (London: J. Bettenham, 1724), 131.

³*HSP* (1749), 2:313–14.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
June 24, 1777

Reverend Sir,

Many thanks to you for the repeated proofs of your watchful care over me.¹ Glory be to God, I feel my will wholly given up to him. I delight in what he chooses. And as to life and death, I am in a strait between two, and cannot choose either. The time when and manner how I entirely leave to him who ordereth all things well, but am led to think that in a little time I shall be,

Where saints in an extasy gaze,
And hang on a crucified God.²

Neither have I any fear of the pain of dissolution. The Lord gives me to believe that dying will be like falling asleep in the arms of God, and the transporting thought of waking in the realms of endless day, fills me with joy unspeakable.

As to my friends, I never loved them better. But at God's command I freely leave them all. 'Death itself cannot our kindred souls disjoin', neither shall our bodies be parted long.

I always feel the eternal God present. But of late my soul has thirsted for a fuller manifestation of the ever blessed Trinity. Glory be to God, I constantly feel his Spirit witnessing with mine that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. From the time I first received this blessed testimony, I have never lost it. Of late it hath been more strong, more permanent, more clear. Indeed I am always happy, and sometimes unspeakably so. I ever feel my spirit peaceful, calm, and serene. My hope is full of immortality. I feel a pledge of future bliss, and greatly rejoice in hope of shortly being in the full possession of that inheritance to which I seem swiftly hastening. O what mercy has been and still is extended to me! I am a sinner, freely and fully saved by grace. I have but one desire—viz., to glorify God in time and eternity. I long to plunge into all the depths of God. My soul thirsts for all I see before me.

May that God whose you are, and whom you serve, ever fill your spirit with his perfect love. I continued till last Friday much as I was when you left us. Since then I have been rather worse. But all my Lord does is right. I trust you will continue to pray for me. But do not ask aught but, 'Father, thy only will be done!' Reprove, advice, or instruct as you see needful. In so doing you will greatly oblige, reverend sir,

Your ever affectionate, though unworthy friend,

E. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 160–61.

¹Replying to JW's letter of June 16, 1777.

²CW, Hymn on Song of Solomon 1:7, st. 2, *Scripture Hymns* (1762), 1:294.

From Sarah (Ward) Nind

Ramsbury Park
June 29, 1777

Reverend Sir,

I designed to have written to you long ago, but heard you were gone to Ireland.

I have found God to be a ready help in the time of trouble which happened a few days after you left us.¹ The deliverance I then experienced was great indeed; for it was done unto me not only according to my faith, but even beyond my most sanguine expectation. This has made me more sensible than ever that it is good to trust in God. Yet I long to feel more of the efficacy of faith in daily occurrences.

Sometimes I feel too great a propensity to reason about future things. But at others I see the necessity of maintaining peace of mind through every scene, and of interesting myself no otherwise in any concern than faithfully to perform my duty to God and man, without dwelling upon the pleasing or painful circumstances that attend the performance of it or looking upon any other way of life as more eligible than that in which I am placed. Satan plays me hard with this temptation, and what greatly strengthens it is the manners and dispositions of those I am concerned with.

Mr. [James] Nind joins in love to you, with

Your affectionate, though unworthy friend and servant,

S. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 161–62.

¹JW had been in Ramsbury on Mar. 11, 1777; see *Journal (Works, 23:44)*.

From Elizabeth Mary Morgan¹

Oxford
June 30, 1777

Reverend Sir,

In hopes of your meeting with this, I write for your friendly assistance, which I shall always esteem very highly. I have met with many trials since I wrote last, but have had power given me to bear them all. Nor do I fear but God will support me to the end. For while I look to him, I always find him a present help in times of trouble.

My music-master talked to me a few days ago concerning the Methodists and said, 'They are a set of the deceitfullest people in the world, and only want to draw you into their opinion.' I told him I knew very little of them, but what I did know was such as I could profit by. He than asked, 'What can you see in going to their b[la]ck[ua]rd meeting-house?'² I answered I wanted to see nothing, but went to hear the gospel, that, with God's help, and by waiting on him in his appointed way, I might be enabled to lead a new life and know that my sins are forgiven. At last he told me I had all the symptoms of a strong Methodist. To which I replied, 'Would to God I was a good Methodist, then I should not care what the world thought of me.' To which he answered, 'I would rather they were at the d[e]v[i]l³ then bring you over to their foolish opinion!'⁴

Dear sir, I have all the reason in the world to bless and pray for those who have, under God, been the means of letting me see that without repentance, and a determination to lead a new life, I shall be destroyed, body and soul, to all eternity.

When I reflect that I may soon be called away (as I have almost engaged myself to go to Scotland for six months) I think, 'What will become of my poor soul, unless God is merciful, and gives me grace to stand against all temptations?' As no person can possibly be more exposed than I am continually. However he is sufficient; and as my day is, so will my strength be.

I hope, dear sir, to hear from you soon. In the meantime I rest

Your much obliged, and humble servant,

E. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 162–63.

¹Elizabeth Mary Morgan (1755–1835) had settled shortly before this in Bristol, lodging with Ann Chapman, where she became friends with Sarah Wesley Jr. and her family, as well as a correspondent of JW. This is her first known letter to JW with surviving content.

²*OED*: 'Blackguard: a person or persons considered worthless, despicable, villainous.'

³*OED*: defines the phrase 'to wish a person at the devil' as meaning to wish them damned or ruined.

⁴Note added by JW in *AM*: 'Well said fiddler! So you would rather that *sixty* or *eighty thousand* serious people were all at the d-v-l, than that a single pupil of yours should go among them! What a delectable Christian are you! And what a worthy member of the most renowned University in the world! And will *you* talk of the Church of England? Would it not be well if *you* went to the Methodists, or some where else, to learn better manners and better language; seeing all the instructions both of the University and the Church, have hitherto proved so ineffectual!'

From Lady [Darcy (Brisbane) Maxwell]

Edinburgh
June 31, 1777

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for your obliging letter,¹ and for the desire you expressed of coming further north, had it been convenient for you. Your steps I trust are all ordered by him that cannot err. I doubt not but he leads you where you can bring most glory to his name, and enjoy most of his presence; and here I believe your views all terminate, independent of persons, places, or things. Glorious liberty! May you daily increase in it! And may I also prove all its heights and depths!

If an unperceived degree of self-love does not make the scale preponderate in my own favour, I have not lost ground, but still hold fast that measure of sanctification I received some time ago. Of late I feel a sensible increase. Since I wrote last, God has been more than ever as a place of broad waters unto me. My fellowship is now continually with the Father and the Son, through the eternal Spirit! Without interruption I see Jesus as the king in his beauty, and feel him nigh. Through mercy I enjoy such a sweet intercourse with him as I cannot easily express. Wherever I am, or however employed, I am enabled to realize the presence of God. And though often engaged with a variety of persons, places, and things, my soul silently converses with him! Through this intercourse with heaven my mind is kept in peace, in spite of the various stratagems of the enemy. Yet I do not experience a rapturous joy. It is rather a calm silent enjoyment of God, which spreads a heavenly serenity through my soul. This makes me continually wish to glorify God in every possible way.

At the same time I am kept deeply sensible that I am nothing, and have nothing but what is freely bestowed. I am also sweetly drawn to forget the things that are behind, and to press on to the possession of every blessing which Christ has purchased for me.

Forgive this tedious account. It is not my usual manner to say so much about myself. But as you asked me the state of my soul, I thought it a call to declare what God had done for me. By thus obliging you, I do myself a favour. Could I add anything to your spiritual comfort, I should feel a superior pleasure. If you desire to oblige me, continue to write and speak freely, and thereby you will add to the many obligations already conferred on, reverend sir,

Your affectionate friend in Jesus,

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 215–16.

¹See JW to Lady Maxwell, May 3, 1777.

From Joseph Whittingham Salmon¹

Nantwich
July 2, 1777

Reverend and Dear Sir,

From some divine impressions which have for a long time rested on my mind, I am inclined to think that the Lord is pleased to call me to preach the everlasting gospel of his dear Son. It is about two years since I was first awakened out of my spiritual sleep, since which time I have (through grace) been much built up in faith, love, and holiness by a close attendance on the preachers in connection with you. I now spend much of my time in visiting the sick and poor, and in some small degree I can say it pleases the Lord to bless my poor endeavours, and encouraged thereby I could wish to improve my talent by extending my labours, as he shall enable me.

I lately received a letter from a clergyman in the west of England who had seen a small publication of mine,² desiring to know if I intended to enter into orders; and if so, offering me a church to preach in, etc. But as nothing, I trust, but obedience to God and love to poor dying souls induces me to undertake ministerial labours, I could wish to go forth in that way that might (through grace) most advance our dear Redeemer's kingdom. I therefore write, dear sir, to advise with you what steps I shall take that may be most likely to promote the glory of God on earth.

I have the pleasure to inform you that there is now more enquiry amongst us after eternal things than has been probably ever remembered before. I hope this good news will bring you to Nantwich when you visit Cheshire again. My wife (who is lately become a child of God) joins me in love to you, and in assuring you we shall be glad to see you at our house whenever you come into these parts. In granting this, you will greatly oblige, reverend and dear sir,

Yours in the best of bonds,

J. W. S.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 217–18.

¹Joseph Whittingham Salmon (1747–1826). JW visited him on Apr. 6, 1779 in Nantwich (see *Journal, Works*, 23:123), where he mentions that Joseph was the nephew of Matthew Salmon, one of the early Oxford Methodists. Joseph did not ultimately seek clergy orders.

²This was likely a pamphlet. The first publication of Joseph Whittingham Salmon that appears in Worldcat is the sermon he preached on the death of his first wife, Elizabeth (Cutton) Salmon (married in 1762), titled: *The Robes of the Saints washed in the Blood of the Lamb* (Leeds: J. Bowling, 1785).

From Richard Condry

Doncaster
July 3, 1777

Reverend Sir,

On two or three prayer-meetings being established in the town where I was some time ago, the inhabitants were exceedingly alarmed; and Methodism, which was almost dwindled to nothing, was talked of everywhere—insomuch that several of our friends avowed their disapprobation of our proceedings. But being in nothing terrified by friends or enemies, God owned and prospered our weak endeavours. Very many came to our little meetings, but more to hear the word than the room could contain. From that time I frequently assured the Methodists I should soon go out of the land.¹ They were unwilling to believe me, and expostulated with me on the unreasonableness of such a procedure.

Some time after Mr. C., who had been at a country village, about ten days before my departure promised to visit them again the following Sunday. But they agreed to put me up in his stead, and when the people were assembled two of the oldest Methodists forced me to stand up. Having gone through the service, nothing could exceed the satisfaction of the people. At night, after preaching, I desired the society to return; they did so. On hearing the occasion, they sorrowed for me, as if they were going to lose their first-born. Their mourning was so loud that I could not hear myself speak. This held about an hour and half.

When the morning came that I was to depart the people flocked together, as if by tears and caresses they thought to stop me. Whilst at prayer they wept aloud. And when I was called to go on board, two young men of my acquaintance present were kind enough to help to disengage me from their embraces. Perhaps sir you will believe me if I say that in all this time I was free from all inward emotion, and did not accompany their ten thousand tears with a single one.

After we had weighed anchor, we ran foul of a man-of-war. The captain and all the men were ready to conclude me the Jonah who had occasioned this misfortune. After a good deal of labour, they got loose again, and in a quarter of an hour ran foul of the dock-yard. Now their notions were confirmed that I was the occasion of their danger. But I promised them a fair wind, if they once got clear of the harbor. In the afternoon we reached the Sound,² when the wind sprung fair. I, never having been at sea before, was very sick and could only get up to call the ship's company to prayer. I continued sick till Friday night, and then went upon deck. Finding them afraid of getting into the Downs³ before daylight, and that the top-gallant wanted to be taken in, and finding my whole body as if new-nerved, I was on the top of the mast nearly as soon as the seamen, to their very great astonishment! While I was there I remember to have sung several hallelujahs, and ardently longed for an entrance into the celestial rest to which I was going. When we came to the Downs the wind shifted about as we would have it. After this the ship's company came and asked me to pray with them twice a day.

When we came to Yarmouth Roads,⁴ the wind again shifted according to our wishes, and on Sunday evening brought us into Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire. On our landing, it is remarkable that one of the seamen who used to beat his wife for hearing the Methodists, charged her to get up and hear me every morning at 5:00. At Whitby there was a room full of the people, and we prayed till I thought it impossible to pray any more, as the Lord was so present in the midst of us! I rose and left them on their knees. On my return in about half an hour, I found them in the same posture. We began again, and in a few minutes a woman who had been seeking full salvation cried out, 'He is come', and fell down

¹Condry appears to be giving JW an account of when he left his home in Stoke Damerel, Plymouth, to take up his appointment in Epworth in the summer of 1776. Alternatively, he had made a trip back to Plymouth to visit his mother.

²I.e., Plymouth Sound.

³A sheltered sea-area near the English Channel off the east coast of Kent.

⁴An anchorage off Great Yarmouth.

senseless! For several days she ate very little. And being so overwhelmed with the love of God, her strength failed, and for awhile [she] became unable to do her business.

I know not how the Methodists in their warmth represented the affair of Mr. Woodcock.⁵ But all of them since, considering my youth and how they treated me, wonder that I have gone through. And though I have left one of the best of mothers,⁶ and some of the most loving friends, I have never once wished myself home since. I know I love God with my whole soul, and am willing to serve him any where, and in everything. But yet I pant for immortality. I see a world of spirits bright, and long to mingle with them! I see rivers of divine life, and pant to bathe in them! Come Lord Jesus! Come quickly! This, sir, is the language of

Your friend and servant in the gospel,

R. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 273–75.

⁵Samuel Woodcock was admitted on trial as an itinerant in 1765 (see *Works*, 10:303). He was stationed in Lincolnshire 1773–75. During the second year he was accused of an ‘immodest’ act; see JW to Elizabeth Woodhouse, Mar. 3, 1776. This led Woodcock to desist from travelling by the next Conference (see 10:452).

⁶Sarah Condry, of Stoke Damerel, Plymouth.

From Ann Chapman¹

Bristol
July 10, 1777

Reverend Sir,

I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken in intruding upon your precious time, as I am at present burdened for our friend Miss [Elizabeth Mary] M[organ].² You know sir she has long borne a weak and sickly body, though she has had a healthy countenance. She has been subject to feverish disorders for some time. Lately she has had violent vomitings, etc. of blood, and her companion has also been in a very dangerous way.

While you were here both of them were ill, and it was no small cross to them that they could not hear you. Miss Morgan I think heard you but once, and that was with much difficulty. It was the Thursday night that you preached from 'Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour',³ which she took as designed for her, on which she was greatly distressed. Her mind affecting her body, she grew worse again. And afterwards the additional disappointment of not seeing you have so sunk her spirits that I fear grief will prevent her usefulness if not soon removed.

Now dear sir, I need not tell you what a loss it will be to many if dejection should incapacitate her for the work she has long been happily engaged in. You know her much better than I do (though I have been lately favoured with her intimacy) and therefore I doubt not but you will write a line of seasonable comfort to her. How liable we are to mistakes, and how ready our great adversary is to take the advantage, is much to be lamented. But glory be to our Redeemer who pities our weakness, and even causes it to work for our good.

I hope, dear sir, you will not think me officious. I am concerned when there is the least shyness between old friends. And if I might be an instrument of removing the mistake (that does not, I am persuaded proceed from want of love on either side) I shall be happy.

I should esteem a line from you a great favour, but will not desire it if you are too much engaged. I have the comfort to thank you for sparing us your new curate.⁴ He is indeed everything we can wish for in so young a man, and I hope will be to us an infinite blessing. Be pleased to accept of my best wishes, and believe that I remain, very dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and follower,

A. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 275–76.

¹Ann Chapman (likely the one of this name baptized at St. Augustine the Less in Bristol in 1737) was drawn into the circle of Methodists in Bristol in the early 1760s. After CW's family moved to London, Chapman was their most frequent correspondent keeping them abreast of events in Bristol; and she hosted CW and family members in her house when they visited Bristol.

²See Elizabeth Mary Morgan to JW, June 30, 1777.

³1 Cor. 3:8.

⁴Thomas Coke, who had recently formed alliance with JW (see *Journal*, Aug. 13, 1776, *Works*, 23:27) and was present in Bristol when JW visited there in August 1777 (*Works*, 23:66).

From William Perronet¹

Bristol
July 10, 1777

Reverend Sir,

As I know that the health of your friends is by no means a matter of indifference to you, I beg leave to point out a circumstance in which it seems to be very materially concerned. I mean the use of chimney-boards.² This piece of good housewifery (but very bad economy) prevails nowhere more than at Bristol, and our friends here have a singular address in the application of them.

In most places where they are used the chimney-board stands in front; and if we cannot breath, we need be at no loss for the reason of it. But here it is dexterously placed out of sight, so that we are continually in danger of being suffocated without once suspecting the cause.

When first I came to Bristol, though weary with my journey, I could get no rest. My sleep went from me, and seemed to have taken its final leave, without my being able to assign any reason for it. Till accidentally happening to stoop down for something on the hearth, I espied out this ingenious contrivance for excluding the air, and for preserving the sender and fire-shovel at the expense of one's health. I leave it to your discretion, sir, what use to make of this hint, and remain,

Your very affectionate friend and servant,

W. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 216–17.

¹William Perronet had trained as a physician in Bristol, and had recently settled there again.

²A board used to close up (and hide) a fireplace during the summer.

From Miss E. A.

[London]
July 12, 1777

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for your kind answer to my last.¹ At present I can say that God is indeed the desire of my eyes and the joy of my heart. If you knew all his goodness to me your heart would burn with love and gratitude to him who is my life, my love, my all! O what inexpressible mercy! He condescends to abide in my heart, and to reign without a rival, the Lord of every motion there.

I often lean, as it were, on his dear breast; which is all my happiness, and all I want.

My present situation would not be joyous, but grievous, were it not for the smiles of Jesus. But while I am a partaker of these I can say, 'Though my outward afflictions abound, my inward consolation aboundeth much more abundantly.' But still I want to glorify him more and more, and to be lost in his immensity. I have, but still I ask a larger measure.

I often look at my infirmities, instead of simply believing and praising God. And by reasoning with the adversary I have been frequently ready to let go my confidence. But I am determined for the future so to live by faith in the Son of God as to quench all the fiery darts of the devil. For he is continually injecting temptation, and bringing ten thousand accusations to weaken my faith. And was it not that my dear Lord showed me undoubted proofs of his love, my feeble heart would join with the tempter. For I know that I am nothing, and that I can do nothing without his help. But as I have him in my heart, strengthening me continually, I believe—in opposition to earth and hell—that I shall be enabled to do all things.

I remain, dear sir,

Your unworthy friend and servant in Christ,

E. A.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 325–26.

¹Neither the prior letter by E. A., nor JW's reply, are known to survive.

From Isaac Billings and Others

Monmouth
[July–August 1777]

Reverend Sir,

It is with no small concern I reflect upon the unhappy divisions subsisting among the few professors of religion in Monmouth.¹ [I] was in some hopes of seeing the breaches healed upon the application of your lenient hand in your visiting of us.² But your very unhappily adopting measures diametrically opposite has rather widened them, and your manner of professing your abhorrence of what you called the students' doctrine,³ or at least doctrines which you dressed up in the most odious and detestable garb then exhibited as the black gowns to which they had no right.

For my part, I do not pretend to know who has a right to them or who not. [I] should have thought it much more prudent in you to have let their gowns and doctrines alone, unless you had more justly and friendly treated them. I have had the satisfaction of hearing several of these young men preach and conversing with them, but never heard anything of those damnable doctrines you accuse them with broaching. But on the contrary, so far as I am capable of judging, such and only such [doctrines] as are truly consistent with Scripture and the Articles of our established Church—those enforced with some becoming life and power.

You therefore, reverend sir, yourself I hope will think me justifiable in receiving, encouraging, and hearing them as often as I can. Especially when I inform [you] it has been a means under God of promoting the love and practice of holiness in my heart and life (though I must acknowledge with shame I am far from what I would be, should be). And as I can't conveniently do this without admitting them into my [preaching] room at Monmouth, which I [currently] forbid them of, I hope you will excuse my doing that. And permit me to vindicate my right and claim so to do, which is that I took the room, never let it to any one or more persons in such manners that I could call upon one or more for any rent, nor in short did not let it. A few professors did agree to pay me the rent I gave for it, or rather promised to endeavour to make it up for me; which they did two years by collections from any that would contribute. But I never had any certainty of rent, nor could I demand it of any. Nor ever did [I] let it or design it for any particular sect or opinion, so as to exclude others. Which was fully manifest by our licence, procured by a Dissenting minister, who first preached in it.

Several times since I have both wrote to Lady Huntington and a friend of mine has personally waited upon her to entreat her Ladyship to favour us with some of her students, with a petition for that purpose. But her Ladyship refused complying, on account of a letter she had received from you wherein you inform her you had taken the room in Hinch Lane.⁴ Which I am much surprised you should affirm, when this your preachers never did. And which I have and shall endeavour to convince my Lady fully of, so as entirely to remove all her objections from your assertion and claims, and to obtain the favour of her students visiting us, as the room is certainly mine and at present at my disposal. And God forbid I should not open the doors to all such as preach the everlasting gospel of peace, and such I cannot but number her Ladyship's students.

Most sincerely wishing you and myself more and more of the divine influence in charity and holiness, I, with all due respect reverend sir (and reverend sir please to take notice whose hands are

¹The Wesleyan Methodists and the Calvinist Methodists (associated with Lady Huntingdon) had been sharing a preaching room owned by Isaac Billings. The conflict reflected in this letter led soon to the Wesleyans being evicted from the house Cf. Isaac Billings to Lady Huntington, Sept. 13, 1777 (Cheshunt Foundation, F1/1787); and *ibid*, Nov 10, 1777 (F1/1799).

²JW preached in Monmouth on July 9, 1777 (see *Journal, Works*, 23:59).

³That is, the doctrine taught by the students from Lady Huntingdon's college in Trevecca. JW was also apparently concerned that the students were wearing clerical garb without official ordination.

⁴This letter is not known to survive.

signed, have jointly agreed and have now taken the said room) am
Your most humble servant,

Isaac Billings

Thomas David
John Nalland
James Seward
Isaac Billings
Sarah Birt
The Mark of Win^t Billing X
Edward Bear
Ann Bear
John Jones

Source: holograph; Cambridge, The Cheshunt Foundation, Westminster College, Archives, F1/1347.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
August 1, 1777

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Accept my sincere thanks for your last kind favour.¹ It came in answer to prayer and—as I had been asking—greatly blessed. To me the friendship you honour me with, like the divine source from which it proceeds, sinks my soul into humble love and praise. Sensibly do I feel nothing, yea less than nothing, is my just dessert. All, all is freely given. Eternally shall I be indebted to my gracious Lord for all his gifts. He gives himself, and with and in him I enjoy all things. So large his grace; so free his love; and so plentifully bestowed on the unworthiest of all his creatures. How is my soul filled with thankfulness and praise to my indulgent God for all his mercies? I only make the enquiry.

How Lord shall I thy love proclaim
How pay the mighty debt I owe? (I never can, yet O my God)
Let all I have, let all I am
Ceaseless to all thy glory show.²

And should my dear Lord continue me a little longer an inhabitant of time, his will be done.

Of late, the violence of some of my most dangerous symptoms have abated. I am much better than when you was with us.³ Mr. Hey⁴ says I have now some good symptoms, but he dare not yet (as they term it) pronounce me out of danger. 'It's the Lord's doings and is marvellous in our eyes!'⁵ I expected to have reached my eternal home before this, but my Lord sees good to defer my dismissal yet a little longer. Should it be weeks, months, or even years, I am perfectly resigned. And now, when put to the trial, feel no unwillingness to enter into life again. But my soul is fully determined to live a *tenant at will*.

All my desires seem lost in one—to glorify the God I love is my only aim. And if life will glorify him most, then welcome life; if death, the grisly monster cannot come too soon. But glory be to my dear Lord, my soul is still on the wing for its immortal home. I am dead to all below. God himself, the triune God, is my portion. He fills me with his love and while I taste the heavenly joys, he capacitates me to receive what I see before me—a whole eternity of love. How ardently does my soul pant for all the fullness of God. Blessed thirst, and still more blessed drought. Glory be to God. While I write my soul is filled with joy to think how near the day when we shall be,

Implung'd in the glorious abyss,
And lost in the ocean of love.⁶

Sometimes the enemy tells me, before I gain the blissful shore seas of trouble must be waded through. But I cannot doubt at present I am more likely for death than life. But should I live, my Lord assures me, 'His grace is sufficient for me',⁷ and 'They that trust in him shall be as Mount Zion'.⁸

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Cf. JW's translation of Paul Gerhardt's hymn on Zechariah 12:10, st. 6, *HSP* (1740), 35.

³JW was last in Otley on June 9, 1777.

⁴William Hey (1736–1819) was a surgeon at Leeds General Infirmary and an active Methodist.

⁵Ps. 118:23.

⁶CW, 'Hymn 7', st. 6, *Funeral Hymns* (1746), 11.

⁷Cf. 2 Cor. 12:9.

⁸Cf. Ps. 125:1.

Since I last wrote, I have been variously tried but graciously kept. All things work together for my good. And though my Lord leads me the way himself has trod, he gives me power unhurt on all my foes to tread. Nor is the wicked one permitted to distress me sleeping, any more than waking. The Shepherd of Israel guards in my unguarded hours, and even in sleep bids my soul go on. I shall sleep in the arms of my beloved and there I rest. And when I awake, find myself still enfolded in his embraces. Help me to praise our common Lord, for he is our own God, our father and our friend. We cannot praise him as we would while tabernacled here. But ere long our souls shall meet in the air and fly to the mountain of God.

There we in Jesus' praise shall join
His boundless love proclaim.
And solemnize in songs divine
The marriage of the lamb.⁹

I am truly thankful to hear Mr. [John] Fletcher is better, and pray that the Lord may sanctify his intended journey. I trust he will long be spared to tread in the steps of my ever dear and much loved father. As to my own health, the pain in my breast and side is often very violent but not so constant as used to be. My cough is better, but my spitting of blood is again returned, and the discharge larger than it used to be. My fever and night sweats are abated, and my strength considerably more than when I saw you. I can now bear to ride five or six miles on horseback at a time without much weariness. And as change of air is thought proper for me, [I] intend going to Park Gate next week;¹⁰ and if I continue as I am after having been there a little, to Cross Hall.¹¹

I shall be with you in spirit and not fail to pray for a blessed effusion of the Holy Spirit on the souls that meet in the approaching conference.¹² May the Lord rest on you, and may you be strengthened both in soul and body for all the abundant labours you are called to, and at the last receive a full reward, is the prayer of, my dear and much loved father,

Your unworthy, though ever affectionate, daughter,

E. Ritchie

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr Wesley / Bristol'.

Annotation: by Ritchie, '19th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁹CW, 'Hymn 2', st. 6 *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 3.

¹⁰The home of Jeremiah and Ann (Haigh) Marshall.

¹¹The home of Mary Bosanquet.

¹²JW's annual Conference with his preachers began on Aug. 5, 1777 in Bristol.

‘An Enquirer’ to the Printer of the *London Evening Post*¹

c. August 17, 1777

Sir,

I do not marvel that the Rev. John Wesley utters so many invectives against the Protestant Dissenters, as it has long been his wish to render them odious to government. And I know the person to whom his champion and counsellor Thomas Olivers, *the shoemaker*, declared his wish that he was but able to shut up every Dissenting meetinghouse in England. But I do wonder (for the sake of consistency, if not truth) that, hating the Dissenters as Mr. Wesley and his people do, they should profess themselves ‘dissenters’ in order to avail themselves of the Act of Toleration.

Some time ago, in a bookseller’s shop, I stumbled upon a strong adherent of Mr. Wesley who, boasting of a new place of worship that he had fitted up,² mentioned that ‘He had got it licensed’. ‘Where?’ asked I. ‘At the Quarter Sessions’, replied he. ‘And what did you give?’ rejoined I. ‘Sixpence’, answered he. ‘And pray’, returned I, ‘what do you call yourselves?’ ‘Methodists’, answered he. ‘And what church do the Methodist belong to?’ ‘The Church of England.’ ‘But Mr. _____, what did you call yourselves when you applied for the license?’ ‘Protestant Dissenters’, returned he. ‘Well, and are you Protestant Dissenters?’ said I. ‘No’, replied he. ‘Then you must have told a lie’, said I, ‘and if the Protestant Dissenters had as little regard for truth as you seem to have, why may not they also subscribe to what they do not believe, and get into church emoluments as well as many of you who do call yourselves Dissenters?’³

This, Mr. Miller, is the single truth. And if you will print it as a specimen of the sincerity of Mr. Wesley’s sect, I can assure you that it is not the only instance; and I will furnish you with other specimens of a similar nature.

I am, sir,

Yours, etc.

An Enquirer

Source: published transcription; *London Evening Post* (Aug. 19–21, 1777), p. 4.

¹In his sermon ‘On Laying the Foundation of the New Chapel’, II.12–13 (*Works*, 3:588–89), JW stressed that, unlike other revivals in England, which formed separate dissenting churches, his movement remained fully in the Church of England. This did not stop his critics from charging that City Road chapel was in reality a dissenting meeting house; see particularly Hill, Rowland (1744–1833). *Imposture Detected, and the Dead Vindicated in a letter to a friend; containing some gentle strictures on the false and libellous harangue, lately delivered by Mr. John Wesley, upon laying the first stone of his new Dissenting Meeting House, near City Road* (London: Vallance, 1777). More rare were charges like the present one, that JW (or one of his followers) had actually licensed City Road as a dissenting chapel. There is no evidence that this took place, nor that JW took the time to rebut this letter.

²The cornerstone of JW’s new Chapel on City Road in London was laid on April 21, 1777. It would not be in full use until early 1778.

³At this point JW was walking a fine line, allowing his preaching-houses to be ‘certified’, while denying that this formally made them ‘dissenting’ meeting houses. See JW to Samuel Wells, Jan. 28, 1779, *Works*, 29:471–72.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Cross Hall
September 1, 1777

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Will you excuse my not answering your kind letter sooner?¹ I think you would receive one from me written only the day before yours. And I thought perhaps my dear father may write again, so I'll wait a little while to see.² But when I consider the multiplicity of momentous affairs in which you are continually engaged, it was almost unreasonable to expect it.

Many of the questions you asked were almost answered in my last. But as I love to show my readiness to comply with everything you propose, excuse me if I should write the same thing over again. To what outward means my recovery may be attributed, I dare not say. A decoction of the bark³ I constantly took, three times a day. The tar pills and buttermilk,⁴ with all the exercise I could bear, and much summer fruit, has also been strictly adhered to. But indeed, my dear sir, though these may have been all useful in their place, I think the prayer of faith has prevailed with my gracious Lord to continue me in a state of trial yet a little longer. And sure the life he has so miraculously spared will be all devoted to him to whom my more than all is due.

I think my disorder took a turn the Thursday night you was at Otley.⁵ In the family you prayed in faith and God, even our God, inclined his gracious ear. For about a fortnight I seemed at a stand (but now think I was a little recovering though it was so slowly I could then hardly discern it). But after then I began to gain my strength amazingly, and in about a month many of my complaints greatly declined. And from that time to this my Lord has been gently restoring my decayed frame. And I am now to all appearances not far from what I used to be, though in many respects I still feel weaker than I used to be before this visitation. I still continue to take the bark medicine and live chiefly on buttermilk. The doctors are quite surprised with me, and Mr. [William] Hey says he never thought to see me thus—though he yet will not pronounce me out of danger. My shortness of breath and cough are greatly better, and I now spit very little; sometimes it is a little blood. My lax⁶ continues as bad as ever, and sometimes rather worse. Since I came here, dear Miss [Mary] Bosanquet has wished me to resume the pills, which I had left taking. And when my fever is coming on I take a little of the saline mixture.

What my dear Lord means to do with me, I know not. But blessed be his name, I live in the spirit of sacrifice, offering up soul and body powers to him. And my only desire is that God should be glorified. Then I am fully satisfied. I do rejoice in the will of my heavenly father. And glory be to him, my soul is as much alive to God as ever. Though my weak body is a great clog to my immortal spirit, yet it does not hinder my soul from constantly aspiring after and every moment enjoying the presence of that God before whom the angels veil their faces. I live in his presence, and feel 'faith's abiding impressions realizing things to come'.⁷ Never did I live so near to eternity in my life as now. The Lord sees it good to keep me thus. There is but a thin partition divides the spiritual world from ours and, glory be to God, though I still am an inhabitant of time, my heart, my affections, my all is in heaven. In the general I feel a sense of the

¹JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, Aug. 2, 1777.

²She had not yet received his letter of Aug. 24, 1777.

³JW was suspicious of taking Peruvian bark (or Cinchona) directly, commending instead that it be taken in a decoction. See *Advices with Respect to Health*, Preface, §7, *Works*, 32:403.

⁴Ritchie's disorder would have been considered a 'consumption'; for which JW commended a buttermilk diet in *Primitive Physic*.

⁵See JW, *Journal*, June 5, 1777 (*Works*, 23:53–54).

⁶Diarrhea.

⁷Cf. JW's *Abstract of the Life and Death of ... Thomas Halyburton* (London: Oswald, 1739), 86: 'If I had had faith's abiding impression, realizing these things [eternal]'.

presence and indwelling of the ever blessed Trinity. And in my near approaches to the throne seem oft overshadowed with the glory of the triune God. Indeed, my dear sir, though I have of late been much tempted, more so than for months past, yet my Lord has kept me— sweetly kept me—free from every evil, and enabled me through grace to say continually, ‘To Father, Son, and Spirit given, I live on earth the life of heaven’. Still pray for me, oh my dear and much loved father, that my added life may still bring glory to our God and King. My Lord greatly unites my heart unto you. I should be ungrateful to the highest degree if I did not love you as well or better than ever. Never will the truly spiritual union I feel with you lessen, except I should live less near to God. This I trust my Lord will preserve me from, and sooner let me cease to be than be distant from him, or grieve you.

My spirit has truly sympathized with you since I heard how things were at Bristol.⁸ By the many souls dear Miss [Mary] Bosanquet and her family has been useful to in Yorkshire, surely God brought her here. Should he now call her away, her loss will be universally lamented. But how does the will of God sweeten all. If a visit to Bristol will not answer the end there, my soul resigns her up to the will of him who orders all things well. But could that do, and she return to live in some other part of Yorkshire than this, we should be thankful. She talks of coming, and I suppose will tell you how the thoughts of coming lay on her mind before she got your letter. Indeed, her affairs here seem nearer a conclusion than ever before, and next spring she hopes to be able to sell her farm. She is a precious soul and I often think she ought to be entirely disencumbered from temporal business, that she may have more leisure to do the Lord’s work. May God direct her in all her ways, and guide her in all her paths.

I heartily pray our good and gracious Lord to give you, my dear sir, all the wisdom, love, and strength you at this time so peculiarly need. May the everlasting arms be put beneath you. And may your soul, in the midst of outward storms, feel constant inward peace and uninterrupted joy in the Holy Ghost. Pray, tell me in your next how Mr. [John] Fletcher does. I hope God will spare him and you yet many years, and at least give us all to meet on Zion’s peaceful shore. I am, my very dear and reverend sir,

Your truly affectionate, though unworthy, daughter,

E. Ritchie

Address: ‘To / The Revd. Mr. Wesley / Bristol’.

Annotation: none [would be 20th].

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁸Debate had arisen during Conference whether the Methodist movement was in decline; see JW, *Journal*, Aug. 5–8, 1777 (*Works*, 23:64–65).

From John Hough¹

c. September 10, 1777²

[p. iii]

TO
THE REVEREND JOHN WESLEY.

Sir,

The danger you are in of being lost in the vortex of error is the motive for prefixing your name to this address.

Having lately been arraigned, on a very interesting occasion, at the bar of the public, you have thought it expedient to publish a small tract as an apology for an answer;³ I term it an 'apology', because it does not contain a refutation of any of the charges. Nor can I suppose you had any design in the publication but to transmit your *heresies* to a deluded multitude, or raise supplies for the benefit of the sisterhood. You are indeed celebrated for your benevolence, but, like the church of Rome, whose *theology* and *discipline* you *espouse* and *practice*, it seldom extends beyond the pale of the church.

Your conduct in the controversy with Mr. Hervey must have been very exceptionable, to constrain him, who always wrote like a gentleman and a scholar, to expressions of asperity. In one of his letters he recommends to your consideration *moral honesty*.⁴ He was too well acquainted with your character to be mistaken in his man; nor would he have given you that admonition, had he not known your want of it.

In the sacred records we read of the blind leading the blind, and the consequence. What an alarming consideration! I lament the situation of those unhappy bigots who are restrained from enjoying the pleasures of this life with a delusory prospect of that which is to come.

Did you possess that spirit of meekness your numerous zealots so industriously propagate, you would pursue a different conduct. But prone to disputation, the effects, like those of inebriation, hurry you into absurdities and confirm the truth of Mr. Hervey's position, that you will contradict yourself for the pleasure of controversy. [p. iv]

Having for so many years sustained the office of a teacher, with the reputation of a scholar, pride (to which you are not altogether a stranger) recoils at the humiliating precepts of the gospel. But if the apostle Paul, who for human wisdom and literature had no superior, could submit to instruction, wherein can the consequence of Mr. Wesley, important as it may be in his own estimation and in the opinion of others, suffer diminution by receiving the testimony of those whose words have the evidence of truth, and whose credentials prove the authority of their embassy.

As a politician excuse me if I do not confess your superior abilities. Hitherto I suspect you have not been able to make a single convert. I wish as much could be said in your sacerdotal function.

If the cause in which government is engaged must be defended by the pens of venality, I deplore the situation of the minister, and caution him against reposing confidence in one whose duplicity of conduct stamps a stigma on his integrity, and whose clerical character will have its proper influence on the dispassionate.

The Author

¹Little is known of John Hough except that he wrote an opera *Second Thought is Best* at about this same time.

²First advertised in *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* (Sept. 10, 1777), p. 4.

³Apparently referring to JW, *Answer to Hervey* (preface published separately as a tract; Bristol: Pine, 1765), *Works*, 13:374–90.

⁴See James Hervey, *Eleven Letters from the late Rev. Mr. Hervey, to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley* (London: Charles Rivington, 1765), 285.

[p. 1]

THE PASTOR

A *priest* there is, and he can write;
Miraculous! a *priest* indite;
Sure wonders then will never cease,
Here's one as great as Gideon's fleece,
Perpetuated let it be,
In Edward Say's chronology.
Not so, indeed, for tho' he writes,
He ne'er intelligible indites;
In writing and in preaching too,
He never does his meaning show;
*⁵Peruse his Works, they all abound
*With hyperbole, and airy sound. [p. 2]
*One day the law to man is given,
*As a directory to heav'n,
*The next the work is all of grace,
*Resplendent in the Saviour's face;
*Then law and grace together join,
*And yet the work is love divine.
Such motley stuff, who can endure it,
Unworthy of a country curate.
However men presume to teach,
Or drones for filthy lucre preach;
In this mankind must all agree,
Divines in judgment sound should be.
Let *commentators* write for gain,
Yet Sacred Writ is clear and plain,
So clear and plain from error freed,⁶
That man may run, and yet may read.⁷
*In every age it may be seen,
*What disputations there have been;
*What sad contentions have arose,
*And friends become the greatest foes; [p. 3]
*Such strange effects from errors spring,
*For error is a dangerous thing.
In such a weighty great concern,
Let reason's sons a lesson learn,
In nature's strength, exert their skill,
Advance the freedom of man's will,⁸
They err, 'tis not the way to Sion's hill.

⁵Note in original: '*These lines have reference to Mr. Wesley's doctrine of perfection, which St. John in his first general epistle refutes, and demonstrates that sin remains with the children of God to their dissolution. Mr. Wesley's comment upon that passage is repugnant to holy writ, and the experience of all Christians.'

⁶Note in original: 'Isa. 35:8'.

⁷Note in original: 'Hab. 2:2'.

⁸Note in original: 'Eph. 2:8'.

The holy Paul, whose works denote,
'Twas inspiration all he wrote;
Before conversion's work took place,
A work of free and sov'reign grace,
Blind Reason for his guide he took,⁹
And the right way of God forsook;
In Nature's strength he strove to gain,
(But all his efforts were in vain)
The prize, he ne'er by nature could obtain.
The ancient Stoics learned to know,
That man was born an heir to woe:
Within themselves could trace the fall,
And man the very source of all: [p. 4]
All this they clearly saw, and more,
To his primeval state restore,
Was not within the human pow'r.
Here reason stops with all her art,¹⁰
She cannot change a sinner's heart;
Direct his feet to tread the road,
That leads to happiness and God;
That pow'r belongs to him alone,
Who takes away the heart of stone.¹¹
'Tis his to teach, 'tis his to show,¹²
The hallow'd path that man should go;
The road which leads to Sion's gate,
Is very narrow, very strait;¹³
And yet tho' strait and narrow too,
It is the way that sinners go.
Not sinners, who let loose the reigns,
And live in sin, and hug their chains;
Whose lives and actions prove most clear,
What willing slaves to sin they are: [p. 5]
Those sure can no pretension claim,
Of int'rest in the bleeding Lamb;
For mourning souls, his blood was spilt,
He died to purge away their guilt.
Not reason's sons alone we see
Plung'd in this gulf of misery;
*Others there are, a sad mistake,
*Who law and gospel jointly take,
*The will of man and grace unite,
*And boast that they alone are right;
*On self-repose the greatest merit,
*And counteract the Holy Spirit,

⁹Note in original: 'Acts 26'.

¹⁰Note in original: 'Jer. 10:23'.

¹¹Note in original: 'Ezek. 36:26'.

¹²Note in original: 'Luke 11:1'.

¹³Note in original: 'Matt. 7:14'.

*Whose gracious office 'tis to show,
*The spring from whence good actions flow.
The law of God requires of man,¹⁴
To pay him more than mortal can,
Do this and live, so says the Lord,
It stands recorded in his word:
The precepts of the law obey,
It is a debt too great to pay, [p. 6]
For man since Adam's fatal fall,
What strength he has it is but small,
Weakness in all the race is seen,¹⁵
The dire effects of Adam's sin.
*The law to man at first was given,
*Not as a passport unto Heaven;
*Not to create contentious strife,
*But as a certain rule of life;
*Not that a man should walk therein,
*Upright and holy without sin;
*With heart and mind so pure and clear,
*No sin and sorrow ever there.
*That such a glorious state there is,
*Reserv'd for all the heirs of bliss;
*But not for mortal man to know,
*While resident in flesh below;
*The souls who long to know that state
Must humbly God's appointment wait,
*When disencumber'd from their load
*Of sin, they soar to heaven and God. [p. 7]
Thus Moses taught, and those of old,
The same instructive lesson told;
And all God's faithful pastors since,
The same almighty word dispense,
A perfect clear distinction make,
Nor ever law for gospel take,
But law and gospel rightly sever,¹⁶
Nor link them in one chain together.
It is the duty of a priest,
To make the word of God a feast;
And feed thereon both day and night,
With consolation and delight;¹⁷
Nor think a priest consists in bands,
And laying on of prelates hands;
Or that his Lordship's solemn face,
Can give him light, can give him grace:
And yet how very few receive

¹⁴Note in original: 'Rom. 7:14'.

¹⁵Note in original: 'Rom. 7:18'.

¹⁶Note in original: 'Deut. 22:11'.

¹⁷Note in original: 'Rom. 7:22'.

More grace than what the bishops give,
How few are sent by God to teach,
How few from love to sinners preach; [p. 8]
How few are what they might or could be;
How very few are what they should be;
And what was once the joy of many,
Is seldom practic'd now by any;
The love of wealth usurps the place,
Of every virtue, every grace,
And is become the ruling passion,
With priests of every rank and nation;
For scarcely can you meet a priest
Who loves not gold, or else a feast,¹⁸
Much better than he does his duty,
And makes it more his care and study,
To add and to increase his store,
Than serve the Lord, and feed the poor.
If man would fatal errors shun,
Let him attend to God's dear Son;
Who wisely severs law from grace,
And gives to each its proper place. [p. 9]
Reason, with all her boasted pride,
And all her vot'ries by her side,
Could never yet devise a plan,
To glory God, and humble man.
The law of god is holy, good,¹⁹
But not by nature understood;
The world by wisdom know not God,²⁰
Nor comprehend his chast'ning rod;
'Tis sov'reign grace alone that can,²¹
Remove the guilt and save the man;
Dispel each fear, bid sin depart,
Convince the mind, convert the heart;
Instruct mankind to know their duty,
And make the word of God their study.
Tho' unattir'd these lines appear,
Tho' some may snarl, and others sneer,
They're written with a mind sincere.
I care not what those hirelings say,
Who labour only for the pay; [p. 10]
Neglectful of the weighty charge,
And leave their flocks to rove at large;

}

¹⁸Note in original: '1 Tim. 6:10; 2 Tim. 3:4. From these passages of Scripture it is evident that avarice and intemperance were in the apostle's time the principal pursuits of the clergy. And to those who are most conversant with our modern theologians I appeal, whether, in general, they do not perceive a striking similitude between them and their predecessors.'

¹⁹Note in original: 'Rom. 7:12'.

²⁰Note in original: '1 Cor. 1:21'.

²¹Note in original: 'Eph. 2:8'.

A practice now so common grown,
As well in country as in town,
That 'tis a prodigy to find,
A priest of any other mind;
Nor is it strange to daily see,
That those who zealous most should be,
For God, and for his glorious cause,
Despise his word, and break his laws;
Nor *those* who preach to get a name,
And cant and whine to raise their fame;
With fronts of brass, *itinerant teachers*,
Who from the *forge*, commence field preachers;
And in that less laborious life,
Make free with many a *purse*, and *wife*,
Then reconcile their ill got gains,
With every labourer's worth his pains;
While those they dupe complain such crimes,
Prognosticate the latter times.²² [p. 11]
Use therefore caution with the best,
And shun all commerce with the rest.
Priests nowadays can lie, deceive,
And yet profess how they believe;
Speak much of God, and things of heaven,
Of grace divine, and sins forgiven;
Of pride subdu'd and holiness,
And faith in Christ, who[se] paths are peace.
Of all these things devoutly talk,
But oh! How few like Enoch walk;
Attend them to their houses then,
You find 'em just like other men;
Regardless, how they spend their time,
And venial sins, account no crime.
At playhouse, tavern, and at ball,
The *priest's* the very life of all;
No matter who exceptions take,
What havoc in the Church they make.
Nor morn or evening pray'r is seen,²³
It is a thing too poor and mean; [p. 12]
For men of sense and understanding,
To meddle with or have a hand in;
And think it is sufficient one day,
To *pray* and *preach* and that on Sunday;
All other times are out of season,
And crimes almost as *bad* as treason;
Regardless what the Scriptures say,
Their duty is, to watch and pray;²⁴

}

²²Note in original: '1 Tim. 4:1'.

²³Note in original: 'Ps. 54:17'.

²⁴Note in original: 'Matt. 26:41'.

To watch and pray, and feed the sheep,²⁵
And safe from every error keep;
In everything they ape the fashion,
And *luxury's* a reigning passion;
And he's the soundest, best divine,
Who preaches least, and loves good wine.
If man the stings of conscience feel,
Send for the priest, he'll lay it still;
And 'tho' the very chief of sinners,
May be absolv'd for some good dinners.
A smoking haunch with currant jelly,
A glutton makes of Doctor _____ [p. 13]
Nor does he less delight in fish,
(A turbot is a favourite dish;)
Is very fond of Mrs. W _____
Who makes the best of marrow puddings.
At table see him take his place,
With an emboss'd rich ruby face;
His dress more slovenly than smart,
His appetite made keen by art,
Mark how the Doctor plays his part. }
To *gormandize* he thinks no sin,
And proves the same, by greasy chin,
Which runs rapacious like a river,
And leaves the chin a perfect mirror:
Nor does the merit of the priest,
In gluttony alone consist;
He thinks good eating; (great's his knowledge,)
He learn'd the same at Lincoln College;
Should have good wine, to crown the feast,
Enough, and that the very best.
With rapturous glee can give a toast,
And *strength of head* his constant boast; [p. 14]
Is ever pleas'd with rakes to sit,
To hear their ribaldry and wit;
Delights to tell a wanton tale,
On Sunday-eve get drunk with ale;
After preaching a good old sermon bought,
Of Mary Lewis for a groat.
*Sometimes on *politics* he talks,
*And near the court obsequious walks;
*Where hungry daws in crowd assemble,
*And high-fed dames are seen to amble;
*When flatter'd by a nod or bow,
*Which in some soils spontaneous grow;
*Then instantly to work he goes,
*To combat with his Lordship's foes;
*Who *steadfast* in the good old cause,
*Maintain their *right* by *charter'd laws*.

²⁵Note in original: 'John 21:17'.

*The consequence he never minds,
*The good effects he always finds;
*For soon the teeming press brings forth,
*A progeny of monst'rous birth; [p. 15]
*The partisans extol the creature,
*And beauty trace in every feature;
*While underneath the broad-brimm'd hat,
*He smiles applause, and owns the brat;
*'Till some sly elf creates a pother,
*And gives the bantling to another,
*Demonstrates the learned *casuist*,
*To be in *politics* a *plagiarist*.
Sometimes he talks of abstinence,
Tis all a farce, a mere pretence;
He never puts the same in practise,
A bold assertion, yet a fact is;
Then sure a man so fond to feast,
Is not from God, but Baal's priest.
The priest of God, who minds his duty,
Makes sacred writ, his constant study.
With faith and pray'r he reads the word,
And free dispenses it aboard!
He sees those Oracles express,
That man was made for happiness;
Created first in righteousness:²⁶ [p. 16]
How long he stood in that blest state,
How soon the fatal apple eat;
To know, to him, is nothing worth,
The fall the Scriptures clear hold forth;²⁷
Within himself he reads this lesson,
Such knowledge is a special blessing;
That man with all the grace of nature,
At best is but a fall'n creature.
The more his eyes are ope to see,²⁸
The more he learns the deity;
Sees God in all his works declare,
Omnipotent's his character.
The radiant luminary, the sun
Who daily doth his courses run,²⁹
Diffusing to the world his light,
Distinguishing the day from night;
In all his glorious works proclaim,
Jehovah is his Maker's name. [p. 17]

}

²⁶Note in original: 'Gen. 1:27'.

²⁷Note in original: 'Rom. 5:18'.

²⁸Note in original: '2 Pet. 3:18'.

²⁹Note in original: 'Though this definition of the diurnal motion of the sun is repugnant to the present system of astronomy, yet as it corresponds with the word of God the author apprehends himself justified in thus describing his revolution.'

The stellar orbs, which beauteous shine,
Record their Maker is divine;
And every reptile on the earth,
Is God's great work, he gave it birth.
The choristers with warbling throats,
Melodious raise their highest notes,
And as they hop from spray to spray,
To usher in the newborn day,
To God their adoration pay.
Enlighten'd thus he still pursues,
The glorious search by holy clues;
Blind nature's curtain soon undraws
To mystic rites, and Jewish laws:
He sees the paschal lamb was slain,³⁰
That fallen man might grace obtain;
The reason why the blood was spilt,³¹
To expiate the sinner's guilt;
The dress that priestly Aaron wore,
An emblematic figure bore;
The ark, the goat, and budding rod;
Were all directories to God;³² [p. 18]
And typical of that great one,
The promis'd seed and David's son.³³
When more enlighten'd sees more clear,
The grace of God in Christ appear;
Admires the glorious Trinity,
The Three in One, and One in Three,
How each a separate office bear,
And yet alike in essence are.
The Scriptures how they harmonize,
And God is holy, just and wise;
That man by nature's born to woe,
And yet by grace can all things do;³⁴
How God and man unite in one,³⁵
And sinners sav'd by faith alone;³⁶
Hears Christ in all his doctrines say,
I am the Truth, the Life, the Way,³⁷
The open door, the fruitful vine,³⁸

}

³⁰Note in original: 'John 1:29'.

³¹Note in original: 'Heb. 9:22'.

³²Note in original: 'Heb. 11:9'.

³³Note in original: 'Gen. 3:15; Mark 10:47'.

³⁴Note in original: 'Phil. 4:13'.

³⁵Note in original: 'Isa. 9:6'.

³⁶Note in original: 'Rom. 5:1'.

³⁷Note in original: 'John 14:6'.

³⁸Note in original: 'John 10:9; John 15:5'.

Round which adhesive tendrils twine;
Look to the blood that fell for thee,
Profusely in Gethsemane; [p. 19]
Which purifies, and washes clean
The guilty soul, defil'd with sin;
Look to my agonizing pain,
Which on the cross I did sustain;
And view the vast stupendous load,
The wrath of an avenging God:
Look to my life of holiness,
My spotless robe of righteousness,³⁹
Thy title to eternal bliss.⁴⁰ }

Thus being taught in wisdom's school,
He strict observes the golden rule;
Directs the flock which way to go,
By precept and example too;
A generous friend to every spital,
And makes his house a little Bethel;
He preaches Christ, and not himself,⁴¹
For popularity or pelf,
Abhors all base and sordid views,
And renders all their proper dues;
By prudence does increase his store,
And daily adds a little more; [p. 20]
Not merely for the sake of riches,
To hoard 'em up like some poor wretches,⁴²
Who ne'er bestow a single mite,
Unless to get advantage by't;
But to dispense the same abroad,
To give the poor, to lend the Lord;
His tender sympathizing heart,
Is always ready to impart
Beneficence, to private poor,
Nor lets a beggar pass his door;
But succours and supports the faint,
And freely gives to all who want;
Without distinction, Jew or Turk,
For all mankind are God's great work;
Among his flock he doth reside,
And seeks no other cure beside;
He disapproves, as wrong the act is,
Of those who make a constant practice,
Of buying livings, to enlarge
Their coffers, and neglect their charge; [p. 21]
Nor mind how much their flocks decrease,

³⁹Note in original: 'Isa. 54:17'.

⁴⁰Note in original: 'Jer. 23:6'.

⁴¹Note in original: '2 Cor. 4:5'.

⁴²Note in original: 'James 5:2'.

So they secure themselves the fleece.
He treads the steps of that God man,
The gracious good Samaritan;
And learns by knowledge sin to hate,
Tho' resident in rich or great,
He thinks it right to speak his mind,
Without restraint to all mankind;
And tho' the word displeases many,
He willingly offends not any;
Fears no man's frowns, courts no man's smiles,⁴³
For both alike the heart beguiles,
Set's God before him where he goes,
And counsel takes in what he does;⁴⁴
He's instant in, and out of season,⁴⁵
And sound in faith, decries not reason;
For reason was at first design'd,
To form the judgment and the mind;
To evidence beyond dispute,
The difference 'tween man and brute; [p. 22]
He disapproves that idle scheme,
The making man, a mere machine;
Tho' man can do in point of merit,⁴⁶
No work that's good without the Spirit;⁴⁷
Yet he of reason makes this use,
What to receive and what refuse.
A few such faithful men there are,
Whom much I honour, much revere;
Who labour day and night to prove,
That Christ is God, and God is Love.⁴⁸

Source: John Hough, The Pastor; addressed to the Rev. John Wesley, in which the character of that fallacious casuist is accurately delineated (London: Williams, 1777).

⁴³Note in original: 'James 2:9'.

⁴⁴Note in original: 'James 1:5'.

⁴⁵Note in original: '2 Tim. 4:2'.

⁴⁶Note in original: 'Rom. 8:26'.

⁴⁷Note in original: 'Rom. 8:26'.

⁴⁸Note in original: 'John 10:30'.

From Thomas Rankin

On board *The Eagle*, commanded by Lord Howe¹
September 17, 1777

[...²] It is past my power to describe what I have gone through, as also diverse of my friends, since I wrote last. You may form some idea, but only those who are on the spot can tell the various trials we have been exercised with. His Majesty's troops landed at the head of this bay [near Baltimore] on Aug. 25. The alarm this gave to all the country soon reached the place where I was. Meantime our friends in different places were hunted by armed men, and dragged to the nearest places of rendezvous where the rebel militia were gathered. They remained fixed and determined not to join them. For this, some of them on the eastern shore of Maryland were dragged by horses over stones and stumps of trees, till death put a period to their sufferings.

Such has been the conduct of these patrons of liberty, against peaceable, inoffensive people! Mr. Rodda³ having been for some time on the eastern shore, I crossed over the bay in August to meet him and too him back with me August 21st, the same day that the British fleet came up to Baltimore. After a few days he crossed over the bay again. He then found that the oppression and cruelties used to their friends had moved some of our brethren to join with many others, who were determined to oppose force with force. When he found they were thus determined, he gave them the best advice he could and left them. But some informed the commander of the rebel militia that Mr. Rodda had been with the Tories, so called. He was pursued by several horsemen, overtaken, and brought to their headquarters. He was examined over and over. But as nothing was proved against him, was dismissed on his promise to wait on their governor; after they had been again and again upon the very point of taking away his life. In his return over the bay the boat he was in was brought to by the *Richmond* frigate. The person that came with him went on to Baltimore county, to give notice of my danger—the rebels declaring that they would have my life, wherever they could catch me. Of this he informed me when he came on shore. I looked upon it as a divine providence, and so went on board the next day, having sent an account of all that has passed to Mr. [George] Shadford and [Francis] Asbury; who, I apprehend, unless God appear for them, will be exposed to severe sufferings.

Thomas Rankin

Source: published excerpt; *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Dec. 3–5, 1777), p. 543; *General Evening Post* (Dec. 6–9, 1777), p. 3; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Dec. 6, 1777), p. 4; and *Newcastle Courant* (Dec. 20, 1775), p. 2.

¹William Howe (1729–1814), 5th Viscount, had taken control of all British forces in North America in Sept. 1775.

²JW sent this 'public part' of the letter he received from Rankin to the papers for publication, along with his comment that the rebels in North America were acting 'worse than Indian savages'.

³Martin Rodda (b. 1737), like his brother Richard, was raised in a Methodist family in Cornwall and began preaching locally. He was accepted as an itinerant preacher in 1763, but stepped aside in 1766 because of difficulties while stationed in Wales. Rodda returned to itinerancy in 1768, and in 1773 was stationed in east Cornwall with James Dempster, whom he then joined as a volunteer in appointment to North America in 1774 (see *Works*, 10:430). Rodda's strong loyalty to the British crown became a source of trouble, eventually leading to a difficult escape back to England in 1778. After serving a couple of more years back in Britain, Martin Rodda desisted from travelling for good in 1781 (10:507).

From Joseph Benson

Halifax
October 7, 1777

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have lately read over again with much attention Grotius' *De Veritate religionis Christianae*,¹ and am much pleased with his arguments in support of a religion on which rests my everlasting all, and with the order in which they are placed. It seems to me little inferior to the best things that have been published on the subject. For my improvement I am employing a vacant hour now and then in translating it into English, and wish I had the opportunity of submitting my performance to your correction. There is in the beginning of the third section, lib. 1, a passage which I cannot translate to my satisfaction, and therefore beg leave to consult you upon it. My difficulty lies in the latter part of the following sentence: '*Non plures esse Deos, sed unum Deum. Hoc inde colligitur quod Deus ut supra iam dictum est, est id quod est necessaria, sive per se; necessario autem sive per se quidque est, non qua in genere consideratur sed qua actu est; actu autem sunt res singulae.*'²

I have thought of asking you, if you publish the magazine you mentioned at the Conference,³ whether it would be inconsistent with your plan to spend two or three pages in the beginning of each number in laying before your readers the most convincing arguments in favour of Christianity. This is a subject which is certainly of the deepest importance. Yet it is a subject of which our people in general are totally ignorant, even the most sensible of them. And I really think something of this kind would contribute much to the sale of your magazine. If you approved of this, I leave it to your better judgment whether a good translation of Grotius would answer the end, at least to begin with. If the magazine were continued you might afterwards insert other pieces such as Addison's *Evidences*,⁴ Doddridge's *Answer to Christianity not founded upon Argument*.⁵ I doubt not, though I never saw one, but there is a good English translation of Grotius.⁶ If not, I would transmit you mine, such as it is, and you might alter, correct, abridge, or enlarge it at your pleasure. If you quite disapprove of everything of the kind, I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken, and oblige me with a translation of the above-mentioned passage.

¹Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), *De Veritate religionis Christianae* (revised edition; Oxford: Sheldonian, 1700 [1627 ori.]).

²The quotation is from the opening of Book I, Sec. 3, *Deum esse unum*. In his reply of Oct. 22, 1777, JW suggested this translation: 'Everything exists necessarily or of itself; not as it is considered in a general view, but as it actually exists. But individual things (only) exist actually.' It is better rendered in John Clarke's translation: 'There can be no more Gods than one. Which may be gathered from hence; because (as was said before) God exists necessarily, or is self-existent. Now that which is *necessary* or *self-existent*, cannot be considered as of any kind or species ob being, but as actually existing, and therefore a single being.'

³There is no mention of publishing a magazine in the printed *Minutes* of the Conference in Bristol in early Aug. 1777, but JW drew up proposals for its publication as soon as he returned to London; see *Journal, Works*, 23:65.

⁴Joseph Addison, *The Evidences of the Christian Religion* (London: J. Tonson, 1730).

⁵Philip Doddridge, *An Answer to a late Pamphlet entitled 'Christianity not founded on Argument'* (London: M. Fenner and J. Hodges, 1743).

⁶In his Oct. 22 letter JW recommended the translation by John Clarke: Hugo Grotius, *The Truth of the Christian Religion, in six books* (London: J. Knapton, 1711).

I gave Mr. [John] Helton when at Bristol one of the accounts of Mrs. Hutton's death,⁷ and desired he would tell you if you thought proper you might print and sell them among your books. The 2,000 that I got printed at Newcastle were almost all disposed of in that circuit, and the few I brought into this neighbourhood has occasioned a great demand for them. If you order any of them to be printed, Mr. [John] Atlay might send 300 to Bradford and as many to Manchester (where they have about fifty), and what number he pleased to Leeds. If you neither have got or mean to print any of them, I purpose getting 2,000 more struck off at Leeds or Manchester soon. I know they have been a blessing to many.

I spent a few days at Manchester as I came from Conference, and I trust not in vain. If you give me leave I shall pay them another visit before winter with the stewards and others, and which I can do without prejudice to this circuit,⁸ as we have several vacant days—which yet I dare not as long as I have health and strength leave vacant, but employ them in making excursions into various places. My dear sir, though you may think me a piece of an heretic,⁹ yet as you are no bigot I am sure you will believe me when I assure you that the Lord has blessed my soul much of late, and has graciously given me many proofs that I do not labour in vain. I know the Lord is with me, and for that reason (and not for any learning, parts, or eloquence, which with me are as dung and dross) I meet with love and affection from the people in every place. Only I lament that I am still very short of what a minister of the gospel ought to be in faith, in love, in holiness. I see the primitive servants of Christ were filled with faith and the Holy Ghost in a manner I cannot describe. I do not therefore despair, or sit down with Mr. Helton,¹⁰ but wait in the use of all means and the exercise of my present grace and gifts for that power from on high which will more fully qualify me for preaching among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. I wrote a very close letter to Mr. Helton three weeks ago, but have had no answer. I wish our friendship may not be at an end.

Source: published transcription; *WHS* 10 (1915): 113–15.

⁷Joseph Benson, *A Short Account of the Death of Mrs. Mary Hutton, of Sunderland, who died Feb. 24, 1777* ([Newcastle], 1777).

⁸Benson was assigned to the Bradford circuit by the 1777 Conference.

⁹Benson had recently been persuaded by Isaac Watts, *Glory of Christ as God-Man Unveiled* (London: J. Oswald & J. Buckland, 1746), of the notion that the human soul of Christ preexisted the incarnation. Some other of JW's followers, particularly Thomas Coke, equated this with the heresy of Arianism.

¹⁰John Helton had become disillusioned with Methodism and was converting to the Quakers.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
October 10, 1777

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your two last letters were dully received.¹ They always do me good. It lays me in the dust before my gracious Lord to think how many repeated proofs of his love are daily given. Your kind care for my present and eternal welfare is his gift, a gift for which I constantly praise him. My spirit feels with yours the true communion of saints; and though distant in body, when before the throne is ready to think it partakes your joys and sympathizes in your trials. I am oft much blessed in praying for you and will endeavour simply as I can to comply with your request in telling you from time to time how I go on.

My dear father asks 'What trials can you have excepting a weak body?' And indeed my dear Lord permits me to have many. But they are all sanctified, and only tend to fix me firmer on the rock of eternal ages. Satan throws many fiery darts at me. It pleased my gracious Lord, while in a state of extreme weakness in the general, to keep me from the hour of temptation. And though this has not been the case ever since I was restored, yet glory be to his dear name, he helps me in the hour of temptation. I feel

Who in the name of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.²

My heart stands fast believing in the Lord and fears no evil tidings. It every moment feels the all sufficient God its portion, and rests delightfully secure in Jesus' guardian love. I would wish to please all for their good, but see this is utterly impossible. However, I determine to love all, and in everything seek only to please him whose approbation alone can satisfy. This, blessed be my God, I continually feel. The cloudless day shines clear on my soul, and the glorious presence of the three-one God harmonizes all my powers. Even now I feel the rays of heavenly glory. How am I lost! O what love! What mercy! Will the eternal God dwell with Adam's helpless race? He will! He will! Be astonished oh heavens at the amazing love of God! What a depth is here! Shortly our God will raise to glory all who fit for glory are. This is but the foretaste. Our great forerunner is gone to prepare a place for us, that where he is we may be also. Indeed, my heart burns with sacred love to know him who has purchased all our blessings, and cannot forbear crying out, 'Who would not love the adorable Jesus?' 'Who would not give their whole heart to him?'

A drop of love can ne'er repay
The mighty debt I owe.
Here Lord I give myself away
Tis all that I can do.³

From another quarter I sometimes feel close exercise, when by any means the enemy seems likely to hurt the work of God. My soul feels in the tenderest part this has of late been the case at Otley. Mr. [Cornelius] Cayley's spirit has not of late been what it was when he first came here, nor has he preached altogether in the same manner. Imparted righteousness has been his chief theme. Time after time he was lovingly spoke to about it, and declared when in private he only meant it in a scriptural sense. But when in the pulpit, he spoke so that all who understood what they heard found he expressed himself quite in Calvinistic terms, and sometimes spoke clearly about final perseverance. With this many were

¹JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, Aug. 24, 1777; and one more that is not known to survive.

²CW, 'Whole Armour of God', st. 1, *HSP* (1749), 2:236.

³An interesting variation on Isaac Watts, 'Alas, and did my Saviour bleed', st. 5.

dissatisfied. Mr. — would not go to hear him, and dear Mr. Allen⁴ (who we love much) thought he had better not preach in our house any more. But fearing, lest by hindering Mr. Cayley, the people would be so prejudiced against him so as to hinder his future usefulness, he left it to the stewards. They told Mr. Cayley, as he spoke things so widely different from the Methodist doctrine, they would no longer admit him to preach in our house as he had done. Many who had some time found benefit from hearing him were sadly hurt. They entreated him still to come, and four times he has preached out of the preaching house. Some who much love Mr. Cayley, and say they discern no difference in his preaching from what it used to be, are sadly unhinged, and we are likely to lose a few members. But the storm will subside. And indeed after a few days were over, I could not help believing the dark cloud, black as it then looked, would after bursting end in brighter day than we have yet seen. I talked with Mr. Cayley last Tuesday. He told me he did not want to make any division among us, and thought he should not come to Otley again to preach except he clearly saw God would have him do so. And if he thinks he is called to come, I do not think anyone can prevent him. He says he feels a very great drawing to come to London, and only waits for a call. I cannot help wishing he may have it, as it is most likely his being in another part of the country will be most for the peace of our Zion.

Mr. Allen and Mr. B[rammah]⁵ are well received, and I hope we shall have a good year. My spirit feels when I see any pained or likely to suffer loss, but my soul is encouraged we shall see Jerusalem prosper. We had the best love feast I ever knew at Otley about a fortnight since. God was with us indeed. I had a letter from dear Mrs. [Ann] C[lapham] about three weeks ago. She desires I would very respectfully remember her to you. She says she has not known where to direct to you since Crawford, and then she could write nothing worth the while to read. She was then at Whitby and intends staying that way some time. Can you tell me what is become of dear Miss [Hester Ann] Roe? It is near four months since I heard from her. I have written twice, but yet have received no answer. May Naphtali's blessing⁶ be the constant portion of your soul prays, my ever dear sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate child,

Eliz. Ritchie

Address: 'The Revrd Mr Wesley / London'.

Annotation: another hand, '21st'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁴The itinerant John Allen (1737–1810) had been assigned to the Keighley circuit at the 1777 Conference.

⁵William Brammah was the junior itinerant also assigned to Keighley.

⁶See Gen. 49:21; a blessing of 'goodly words'.

From Richard Sause¹

New York
October 16, 1777

[...²] With regard to the conduct of the rebels, where shall I begin? Prisons are crowded with friends to [British] government. Many families are reduced to poverty. Their property is confiscated, their estates sold, and themselves turned out of house and home. Others who were in the prosecution of their lawful business have been shot in the fields, or on the highway. So that many of the country people are afraid to be seen on their own land, insomuch that cultivation is in a great measure dropped. A number of rebels have a way of squatting behind fences, to watch the motion of travelling people—and on suspicion of their intending for New York, to shoot them without any inquiry. Several instances of this barbarity have happened not far from this city, and the murderers make a merit of having killed a Tory. Nor has one of them, whatever application was made to their governors, ever been punished for it.

Source: published extract; *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Dec. 29–31, 1777), p. 631; *London Chronicle* (Dec. 30, 1777–Jan. 1, 1778), p. 6; *St. James's Chronicle* (Dec. 30, 1777–Jan. 1, 1778), p. 3; *Daily Advertiser* (Jan. 1, 1778), p. 1; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 1, 1778), p. 4; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (Jan. 3, 1778), p. 2; *Sarah Farley's Bristol Journal* (Jan. 3, 1778), p. 3; *Ipswich Journal* (Jan. 3, 1778), p. 2.

¹Richard Sause (c. 1740–1802) was one of several Irish Palatines (persons—or descendants of persons—who had immigrated from the Rhine valley of Germany to Ireland) active in Methodism in Dublin who moved to New York in the mid 1760s. He became a cutler in New York City and strong supporter of the John Street chapel. Sause's opposition to the colonial rebellion led him to move to London, where he died in 1802, and was buried at City Road Chapel.

²JW describes this as 'part of a letter' which he has sent for publication in newspapers, like he had done in December 1777 with the letter from Thomas Rankin dated Sept. 17, 1777.

From the Rev. John Abraham¹

Londonderry
October 27, 1777²

Reverend Sir,

For some time past I have earnestly sought the face of God, that my dark experiences might be revived, and brightened by fresh evidences of his love. I also importunately, by fasting and prayer, implored his direction as to my future way of life. In both I hope he has listened to the voice of my humble petition. I am no longer under condemnation. My conscience (ever of the tender and trembling kind) is calm, satisfied, and happy. The uproar of wild passions is silenced, and evil concupiscence is daily and hourly dying away. This last, for nine years, has been the enemy's strongest hold. Death only I thought could deliver me—partly suspecting the power of God, partly ignorant of my privilege, and partly neglecting the faithful, continual use of fasting and prayer, under pretence of bodily weakness and infirmity. Now I think differently, and all heaven opens in the thought! My evidences of the divine love have been so extraordinary that I dare not commit them to paper, but shall when I see you in Derry consult you about them in private.

I account myself no longer its chaplain.³ I have been ill treated by all ranks, from my patron almost to the lowest of the people. Through grace I have stifled and overcome every resentment, returning them all manner of good for their evil. So that my departure from among them is not a passionate one, nor is it a chimerical one, as it has much been the subject of my thoughts and prayers for these last two years and a variety of occurrences so clearly pointing it out that scarcely the shadow of a doubt remains.

I shall ever consider myself as a son of the Church of England; ever hold her interests dear to me, and according to my ability promote them to the uttermost. But I cannot do this in the way of the world. And therefore, however strange my way of serving her may appear, with the most determined resolution I choose to do it for the future by acting in concert with your preachers, if admitted among them. My mother⁴ and friends have been informed of this, and the little storm is over. I am every way prepared to leave Derry with you. And I would fain hope the reasons for my conduct will appear so satisfactory, when you are fully informed of them, that you need not have a scruple about the matter.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate,

J. A.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 609–10.

¹JW had approached Abraham about joining the Methodists, with particularly interest (given Abraham's clergy orders) in Abraham assisting at the new Chapel on City Road in London. See JW to Alexander Knox, May 20, 1777.

²Orig. in *AM*; '1778'. But this letter reflects Abraham considering JW's initial proposal. He is already listed as assigned to London in the *Minutes* of the August 1778 Conference (*Works*, 10:475).

³Abraham had been chaplain at the Chapel (of Ease) of the Immaculate Conception in Fahan.

⁴His mother was a widow living in the Fahan district just outside Londonderry.

From 'Mentor'

Bristol
December 20, 1777

Sir,

I have observed your political squibs in the public papers, which always die away in a mere *ignis fatuus*.¹ How you can reconcile your practice with your profession at first appeared rather mysterious to me. But upon a moment's reflection I should not wonder to hear Mr. John Wesley had translated his religious principles with as much ease as he transferred his politics.² You pretend to be a minister of the gospel. Pray, wherein did Jesus Christ instruct his disciples to stir up the embers of strife, or add fuel to the flames of war? I always understood that his doctrine was peace and goodwill towards men. Therefore he cannot be a minister of Christ, but must be a servant of the devil, who is continually draining the dregs of his understanding to sow discord among them.

Your *Calm Address to the Americans*, that puerile production of a superannuated brain,³ was received with indifference or contempt by most sensible people. Indeed, I have long observed in you the decline and frailty to human nature. Your sermon in Broadmead about four years ago strengthened the opinion,⁴ and daily experience confirmed it. And though there may still remain something of the art and subtlety of the priest, yet believe me, friend John, I think the essential part of thy understanding is all evaporated.

Permit me then, good sir, to recommend to you in the future to confine yourself to the craft of your trade,⁵ and leave politics to men of superior abilities.

I am, sir,

Yours, etc.,

Mentor

Source: published transcription; *St. James's Chronicle* (Dec. 23–25, 1777), p. 2.

¹A flitting phosphorescent light seen at night, chiefly over marshy ground, and believed to be due to spontaneous combustion of gas.

²Note in original: 'Formerly you thought the Americans an injured party.'

³Note in original: 'I mean no reflection on age, but use the expression as a proverbial saying: once a man, and twice a child.'

⁴Note in original: 'Text, "What are ye better than others?" [Matt. 5:47] Here the preacher displayed his vanity largely by flattering his audience and praising himself.' Broadmead was the location of the New Room in Bristol. JW was in Bristol from mid-September through early October in 1773.

⁵Note in original: 'Which I believe to have been very profitable.'

From 'Sydney'

Bristol
December 31, 1777

Reverend Sir,

By the public prints I find you have not yet done figuring away in the line of ministerial polemics. Though one would have imagined that if your failure in point of political prediction in that egregious blunder of yours in page 13 of your *Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England* had not altered your sentiments in matters of state,¹ it should nevertheless have rendered you a little more cautious in representing matters of fact. Especially when upon their authenticity depends not barely the credit of an individual but the reputation and honour of a whole commonwealth. For certainly this is in some measure affected when transactions of so horrible a nature are nationally approved of or winked at.

The reader, sir, need hardly be informed that the barbarous proceedings here alluded to are those inserted in the evening papers of (I think) the 6th of last month,² respecting the treatment some of your friends have received from an American mob—but of the absolute authenticity of which it does not appear that your informer, Mr. Rawlinson [sic], is anything more than a heresay. If he was, he should have told you so. And if he had, I am thoroughly persuaded you would not have concealed it from the public, who have at present only your own credulity for believing one of the most barbarous executions that would even have disgraced a B—, whose scalplings, tomahawkings, and other unprecedented barbarities bid fare to fix his reputation, if not ring in his ears to eternity!

I ask pardon, sir, for taking this liberty with you. But upon my word, when persons of your character and influence make use of such talents and abilities as it is universally confessed you are possessed of either to misinform or misguide, it becomes the duty of every man who can either reason or refute to stand forth in the cause of the oppressed—if he cannot relieve them, at least to censure their adversaries. Among these, sir, I must reckon you, who once thought as thousands do still, that American is an injured country.

Yours, etc.,

Sydney

P.S. Since this was finished the public has been favoured with another tale of a tub,³ recorded by one Mr. Sause of New York,⁴ upon which, as well as the former, it need only be observed that upon the supposition that the whole is true, what does it prove? Why: 1) That all irritated mobs are alike. 2) That Mr. John Wesley's preachers hold the same sentiments in general respecting the Americans which are known to be those of their tyrannical masters.

Source: published transcription; *St. James's Chronicle* (July 23–25, 1778), p. 2.

¹Referring to §16 where JW suggested that when the king called for a general fast in England in late 1776, it turned the tide of the war in the favour of the British army. This passage was the focus of a critique by 'An Enemy to Hypocrisy' in this same paper in mid April 1777 (see above). The present letter may be by the same author.

²Referring to the letter of JW that included an extract from Thomas Rankin (dated Sept. 17, 1777; see above), which was published in *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Dec. 3–5, 1777), p. 543.

³Referring to Jonathan Swift's famous satirical book by this title, denoting stories that rely upon undue credulity.

⁴The excerpt of the letter from Richard Sause (dated Oct. 16, 1777; see above) appeared in *St. James's Chronicle* (Dec. 30, 1777–Jan. 1, 1778), p. 3.

From Catherine Corlett¹

c. 1778

1. Before I was ten years old, I believe God was striving with me by his Holy Spirit. I spent many hours in secret, weeping, and praying to the Lord, to take me to himself. I was so much afraid of pride, that I could hardly be persuaded to put on any new clothes, lest they should make me think better of myself. And I had a continual fear of doing or saying anything to offend God. So that my relations often used to say, 'The child is not for this world.'

2. But when I was between fourteen and fifteen, I began to keep company with girls of my own age. By this means, I soon grew like them: I was less and less serious, till all the good impressions I had once, were entirely vanished away.

3. When I was near seventeen, God was pleased to stop me in my course, by sending me a severe fit of sickness. I kept my bed for two months; and never thoroughly recovered, till the latter end of December 1771. I lost the use of my left side. I had all the advice that could be procured, and tried abundance of remedies; but without any effect at all. Till at length it was resolved to try what the physicians of Dublin could do. Here I had the advice of those that were thought the best physicians, and tried whatever they recommended. But I was no better at all, so I thought it well to return from whence I came.

4. On October 29th, I went on board a small vessel at St. George's Key. We had in the vessel four mariners, and six women, with one man and a little child, passengers. We sailed down the bay, about nine o'clock, in a fair, calm evening. But before 9:00 in the morning we had a violent storm from the southwest, which rose higher and higher, till before 12:00, there was nothing left upon deck, our sails being torn to pieces, and the mast carried away. They had shut up all the passengers in the cabin, and could not tell which way they went, as the compass was washed overboard, so that we were left to the winds and waves. About 4:00 one of the men came down to strike a light. But he could not, for all the tinder was wet. We asked him where we were. He said he could not tell; neither where we were going. Only we all expected every moment that we should go to the bottom. About 9:00, it being exceeding dark, the vessel struck upon a rock and stuck fast. Afterwards we knew it was not very far from the Calf of Man, but above a mile from the Isle [of Man]. The water flowing in apace, three of the men let down the boat. The fourth asked, 'Where are you going?' They said, 'To save ourselves, if we can.' He asked, 'And what will you do with the poor women on board?' They said, 'We must leave them to the mercy of God.' 'Nay', said the man, 'Whatever becomes of *them*, shall become of *me*.' As he spoke, a wave washed the ship off the rock, but with a large hole in the bottom. They fell to pumping with their might, while the wind drove us toward the shore, till we were driven in between two rocks, and stuck quite fast. The mariners then opened the hatches, to let the passengers out: after which, they got down upon the rocks, and helped the women after them. Having no heart to stir, I lay *still* where I was, till they were all gone. Finding I was all alone, I would fain have got out; but I could not. For the boom was fallen across the cabin door, and quite blocked it up. I then cried with all my might. A man, who was come back for his clothes, hearing the cry, came to the cabin door, lifted away the boom, and pulled me out. As soon as we were out of the vessel, I suppose not knowing what he did, he laid me down in the water. I immediately sunk. He caught hold of my clothes and swam with me to the rocks, on which he left me half dead. When I was a little revived, I made toward the land, creeping on my hands and knees, over the craggy rocks, though I was sadly torn and bruised all over. But before I got to the land, there were two rocks that ran across, with a deep cleft between them, filled up with water. I knew nothing of this, till I dropped in headlong. There I must have perished inevitably, had not a man who thought of saving something out of the vessel, come just at the instant, who pulled me out, and would not leave me till I was on firm land.

¹While the family name printed in *AM* is 'Corbett', this is not a common name at the time in the Isle of Man; by contrast, 'Corlett' is quite common and there are three or four women named Catherine Corlett born c. 1754.

5. About twelve o'clock I got to Castletown, far less hurt than might have been expected. And for a few days, I was thankful to God, for so wonderful a deliverance. But I soon gave way to discontent, because of my lameness, till my life was miserable. Yet still the goodness of God was striving with me. And often when I was alone I had earnest desires to give myself wholly to God. But I knew not how. One time, as I was walking and musing by myself, I thought I heard a loud voice, saying, 'If thou seek the Lord, thou shalt be happy.' I replied aloud, 'If the Lord had made me like other persons, I *would* serve him; but as I am, I am fit for nothing.'

6. In March 1775, Mr. Crook came to the island.² The two first times I heard him preach it made no impression upon me. The third time I went, he preached on those words, 'Escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.'³ I thought he spoke to none but *me*. I trembled all over. I felt myself a guilty sinner, and all my other trouble was swallowed up in this. I continued to hear, and the more I heard, the more my trouble increased, till at last I was afraid to sleep, lest I should awake in hell. Many times I walked all night in my room, praying and crying bitterly. Yet many times I felt a strange joy, but it did not stay long. And thus, having none to speak to that understood my case, I struggled on for several months.

7. One Friday night in September I went to the preaching, with all my load of sin. Something in me answered every word that was spoken. From eight o'clock that night, till 3:00 the next day, I believe no woman in her labour pains was ever in a greater agony. But 'as the lightning shineth from the east to the west',⁴ so was the coming of the Lord to my distressed soul. I fell with my face to the ground, and wept for half an hour. I was filled with joy unspeakable. As soon as I could rise, I went to the preacher, and told him what the Lord had done for my poor soul. My eyes were full of tears, my mouth full of praise, and my heart full of love. My Lord had given me 'beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning'.⁵ For two years after, I felt nothing but love; no trial, no temptation, did the adorable Jesus suffer to disturb me, but all were made easy.

8. I was then convinced that I wanted something still, namely, full sanctification. And I sought it with all my might, crying day and night, that God would sanctify me wholly. I bless God, that he gave me this too in a moment, purifying me from all sin, and enabling me to present my whole soul and body, a living sacrifice⁶ to him. Thus far he hath brought an unworthy worm, and I trust he will be with me to the end.

Catherine Corlett⁷
of Castletown, in the Isle of Man

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 535–38.

²John Crook (1732–1805) had just been admitted on trial as an itinerant preacher and sent to serve as a missionary in the Isle of Man. See his long letter to JW dated July 24, 1776.

³Gen. 19:17.

⁴Cf. Matt. 24:27.

⁵Cf. Isa. 61:3.

⁶Cf. Rom. 12:1.

⁷Orig., 'Corbett'.

From John Francis Valton

[Gloucester]
c. 1778¹

Dear Sir,

I was at Painswick about a month ago; whither I went, as I believed, in obedience to a call from God. During my abode there I visited daily from house to house, and met at different times all the classes. I took every opportunity to press an instant, entire sanctification upon the believers, and stirred them up to pursue holiness; declaring to them that ‘Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.’² Blessed be God, it was then given me to say, ‘We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen.’³ I spoke out of the abundance of my heart. You cannot easily conceive how kindly they received me.

I could have no time for retirement except about two hours in the morning. I was obliged to visit, or to receive visits, continually. But blessed be the Lord, my soul was well watered. I found that he was my shepherd, therefore I lacked nothing. I had not been there many days before one, then another, then a third experienced a deliverance from sin. And many others were earnestly seeking. One of them was brother N. I had no doubt of the reality of his experience. The two others I had not such a proof of. But however I persuaded them to hold fast that faith and to pray unto the Lord for the witness of the Spirit. There are two or three more who believe that the Lord has cleansed them from all unrighteousness.

Suffer me, dear sir, to speak as a fool. I meant to recommend a duty, not myself. I believe that during my short stay, by visiting from house to house, and pressing and praying for holiness, I was made a greater instrument for good to the people than four years preaching alone could do. I spoke on nothing but what pertained to the kingdom, and with much cheerfulness pressed them to walk humbly and closely with God—and always concluded with singing and prayer. You can scarcely think how the Lord blessed my own soul in those duties. You have set this duty on foot in London. I pray God give you success, and make every preacher willing to be spent in the service of the church. Then they will find this service a present reward, and a thousand blessings would redound to their own souls.

Dear sir, preach perfection always and everywhere, even as you do. It is the hope of this attainment that will alone animate a soul combatting the world, the flesh, and the devil. You have all the earnest souls on your side. This preaching is the word that God has appointed to sustain them. The old serpent will twist and twine and hiss; but the Lord with this sore, and great, and strong sword shall punish him.

The Lord Jesus bless and prosper you yet more abundantly, and at last receive you up into glory. So prays, dear sir,

You most affectionate, though unworthy, son in the Lord,

J. V.⁴

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 6 (1783): 159–61.

¹Painswick was on the Gloucester circuit, which Valton served from Aug. 1777 to July 1778.

²2 Cor. 6:2.

³John 3:11.

⁴The title has ‘J. V.’, while the closing mistakenly has ‘T. V.’.

From the Rev. James Murray

The Finishing Stroke to Mr. Wesley's 'Calm Address to the People of England'

Newcastle
c. January 1, 1778

[p. 5]

I should not have taken the smallest notice of Mr. Wesley's reveries, provided they had not been calculated to hold forth the best friends of the revolution and the Protestant succession to government, as objects deserving the royal vengeance. I do not remember to have seen so many falsehoods contained in as little bounds as there are to be found in the *Calm Address*; for except what he says in the beginning of the pamphlet (namely, that a great number of them were sold), I can scarcely find another well-ascertained fact in the whole twenty-three sections. Mr. Wesley observes, that he has had opportunity of conversing with persons on both sides of the question who have been *in*, and come *from* America, and by comparing their accounts has formed an estimate of the true state of the case. Those that are acquainted with Mr. Wesley's *Journals*, and know what lengths he frequently goes in stretching facts, will have little confidence in his veracity in telling this story.

He proceeds to give us an history of the springs and causes of the present unhappy contest between Britain and her late colonies. He is never at a loss for authorities. His 'brother [p. 6] Charles' is always ready—and Charles, good man, by a violent storm was driven into Boston forty-one years ago, and saw the present political storm, and the storm of war gathering fast. He heard several people talking *then* of independency; but Charles does not say who they were. 'Another gentleman' two years after this, observed the same thing, and told it to Mr. Wesley, and Mr. Wesley never told it till the year 1777. Is it very likely, if this had been true, and Mr. Wesley had been as sincere a friend to government as he professes himself to be, that he would have kept this rebellious secret so long. It is a capital crime to know of treason and conceal it. But the real matter of fact is that not one of these stories is true, nor would ever have been heard of, provided Mr. Wesley had not been employed by some persons to write a pamphlet and something must be said. *Calumniare audacter aliquid adherebit*.¹ It was a thing in justice, due to the public, to have given the *words* and *names* of the *men* that were then hatching rebellion.

Mr. Wesley informs us that he has 'abundance of letters' from persons in America, whose judgment and *veracity* and *impartiality* he can safely depend upon. The public would have desired to see *these letters*; and had a right to see them, seeing they fix charges upon their fellow subjects of a very heinous nature. I can assure Mr. Wesley that I have *no* letters from that country. But I heard Dr. Ewing and Dr. Williamson,² two gentlemen from Philadelphia, affirm since this controversy began that the Americans had no such ideas as independency. These gentlemen were examined in the cabinet council, and Mr. Wesley's friends can tell him whether they did not declare the same thing there, and also gave reasons why they thought independency not convenient. The notions of independency were produced by [p. 7] the violence of the measures of government.

Our author, in his historical narrative, imputes the increase of population in America to the mildness of government. And this is a reason why it should have continued mild, for the more subjects a government has, the richer it grows. But the mischief of the matter is, when they turned rich they defrauded the king of his customs. Like 'Scotch and English smugglers' they run goods, when it was in their power, and the officers could not find them out. And worse still, the celebrated Mr. [John] Hancock was the most notorious of the whole gang. Now to show how far Mr. Wesley's word is to be depended upon, I heard a Mr. Turner, a supercargo³ of a vessel in the harbour of Newcastle, declare in the presence

¹'Slander strongly enough, something will stick.'

²I.e., Rev. John Ewing (1732–1802) and Hugh Williamson, M.D. (1735–1819).

³*OED*, 'A representative of the ship's owner on board a merchant ship, responsible for overseeing the cargo and its sale.'

of some gentlemen in this town (who will be ready to bear testimony to what I affirm) that what Mr. Wesley says of Mr. Hancock was a malicious slander. And moreover I must inform Mr. Wesley that though Mr. Turner is as inveterate an enemy to the Americans as he is, yet the slander which he read in his *Calm Address* made him both swear and curse most terribly. When a *grave religious man* has so far got the better of his conscience as *deliberately* to publish notorious falsehoods to the public, what credit can be given to him in anything he says?

What Mr. Wesley says concerning the American juries is exceedingly malicious, and shows that this *old* man has given up all regard to *truth* and *decency*. What reasons has he to conclude that the juries in America are guilty of perjury more than juries in England? If they acquitted the persons who were accused of *smuggling*, it was because there was no guilt, and because the officers stretched their commissions, as they are often found to do in *Old England* as well as in *New England*. Before Mr. Wesley had ushered such a grievous accusation against any people, he ought to have shown [p. 8] that the evidence was directly contrary to the verdict of the jury. But this he has not done, and therefore the whole must be considered as a deliberate malicious slandering of an innocent people. Had Mr. Wesley had proofs at hand to have confirmed his accusations, there are none who know the character of the man but must be persuaded that he would have given them at full length. He is neither so unwilling to write, nor does he want a disposition to set this subject in the clearest light. The reason why he proceeds no farther than he has done is that there is not one word true that he says.

What this writer says against the patriots in England is what now he must confess to be a wicked slander. For his good friends the *ministry* have said the same things that the patriots have said. And the Americans have not been rebels, otherwise the *new acts of parliament* are *acts of hypocrisy*. Mr. Wesley says, 'as it was thought reasonable every part of the British Empire should furnish its part of the general expense, the English parliament laid a small duty on the tea imported to America';⁴ and then the *patriots* and *Americans* confidently asserted that the *English parliament* had no right to tax America. This he calls asserting a 'new right'.⁵ But it is certainly a right as old as the constitution of England that all countries that are taxed by *any* government ought to have some share in the legislature; but the Americans had none in England, and could not lawfully be taxed by the *English parliament*. The English tea was thrown into the sea, which Mr. Wesley calls an act of rebellion. But he does not prove this point. For it can be no act of rebellion to resist laws that are contrary to the essential constitution of an empire. It was as much contrary to the laws of the British Empire for people to bring tea to America with a new tax upon it as for them to throw it into the sea. If the British parliament has a right to tax the [p. 9] American tea, without their consent, they have right to tax their heads, and everything they have also. But the truth is they have no right to tax them at all, more than they have a right to tax countries that have no representatives in their legislature. America by situation is so far distant from England that it is not possible that the people there can be represented in the parliament of Great Britain. And it is both *illegal* and *unjust* to entrust a people that squander away their own substance upon the most unworthy objects with the most interesting concerns of others, when there is *no restraint* upon them.

Mr. Wesley brings a charge against some *principal* people in this country of writing letters to the congress nearly in these words: 'Make no concessions. Give up nothing. Stand your ground. Be resolute, and you may depend upon it, in less than an year and an half there will be such commotions in England that the government will be glad to be reconciled to you, upon your own terms.'⁶ This is like many others of Mr. Wesley's groundless assertions, founded in *suspicion* and published out of *malice*. He ought to have given the very words of the *letters*, and have informed us who were the authors. But he could not, otherwise he would have done it. It is amazing he is not ashamed to publish such glaring falsehoods. Does he imagine that people are obliged to take his word for things that affect the characters of an *innocent* and *inoffensive* people abroad, and persons at home who have never offended? He has too often forfeited his

⁴JW, *Calm Address*, I.11.

⁵Cf. *ibid*.

⁶*Ibid.*, I.14.

character as a *storyteller* to deserve credit in matters of such importance.

But let us now come to his account of the *general fast*, and the efficacy thereof. 'At length', says he, 'the king proclaimed a fast in England that we might humble ourselves before God, and implore [p. 10] his blessing and assistance. Some of the patrons of independency mocked at this, and endeavoured to turn it into ridicule.'⁷ It was no more than it deserved, which Mr. Wesley knows very well. For it was a solemn mocking of the Most High, and the most daring impiety that ever a nation expressed against the great Supreme of the universe. Yet he has the assurance to say that 'there is all reason to believe that God was well-pleased with it'.⁸ Mr. Wesley was certainly dreaming when he wrote what follows—for all that he says happened in consequence of the fast, had happened before it. Long Island, Staten Island, New York, Fort Washington and Fort Lee were all in possession of the king's troops before Mr. Wesley and his friends humbled themselves. But I must now tell Mr. Wesley that there are some consequences of this mock fast which he has forgotten to mention. There was something happened at Trenton in the Jerseys which fell out near about the time of that *hypocritical* humiliation. 500 men lost their lives, and the British forces were defeated with disgrace, by very inferior numbers. The Almighty seems to have been in wrath at such dissimulation, and showed a very early mark of his displeasure. The prayers of the fasters was for blood and it was not long till the Lord gave them blood to drink. Another effect of this profane humiliation is that it hardened the hearts of sinners and made them repeat the same disobedience. There is another thing that has followed this new method of fasting, a whole British army has been delivered into the hands of the colonies, and another shut up in Philadelphia, likely to be in the same situation.

This *arch-hypocrite* wilfully utters the court language, which both *he* and *they* knew to be absolutely false. Hear his own words: 'What would a million do if they ran away as soon as the English appeared? [p. 11] Whatever they do they will not fight. I believe they cannot, for the hand of God is upon them.'⁹ Was there ever greater falsehoods and profanity? The old man either knew he was telling a lie or he was willing to be deceived. For there is not a word of truth in all that he has said upon this subject. The first lord of the treasury has proved in the House of Commons to a demonstration that in all the battles which have either been *lost* or *gained* on both sides, that the British forces have been superior in numbers to the provincials. Mr. Wesley ought to rebuke Lord [Frederick] North for deceiving him, and making him expose himself to the world as one of the most notorious perverters of facts that ever existed. But *qui vult decipi, decipiatur*.¹⁰ The old man had good will to the employment, and was willing to be deceived. But suppose that Mr. Wesley might be forgiven for becoming a dupe to the ministry. Yet who can forgive him for abusing the name and character of the Almighty? He tells lies of his God wilfully and wittingly: 'Since we sought help from God, there has been a manifest blast upon them.'¹¹ All the blasts that have yet appeared have been in their favour and against Mr. Wesley's dear friends the *ministry*, and the *cause of blood* they have espoused. I would ask Mr. Wesley how he could be so daring as to ask God to help to destroy his own people, for no other reason than to gratify the wantonness of a few ambitious men that have not the fear of God before their eyes?

But we now come to another piece of history which is to be found nowhere but in Mr. Wesley's private chronicle, which he *now* and *then* receives from some profligate persons who were 'Methodist preachers' in America, and set adrift for *male practices*, and joined the British army.¹² If this accuser of the Americans shall charge me with misrepresenting *him*, and *some* of his friends, I shall find him among his own friends vouchers for what I affirm. He represents the Americans as *cruel*, *barbarous*, and *savage*,

⁷Ibid., I.16.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., I.17.

¹⁰'Those who desire to be deceived, will be deceived.'

¹¹JW, *Calm Address*, I.18.

¹²This may be a reference to Abraham Whitworth, a prominent itinerant in New Jersey who ran afoul of Asbury, withdrew, and joined the British army.

burning houses and sending [p. 12] women and children into the woods.¹³ Did he not receive this intelligence from a certain quarter, from one who knew nothing of the matter because the author was obliged to make the best of his way to New York to save his head. He fled so fast that he thought all things were on fire behind him. The *Gazette* is *gospel*, when compared to the *Calm Address*. It is surprising that Lord and General Howe, Burgoyne, and others who were upon the spot never told us of *this barbarity*. It has not as yet been registered in the *Gazette*, nor published in the *most venal* chronicles. This consummate piece of falsehood was left for the *pious repository*, Mr. Wesley's *Calm Address*. I wonder how this dissipated old man can show his face for shame. He seems to be past all feeling.

But if my audience will bear with me a little, I will give them a specimen from his own words of the strangest rant that ever proceeded from the pen of an enthusiast:

At first prosperity seemed to attend them in all their undertakings. But since we sought help of God, there has been a manifest blast upon them. Their armies are scattered; their forts and strongholds lost; their provinces taken one after another. Mean time they are not humbled? No: they roar like a wild bull in a net. They tear up the ground with fierceness and rage; repentance is hid from their eyes. They revenge themselves upon women and children. They burn all behind them! O American virtue! are these the men who are proposed as a pattern to all Europe?¹⁴

This is more like the ravings of a bedlamite than a grave aged divine. But what renders the whole consummately wicked, it is all lies, and not the word of truth in it all. The meaning and design of it is to dress up the Americans in the worst a[titu]des possible; to make them hateful to their fellow subjects of Great Britain, that they may join in [p. 13] assisting the government to destroy them.

This writer proceeds to enforce his exclamation upon the minds of his countrymen. What are the reflections that naturally arise in your breasts? Are you not ready all to rise and hasten across the Atlantic to destroy such miscreants? That is the design of this violent exclamation. Mr. Wesley affirms:

There is not the least shadow of liberty left in the confederate colonies. There is no liberty of the press. A man may more safely print against the church in Italy and Spain than publish a tittle against the congress in New England or Pennsylvania. There is no liberty of conscience. What minister is permitted to follow his own conscience in the execution of his office. To put men in mind to be subject to the principalities and powers? To fear God and honour the king? who is suffered (whatever his conscience may dictate) to pray for the king and all in authority.¹⁵

How can Mr. Wesley expect the Americans will grant what our own government will not allow at home? Is it not wisdom to restrain professed enemies? Would the king of Great Britain, or would any *loyal* subjects in England, suffer men openly to pray for the *pretender*¹⁶ or write in defence of his rights? Or would they not secure all spies that were either sent by their enemies, or were residing among themselves, watching to destroy their rights or liberties? The Americans have declared they have *no king*, and consider themselves no more subject to our king than the Dutch reckon themselves subject to the king of Spain, and therefore consider those as rebels against their states who want to subject them to a foreign authority. Were any endeavouring to prove that the Americans have dominion in England, or had a right to rule here, they would deserve to be served in the same manner. I do not find that the Americans meddle with any [p. 14] persons, good or bad, except those of their enemies; and our army does the same thing.

¹³Ibid., I.17.

¹⁴Ibid., I.18.

¹⁵Ibid., I.19

¹⁶The exiled Stuart heir to the British throne.

Mr. Wesley ought first to have settled which cause is the most righteous, before he had been so violent in his censure.

He says if any man says a word for the king, what will follow?¹⁷ I answer, any man may say he is king of Great Britain and Ireland in any place of America, and no bad thing will follow. And no person here dare say that the congress are lords of Great Britain, without having reason to expect as bad consequences as those he supposes in America. The Jacobites in the reign of King William made use of the same arguments against the revolution.

This sympathizing *Christian divine* is very much concerned for the 'poor colonies', because they have given up the substance for the shadow.¹⁸ But the people themselves do not complain. It is only a few Tories in the colonies that are desirous of making the rest slaves, that complain because they cannot have power to enslave them.

Mr. Wesley affirms that 'we have received no liberty from our fathers; that English liberty only commenced at the revolution'.¹⁹ Well let us hold there; then we had it from our *forefathers*, for there are few alive now that ever saw the revolution. But we are also obliged to those who struggled before that time for obtaining liberty, though they did not succeed so perfectly. I find Mr. Wesley's hand begins to shake when he mentions Oliver Cromwell and the *long parliament*. Cromwell was no friend to such as Mr. Wesley, nor would he have rewarded him for his *Calm Address*. It was in *his* time and that of the *long parliament* that Englishmen began to claim liberty more perfectly. It is true what Borel the Dutch ambassador said of him, '*Cromwell etoit un grand homine.*' 'Cromwell was a great man.' But would the government of Britain have permitted the friends of King [p. 15] James to have written in his defence, or prayed for him publicly, more than the congress will suffer the friends of our sovereign to pursue these measures? I suppose not. Yet Mr. Wesley confesses this was the [origin?²⁰] of liberty.

This author comes at last to view this subject in a religious light, and endeavours from Scripture to urge obedience to the higher powers. He also exhorts men to abstain from speaking evil of the rulers of our people.²¹ This is all right. But I suppose there is a difference between speaking things that *are true*, and things that *are evil*. If acts of oppression are visible, and government continues to oppress, is it speaking evil to say that oppression is contrary to *law* and *righteousness*? We are a people governed by laws, and it is not speaking evil of rulers to say that they err when they transgress the laws of the land by exertions of power contrary thereto. Mr. Wesley's argument for the powers that be is just as strong in favour of the *American congress* as it is in favour of the government of Great Britain. For whenever a government is changed, and another comes in its stead, the latter is the power that *then is*, and according to Mr. Wesley, ought to be obeyed for conscience sake. But it is plain that the apostle means no *passive obedience* nor *non-resistance*, but only declares the duty of subjects to those powers that are a 'terror to evil and a praise to what is good'.²²

Trifling upon this subject is altogether needless, for no man is in conscience bound to obey those who do not rule according to the laws of society. Just government and allegiance are reciprocal. The righteous God of heaven could never command his rational creatures to obey either the devil or his servants that serve him. No government except that which tends to the good of the whole community as its end can be from him who loves all his creatures. Any other [p. 16] ways that national evils and calamities are sent to nations for punishment of their transgressions.²³ And it would be no compliment to a magistrate to tell him he was of God in the same way that Nimrod, Nero, and Judas Iscariot was of God.

¹⁷JW, *Calm Address*, I.20.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*, I.21.

²⁰A word is obviously missing in the original.

²¹JW, *Calm Address*, I.22–23.

²²Rom. 13:3.

²³This is how the sentence stands in the text; though it is obviously incomplete.

Magistracy is from God, and is his ordinance. But those who prostitute that office by *dissipation*, *luxury*, *extravagance*, and *oppression* are from another quarter. It appears preposterous, and contrary to reason and common sense, that so many millions of people should be obliged to answer all the demands which the lusts of rulers make upon them, and that one half should be enslaved and starved to find fuel to nourish the flame of a passion for dominion which in the end ruins both the *soul* and *body* of the *magistrate*. The money laid out upon pageantry of courts and for supporting an extravagant *royal equipage* and grandeur, is the worst applied of any sort of human substance. When all the subjects live easy, let the dignity of superiors be in proportion. But governors ought always to consider the situation of their subjects. I cannot perceive that there is any principle in Scripture or reason that say that millions should be wasted by a few, when hundreds of thousands are pining away in *want*, *hard labour*, and *poverty*. There is enough in the world to make all honest people live comfortably, provided suitable dividends were observed. There is no occasion to pursue levelling practices [to] obtain this end, for moderation in the *great* would keep the poor from distress, without raising them equal to the high, or bringing them below their dignity.

I am far from wishing either the *dignity* of *magistrates*, or the *honour* of *government* lessened in any degree. But I cannot help thinking that the *honour* and *dignity* of *both* might be supported with far less expense to the community, and with more [p. 17] advantage and health to the crown. The dignity of government does not consist in the sums of money that are expended by *royal* servants, nor in the *pageantry* and show that is made by a multitude of attendants, but in the right exercise of power for the *end* and *purpose* for which it was at first substituted. Real dignity is not what everyone thinks so. There is a standard of dignity, which is to *do what is worthy in itself and profitable to society at large*. This is the dignity of government, and of a crown. The farther men depart from this, they will have the *less dignity*. There need be no difference among mankind about this point. They might all agree in the principle, though they differ in the way of seeking to obtain the end.

There is one thing which Mr. Wesley takes for granted throughout his *whole Calm Address*, that there are numbers of people that speak evil of dignities, and of the higher powers. This does not appear from anything he has said. He affirms but does not prove his point. Those whom he calls ‘patriots’ in derision have as much reverence and regard for *their king* and the *laws* of their country as he can pretend to have. But they are not so destitute of regard to truth as to call ‘good evil’ and ‘evil good’, put ‘light for darkness’ and ‘darkness for light’.²⁴ At the same time that they *venerate* government, they reprobate the actions of men who pervert it to the ruin of the laws and the constitution. To speak evil of governors is to lie upon them, or misrepresent their actions, to say they do what they do not. But who are those patriots who have abused the king, or have told falsehoods of his servants? Their actions are public, and free to any one to censure or approve as they appear right or wrong.

Such as have either *abused the king*, or *lied upon his ministers* deserve a *severe censure* and *rebuke*. But who are [p. 18] *these*? Mr. Wesley has not told us, except in general. I deny the fact, and call upon Mr. Wesley to prove what he has asserted. It has been often proved that the present executive powers, and the present legislature also, have done several things contrary to the fundamental laws of the British society, and made modern statutes clash with ancient constitutions. But this is not speaking ‘evil of dignities’²⁵ but *speaking truth of them*. Does Mr. Wesley really believe that the apostles Paul and Peter intended by their exhortations to the ancient Christians to enjoin it as duty to them to yield obedience for conscience sake to Nero, to help him to burn Rome? Or would they have been guilty of a transgression of *apostolical* authority if they had said that it was a very wicked action in the emperor to do it? Or would it not have been their duty to have resisted such an act of violence and tyranny? This to be sure, according to Mr. Wesley, would have been resisting the ‘powers that be’, and bringing damnation upon the heads of those that resisted. But is it possible that a righteous God would ever require reasonable creatures to support any authority for their own destruction? It is amazing that it should have been the privilege of mankind from the beginning of the world, till the coming of Christ, to judge concerning the actions of

²⁴See Isa. 5:20.

²⁵See Rom. 13:1–5, and 2 Pet. 2:10.

men in power and to censure them as they deserved, and that this liberty should have been taken away by Christ, who in all other respects enlarged the privileges of mankind.

But the apostle, in his commands to the Christians, has no respect to wicked magistrates at all. He calls them ἐξουσίας ὑπερεχούσαις,²⁶ ‘the excellent authorities’. Our translators know well enough how to render ὑπερεχούσαις in other places. As Philippians 2:3, ‘Let every man’ (namely, every Christian) ‘esteem another more excellent than himself’ (ὑπερεχοντας). [p. 19] [In] Philippians 3:8 this word is made to express the excellency of the knowledge of Christ (το ὑπερέχτον). In the fourth chapter this word is applied to the peace of God which excelleth all things (ὑπερεχούσα). The whole meaning of the apostle is, in short, in his own words, expressed thus: ‘Let every soul be subject to the powers that protect them, for it is not authority unless it come from God.’ The authorities that be of God are commanded by him. Thus they have their mark and criterion by which they are known to be from God. They have his appointment, and it is their end to answer that appointment. When they do not answer that end, the ordinance is perverted by the mismanagement of the officer. And therefore, though the ordinance deserves our regard, the magistrate that perverts it deserves our disapprobation. This is plain and fair reasoning.

It is indeed very wicked and absurd to make the holy Scriptures support doctrines to which they were never intended to give the smallest aid. In the times of the apostles Peter and Paul there were some who assumed the Christian name, who imagined by becoming Christians that they were freed from all obedience to lawful authority and, like those people at Munster in the beginning of the Reformation, wanted to *level all ranks and distinctions*. Lest this should be imputed to all the Christians, and be made an handle against them, the apostles command the churches to be subject to *all* degrees of *lawful* authority, whether they were supreme or subordinate. And this is the whole of their *design* and *intention* in all these exhortations. They did not mean to inculcate non-resistance of tyranny, but only pointed forth men’s duty to magistrates that were ‘a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that did well’.²⁷

Mr. Wesley has a particular antipathy against [p. 20] those he calls dissenters from the church. He threatens them with the vengeance of church and state.²⁸ But what have they done to deserve the royal displeasure? Their fathers were zealous in bringing the Brunswick family to the throne of Britain, when Mr. Wesley’s good friends did all in their power to oppose the accession. They, with all their influence, opposed two rebellions when a popish Pretender, with his adherents, attacked the sovereign upon the throne. And they now endeavour to support the same principles they did then, against men who are maintaining the same principles that those rebels did. They are exceedingly *sorry* to see men giving counsels to their sovereign that are calculated to make him drive from him a very considerable part of his dominions. Had their wishes succeeded, much blood and treasure had been preserved, and neither resistance, nor attempts to resist, had been heard of.

The people in America have been of much service to this country. And though their fathers were driven from it by the Lauds and Sheldons,²⁹ Mr. Wesley’s *good friends*, yet they have long maintained a very great regard for their mother country. And had she not turned a cruel stepmother, they would not have thrown off her yoke. This accuser of the brethren charges the dissenters with speaking reproachfully of their governors, but points out not one fact. He threatens them with the vengeance of both *God* and the *king*, and all for nothing. They have *said nothing*, they *have done nothing*, that even he himself can fix upon them to deserve the vengeance of either. That wicked reprobate old man, if he had the Almighty’s bolts to shoot, he would soon send all the dissenters to hell. But how does he know that the Almighty will

²⁶Rom. 13:1.

²⁷Rom. 13:3.

²⁸See JW, *Calm Address*, II.3.

²⁹William Laud (1573–1645), Archbishop of Canterbury, 1633 to death; and Gilbert Sheldon (1598–1677), Archbishop of Canterbury from 1663 to death (both cited by JW in *ibid.*).

‘laugh at their calamities and mock when their fear cometh’.³⁰ The Almighty is merciful, and will not listen to [p. 21] the peevish desires of either *kings* or *clergymen*. I would not wish even this old hardened sinner such a fate as he threatens the dissenters with. Let him find mercy and grace in time of need.

And truly, if ever he obtain mercy, he will find that it will not be for writing this *Calm Address*. I wonder much how he could give it this title, when it breathes nothing but falsehood and vengeance. If this is a *Calm Address*, few can tell what is a violent one. This performance of Mr. Wesley is an hint to government, when they have leisure to persecute the Protestant dissenters. This old man cannot die in peace, without having a little blood shed before he die upon the *old score*. But should even his Sheldons, and Lauds arise, and also a prince willing to support their sanguinary measures, there will still be found among dissenters such as will ‘overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony’,³¹ and give even their lives for so good a cause.

From what Mr. Wesley has said, he either knows that some of his brethren are very wicked, or wishes that they may be so, when he says that they are only waiting for an opportunity to persecute innocent people on account of their religion. But if Mr. Wesley and his friends shall ever again try this experiment, let them take care that the blood of dissenters does not drown their hierarchy, and in conclusion put a period to those dignities that are so ready to oppress mankind. It once happened that the violent measures of a Laud ruined both himself and his sovereign, and upset the whole fabric of episcopacy. Perhaps if such measures are again pursued, the next blow will be a total annihilation of the whole system. For mankind will not always endure an order of men that cannot enjoy their dominion and power without having it drenched in blood. [p. 22]

This hint which Mr. Wesley has thrown out can be of no service to government, but a real injury. For if any believe what he has affirmed, they will find it their interest to fly to an asylum which providence seems to have prepared for them. It was the persecution of men of the principles of dissenters that laid the foundation of the American empire. And probably the pursuit of Laud’s principles may now do much to establish its independency. I heartily wish that our present sovereign may be preserved from men of Mr. Wesley’s principles, who are ready to advise measures that will always embarrass government, as long as men have the smallest sense of their own liberties.

Source: James Murray, *The Finishing Stroke to Mr. Wesley’s ‘Calm Address to the People of England’* (Newcastle upon Tyne: T. Robson, 1778).

³⁰Cf. Prov. 1:26 (quoted by JW in his conclusion, II.4).

³¹Rev. 12:11.

From 'Poplicola'

c. January 5, 1778

Why didst thou choose that cursed sin,
Hypocrisy, to set up in?
Because it is the thriving'st calling,
The only saint's bell to ring all in.
Butler's *Hudibras*¹

Sir,

Men espouse a cause either through principle or hope of advantage, though the former of these incentives has no more to do with your motives for being so strong an advocate for administration than the pope has to do with heaven. Yet the latter altogether keeps up your enthusiasm for loyalty, which in your heart you are as much a stranger to as the great law Lord himself.²

The *Calm Address*,³ and other ridiculous publications you have at various times presented us with, you have found to take so little with the people, even of you own party, that you have now thought proper to confine yourself to newspaper scribbling only. Through which channel you vomit forth your malice on America in short letters, paragraphs, etc.—which, notwithstanding all your labour to the contrary, appear to be produced from one possessed of as much weakness as hypocrisy.

Pains, reading, study, are your just pretence,
And all you want is spirit, taste, and sense.
Swift⁴

As for your making a merit of putting your name to your letters, as you pretended to do with one of them not many days since,⁵ even yourself I think must clearly perceive how immaterial it is whether you sign your real name or not to your abuse, since you can avail yourself both of your insignificance and age to escape the chastisement due to your demerits.

In short, reverend sir, do you think forging most infamous falsities, in order to prejudice the Americans in the eyes of the public, and to impede the relief of distressed prisoners, is the least corresponding with the rigid Christianity you pretend to profess?

If therefore you do not leave off your scribbling, depend on it I shall disclose things you little think the world can be acquainted with, through the means of

Poplicola

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 8, 1778), p. 2.

¹Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*, ll. 1221–24.

²I.e. Lord Mansfield, Chief Justice.

³Apparently referring to *Calm Address to Our American Colonies* (1775), rather than *Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England* (1777).

⁴These are actually lines from a poem by Alexander Pope, *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, st. 14.

⁵JW's letter dated Dec. 30, 1777, appeared in the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 1, 1778), p. 4.

Thomas Hastings to 'Poplicola'

King Street, Bloomsbury
January 8, 1778

When a smirk so grave as learned Top-
Lady falls squeezing her wet mop;
The filth flies round on high or low land,
And subdivides like th' text of *Rowland*.
not Butler's *Hudibras*

Sir,

Seeing a curious letter in the *Morning Chronicle* of this day signed Poplicola, in answer to Mr. Wesley, and which is fraught with folly and malice at the same time, I could not believe that any man in the metropolis, or the kingdom, a [Rowland] Hill and a [Augustus] Toplady excepted, could have been the author of such a senseless composition. I know little of Mr. Wesley. That gentleman knows less of me. Every honest man in the kingdom will, however, naturally side with one who, through all the stages of his past life, has maintained the noblest of characters. His religious doctrines have had the most salutary effects on the minds of men. His political, calm addresses have cooled the raging of the once-maddened multitudes in many of the counties and manufacturing towns in England. All his party, consisting of the loyalists and friends to law and order, in Great Britain, Ireland, and America, highly approve his laudable endeavours. May those endeavours be crowned with success. May peace, harmony, and concord again subsist in all the component parts of this now divided empire.

The present unnatural rebellion originated and was bred in England. The rebels, in the course of several campaigns, have been assisted and advised (I will not say by foreign, but I will say) by domestic principalities and powers. May these assistors and advisers meet the fate of their great progenitor, Ahitophel: Set their houses in order, saddle their asses, ride home, and _____ themselves!¹

For they at first these evil courses chose:
Foes to themselves, to Heav'n, to mankind foes!

no Swift

A coward, an assassin, stabs in the dark. He acts the part of the God of Calvin, who destroyed the greater part of the human race before any of the sons of Adam saw the sun. O my soul, enter not thou into their secrets! Nor let the learned Toplady, nor the more, if possible, jargonical Hill, deter me from thus subscribing myself, Mr. Woodfall,²

Your most obedient, and very humble servant,

Thomas Hastings

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 13, 1778), p. 4.

¹Ahitophel hanged himself; cf. 2 Samuel 17:23.

²William Woodfall was currently the publisher of the *Morning Chronicle*.

‘Hipponactes’ to ‘Poplicola’

c. January 10, 1778

Sir,

In your paper of the first instant a letter appeared, bearing the signature of Mr. John Wesley,¹ in which an extract of a letter from Mr. Richard Sause, of New-York, dated October 16, relating the inhumanity of the Americans committed on the loyal inhabitants in and about that place who are called Tories. He signed his own name, and gave the name of a respectable tradesman in New York, who sent the letter to obviate all objections, and also ‘that any one who thinks it worth while to make enquiry, may know the man and his communication’.

This letter has given great offence to a writer, signed Poplicola, in your paper of the 8th instant. He directs ‘To the Reverend John Wesley’, and chose a motto from Butler’s *Hudibras*.

Why didst thou choose that cursed sin,
Hypocrisy, to set up in?
Because it is the thriving’st calling,
The only saint’s bell to ring all in.

This writer has very injudiciously chosen his motto, for it cannot be that Mr. Wesley has acted the part of a hypocrite. No sir, quite the contrary. He has given the fact as he received it, also the author and his residence, with an assurance that any may know the truth who will enquire. Is this dissimulation? Is this hypocrisy? No; rather baseness in the man who stigmatizes it thus.

His argument fails equally with his motto: ‘Men’ (he says) ‘espouse a cause either through principle, or hope of advantage.’ Admitting this to be true, can he with propriety say, ‘the former incentive has no more to do with his’ (Mr. Wesley’s) ‘motives, for being so strong an advocate for administration, than the pope has to do with heaven?’ These are both suppositions only subsisting in the chimera of a distempered brain. When a man shall thus rashly pronounce, without evidence for the same, that Mr. Wesley acts not from principle, neither can the pope have anything to do with heaven; the latter incentive is advantage. From whence is that to be gained? Because you know not, nor cannot tell, you basely insinuate that ‘it keeps up his enthusiasm for loyalty, which in his heart he is a stranger to, as much’ (for your comparison runs thus) ‘as the great law Lord himself.’ Therefore he proved that a man must be actuated either by principle or advantage, and at the same time proved a man actuated by neither. Such logic surely never appeared in print before.

The next assertion is, that ‘the *Calm Address*, and other ridiculous publications, have so little effect, nay even with his own party, that he now confines himself to newspaper scribbling only, through which channel he vomits forth his malice for America in short letters, paragraphs, etc.’ A very positive one, but not matter of fact. This Poplicola wears the Cromwellian hue, and is daily (I may suppose from this specimen) publishing the blackest falsehoods to deceive the credulous, and ridicules the honest and fair-dealing man who dares step forward to undeceive them. He proceeds to tell the world, ‘notwithstanding all his labour to the contrary, they appear to be produced from one possessed of as much weakness as hypocrisy’. Is it weakness to relate a fact, to contradict a glaring falsehood? Is it hypocrisy to undeceive the public, who daily have paragraphs—from nobody knows where, nor anyone knows who—teeming forth the blackest and most villainous assertions?

‘It is immaterial’ (says this author) ‘for Mr. Wesley to make a merit of putting his name to his letters, since he can avail himself both of his insignificance and his age to escape the chastisement due to his demerits.’ Is it probable, nay even possible, Mr. Wesley ever availed himself of his insignificance? No sir, one of less sense and merit than Mr. Wesley would not, much more that gentleman. Neither will he avail himself of his age, unless that scurrility appears which once came from the pen ‘of a Reverend and

¹JW’s letter dated Dec. 30, 1777, appeared in the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 1, 1778), p. 4.

learned' say, I cannot, 'gentleman', because he does not deserve that appellation.

The next sentence informs us Mr. Wesley has forged most 'infamous falsehoods, to prejudice the Americans in the eyes of the public, and impede the relief of distressed prisoners.' O shame, where is thy blush? It is an axiom laid down, certain and sure, that we do, or do not, know the subject treated on. This must be the case with Poplicola. Did he know these things to be falsities, why not then prove them to the public, and not have acted with such weakness as barely to assert them only? Did he not know them to be falsities, what man could act more hypocritically than this base assassin?

The last argument, as a proof of his abilities, is, 'that he will' (if Mr. Wesley does not leave off scribbling) 'disclose such things he little thinks the world can be acquainted with.' O wonderfully profound! Those threatenings are vain. Mr. Wesley's character desires not his assistance, nor dreads his most inveterate malice. Was the character of that gentleman to be supported or defamed only by positive assertions, in contradiction to plain matter of fact, then would it be prudent for him to court the smiles, and dread the frowns of the vile and insinuating Poplicola.

Hipponactes

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 15, 1778), p. 4.

‘Poplicola’ to Thomas Hastings

c. January 15, 1778

To the Printer of the *Morning Chronicle*

Shall I, like Curtius, desperate in [my] zeal,
O'er head and ears plunge for the commonweal! [...]
Hold—to the Minister I more incline;
To serve his cause, O Queen, is serving thine.
Pope's *Dunciad*¹

Sir,

I perceive my letter to Mr. Wesley, which appeared in your paper of the 8th instant, has given no small offence to somebody, who styles his name ‘Thomas Hastings’, and was the occasion of that almost unintelligible and stupid hodge-podge of nonsense that appeared in your paper of Tuesday last; which I am persuaded you would not have printed, had it not been to set forth that impartiality for which you are so justly famous.

This Mr. Hastings, Master Woodfall² (if we may judge from very convincing circumstances) appears to be one of those unfortunate men whose brains have been turned by the infatuating doctrine of Methodism. For nothing can more plainly indicate this than the strain of fanaticism in which his letter was wrote. And which I should have thought unworthy of an answer, was it not to convince him how totally mistaken he is when he takes me to be either [Rowland] Hill or [Augustus] Toplady. For to be plain, so far from it, I am an enemy to the field preaching fraternity in general. But more particularly so to his patron, as I believe the ridiculousness of some proceeds from a distempered head, but those of the old fox from a wicked and hypocritical heart. This I do not speak out of malice, as your correspondent supposes, but from real sentiments. For Mr. Wesley's religion I am sure more than me, nay the generality are acquainted with. If filling more madhouses than half his profession besides, in England and other places, is cooling the raging multitude, this Mr. Wesley has certainly done [so]. If having enriched himself under the specious mark of religion is having maintained the noblest character, this he has likewise done. But your correspondent seems to be so enchanted with the magic of Methodism that he takes everything by contraries.

His knowledge is not far behind
The knight's, but of another kind;
And he another way came by 't,
Some call it gifts, and some New Light
A lib'ral art that costs no pains,
Of study, industry, or brains.
His wits were sent him for a token,
But in the carriage crackt and broken.³
Butler's *Hudibras*.

There is one thing, Master Woodfall, I would observe before I conclude, which is how truly it makes out the vulgar adage ‘the devil corrects sin’, in administration's emissaries holding forth so much of the fanaticism of the Americans, when the ministry employ such despicable and enthusiastic wretches

¹Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, i.209–10, 213–14.

²William Woodfall was currently the publisher of the *Morning Chronicle*.

³Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*, ll. 479–86.

as Methodistic field-preachers to draw the pen in their behalf.

If any fool is by our satire bit,
Let him hiss loud, to show you all he's hit.
Swift⁴

Poplicola

P.S. I would not have Mr. Hastings think I want to stab him in the dark, as he hinted I did his patron in his last. For the first time I go near Bloomsbury (which will not be long first, and I don't think it worth while to go on purpose) I shall make enquiry after him; and if I find he is worth notice, and not a fool or madman, he may hear from me much sooner than he can wish.

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Jan. 22, 1778), p. 4.

⁴This is again by Alexander Pope, 'Prologue to "Three Hours After Marriage"', ll. 23–24.

From Mrs. Martha Ward¹

Cork
January 17, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I received your favour of the 23rd of last November,² and shall simply answer the questions you put to me.

You almost wonder, you tell me, that I never got acquainted with you when you were in Ireland. I assure you I had no opportunity, nor freedom to tell you all that is in my mind.

At present I feel that my heart is dead to those desires which torment and bewilder mankind. My soul has made choice of Jesus for her all in all, and knows no happiness but that of loving him, and of being made more and more like unto him. I feel my desires centre in him, while my will and affections are given up to him. I know I love him with all my heart and mind and soul and strength, and can say to him, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there in none upon earth I desire besides thee.'³ Yet, though I am fully convinced of the truth of this, I am confounded before him. When I view his infinite perfections, I sink into nothing. I feel myself so faulty, so ignorant, so wavering, so frail, so helpless, so unfaithful, that if I was not continually prevented, upheld, strengthened, and purified by free unmerited grace, I should become barren, dead, and guilty. Therefore I am constrained to fly to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness.

When first I began my present employment, a train of providential events obliged me to it. They are remarkable, but too tedious to be inserted here. Though I saw and dreaded the dangers of my situation, I obeyed, trusting in God for grace and protection. The company to which I was exposed, and my being denied almost all the means of grace and the fellowship of the children of God, joined with other grievous temptations, often brought me into deep distress. But my merciful Lord, knowing my infirmity, blessed me with a faithful friend (Mrs. M[alenoir]).⁴ To her I would steal, and pour my complaint into her bosom. I have reaped great advantage from her friendship. For when I have been ready to give up all for lost, I have been encouraged by her words, and comforted by the sympathizing manner in which she assisted me. And often when I could hardly find anything to rest my soul upon, she so pointed out the promise that my heart felt a degree of comfort.

I continue a member of the society, meet my Christian friends as regularly as I can, and go sometimes to hear the word. But the nature of my business does not permit me to be so constant as I could wish.

Except the portion of time that I allot for the public and private worship of God, I give up myself entirely to the children committed to me. I call them daily to family prayer, and endeavour by word and example, reading and explaining the Scriptures, and otherwise instructing them in the duties and principles of our holy religion, to set the fear of God before their eyes and stir them up to seek for those things that make for their peace.

Thus, dear sir, I have answered all your questions, and am ashamed of your expressions of esteem for a wretched sinner. If you knew me half as well as I know myself, you would not have so good an opinion of me. For truly I feel that in me dwelleth no good thing; and that it is the Lord that worketh in me both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. To him therefore be all the glory for ever and ever! I am, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate though unworthy friend,

M. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 326–28.

¹Martha Ward became a key leader in of the society in Cork; see Crookshank, *Ireland*, 365. She was married (though her maiden name is unknown) and had a son Richard attend Kingswood school.

²Neither this letter nor any other of JW to Ward is known to survive.

³Ps. 73:25.

⁴Mrs. Christiana Malenoir (1738–1803) was active in Cork Methodism and a friend of Ward.

‘Poplicola’ to ‘Hipponactes’

c. January 30, 1778

To the Printer of the *Morning Chronicle*

‘Hypocrita cupit videri Justus.’¹

Sir,

I find Mr. Wesley is like the Lernaean Hydra,² as nothing can be addressed to him but a group of his disciples, like the Hydra’s heads, start up on his behalf.

Whip but a cur as you ride thro’ the town,
And strait his fellow curs his quarrel own.
‘Sir Carr Scroopes Defence of Satire’³

From these kind of gentry, Mr. Woodfall, I judge those two curious epistles in answer to my letter of the 8th instant to have come—the one signed ‘Thomas Hastings’, from a man seemingly beside himself; and the other signed ‘Hipponactes’, from one more cool, but apparently not less an hypocrite than other Methodists. The former of these productions I have already answered as it deserves, and the latter I now sit down to answer likewise; when [I will say] adieu to contests with followers of Methodist field-preachers.

In the first place, Hipponactes alleges that I have very injudiciously taken my motto from *Hudibras* (it will be unnecessary to repeat it). So far am I from being convinced so, on the contrary I think it so much corresponding with the character of Mr. Wesley that, had Butler lived in his time, I should have taken it to be directly leveled at him. Not that I speak concerning the letter of John Sause, for I know nothing about that. But it is from Mr. Wesley’s beginning, I mean, he has acted the part of an hypocrite. This I shall prove in answering Mr. Hipponactes’s other objections to my above-said letter.

In the next place I am told my argument fails with the motto. Here I will prove him as wrong as in any place. Is it not undoubtedly obvious to commonsense that men espouse a cause either through principle or hopes of advantage? And I again repeat that Mr. Wesley has no more to do with principle than the pope with heaven. And I think Hipponactes appears tainted with a little popery, as well as Methodism, in seeming offended at the comparison. For I believe there is no Protestant but what holds in the highest contempt the idea of the pope having the keys of heaven. And then as to Mr. Wesley’s principle, nothing shows it plainer than his being the last reign a most assiduous croaker of sedition, and now setting up for a strong loyalist. What actuates such a man as this but his own emolument? And it is the hopes of advantage, I say again, that keeps up Wesley’s enthusiasm for loyalty, which in his heart he is as much a stranger to as the great law Lord himself, who I likewise believe to be actuated by nothing but desire of gain. Here, Master Woodfall, your correspondent shows he has too much lead in his brains to comprehend my meaning, and he says I contradict myself. Good God, is it not plain to the meanest capacity that a man may pretend a great deal of enthusiasm upon any account, and yet do it only for gain? Perhaps even thinking to the contrary of what he does, at the same time sacrificing everything to his interest, but disregarding principle totally?

The next question asked by Hippocates is, Where can this advantage be derived from? Why plain enough; from a venal ministry, for scribbling in their behalf. And if Mr. Hipponactes knows

¹‘The hypocrite desires to seem just.’

²A monster in Greek mythology. It had many heads and every time someone would cut off one of them, two more heads would grow out of the stump.

³John Wilmot Rochester’s poem by this title, ll. 82–83.

anything of Mr. Wesley's transactions, he must know that he has received money for writing anonymous paragraphs and letters, and likewise for his *Calm Addresses*. And above all, it was he, as is well known, that forged the several accounts of New York and Philadelphia's being taken, long before they were. And likewise that he, Mr. Wesley, was the author of the paragraph which was fabricated before General Lee's capture, concerning Washington's being drowned, and Lee having killed himself in a fit of despair. The forgery of this letter he cannot, without the most bare-faced assurance, deny. And indeed as to the letter of Sause, I think nobody can be so blind as not to perceive it seemed calculated rather to gratify malice than for public information, which the comments upon it, and a succeeding letter from this reverend gentleman, was a proof of. But whether the above-mentioned letters and paragraphs were not most infamous falsehoods, I am sure cannot be denied even by a Methodist.

Your correspondent then proceeds to ask whether Mr. Wesley ever availed himself of his insignificance, to escape the punishment due to his demerit (as to his age he allows he has). There may not indeed have been an instance of his availing himself of his insignificance, because he may have been thought too insignificant to be called to an account for his misbehaviour; and knowing this, he therefore is not afraid of letting his name appear to his letters. At last, Mr. Woodfall, after your correspondent has exhausted his budget of arguments, he proceeds to scurrility, and tells you he thinks I am daily forging the blackest falsehoods to deceive the unwary. With how much more justice may this compliment be returned to himself, when the ministerial lies so greatly out number those of the opposition? And I make no doubt Hipponactes has, from an upper story, lent an hand to the forging the inconsistent reports now going about, of Washington's army being defeated, and himself killed or taken prisoner.

In short, Master Woodfall, how truly of the touch-wood kind⁴ do the ministerialists appear, when they cannot bear even an itinerant preacher of their party to be spoke of in his true light; whereas on the other hand, how busy they show themselves in daily abusing the most respectable characters of the minority. Are they not always throwing out their illiberal and illiterate productions, teeming with the utmost malice, against the illustrious Lord Chatham and the worthy Dr. Price? But who regard the scurrility with the contempt it deserves?

Poplicola

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Mar. 25, 1778), p. 4.

⁴*OED*: 'Tinder in the form of powdery or spongy wood from trees affected by fungal rot; used figuratively of persons who are hot-tempered, irascible, or impetuous.'

From [James Rogers?]¹

Plymouth Dock
February 7, 1778

Reverend Sir,

When I received your kind letter that was directed to Isaac Shearing,² he was at school. On Saturday, the 17th of January, he complained of a pain in his head and back. On Sunday he said it was much increased.

On Monday morning he was obliged to keep his bed. On Wednesday it appeared that his disorder was the smallpox, which presently fell inward again after it had made its appearance, and was followed by a mortification, bloody urine, and a difficulty in breathing.

While eight or ten people were about his bed he professed a full confidence in the favour of God, together with a firm expectation of being happy for ever. He then desired that hymn might be sung which concludes thus:

What now with my tears I bedew
O might I this moment become;
My spirit created anew,
My flesh be consign'd to the tomb.³

After this he poured out his soul in prayer to God for a speedy deliverance! Then exhorted his friends about him to stand steadfast, and to follow the Lord in good earnest. Having spoke of his debts and settled his few worldly affairs, he cried out, 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!' Then sang the following hymn,

The glorious crown of righteousness
To me reach'd out I view!
Conqu'ror through him I soon shall seize,
And wear it as my due.⁴

And in about ten minutes after gave up the ghost, January 21, 1778.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 291–92.

¹James Rogers (1749–1807), a native of Marske, Yorkshire, was admitted on trial as a Methodist itinerant preacher in 1774 (see *Works*, 10:427). He remained active in itinerancy until his retirement in 1805. In 1778 he married Martha Knowlden, and they had two children. After her death he married Hester Ann Roe in 1784.

²This letter is not known to survive. Isaac Shearing appears in the *Minutes* only at the 1777 Conference, where he is appointed to Plymouth (along with Richard Whatcoat, and James Rogers); see *Works*, 10:466.

³CW, 'On Sight of a Corpse', st. 6, *Funeral Hymns* (1746), 8.

⁴CW, 'Hymn on Rev. 3:14ff', Pt. III, st. 14, *HSP* (1742), 303; but as abridged in *HSS* (1753), 108–09.

From Gaton Priest¹

Cork
February 16, 1778

Riding over a mountain called Sleeveord, in the county of Tipperary, my mare losing a shoe, I stopped at a smith's shop, to have one put on. The smith taking me into the house, I observed an old, withered woman sitting in the chimney-corner. On finding my heart grow warm, I drew near to her and said, as you seem, by the course of nature, to be on the confines of eternity, have you any assurance where you are going? She said, 'Blessed be God I have!' On asking her if her assurance was well grounded? she said, 'I hope it is.' On asking her what the ground of her assurance was? she said, 'I have the love of God shed abroad in my heart,² and the light of his countenance shining on my soul.'³ I then asked, *how* and *when* she came by that experience? She said, 'When I was about eighteen years old, God convinced me that I was a sinner. On seeing this, I was in great distress for some time. But one day, as I was going for water, across a field, the Lord arrested me by the way: on which I laid down my pail, and fell on my knees; and while I was at prayer, he manifested his pardoning love to my soul, shed abroad his love in my heart, and gave me an assurance of his favour. I am now eighty-one, or eighty-two years old, and from that time till the present, I have not been one day without a sense of the love of God in my heart, and the light of his countenance shining upon me.' I then asked her how she came to know she was a sinner, she answered, 'By reading good books'.

I have often visited her since, and always found her uniform and consistent in her accounts. Having never met with anyone before who experienced these things, she said, she thought herself alone in the world, and seemed rather surprised at the accounts I gave of my own, and others' experience.

Thus we see, God has his secret ones, even where the gospel is not preached. Therefore let us rejoice in hope of meeting many in glory who were unknown, not only to us, but even to his whole church on earth.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 10 (1787): 190–91.⁴

¹Gaton Priest, a native of Bristol, who moved to Innishannon, Cork, Ireland, is credited with bringing Methodism to the region. See Crookshank, *Ireland*, 110.

²Cf. Rom. 5:5.

³Cf. Ps. 89:15.

⁴Titled: 'Mr. Priest's Account of an old Woman'.

From Mary Bosanquet

Bath¹

February 17, 1778

Pleasant it ever was to me to render you any satisfaction, for which cause I embrace with comfort the present opportunity of informing you how graciously the Lord is carrying on his work among this dear people. The first thing which struck me with thankfulness was there seems to be no jarring string, no divided opinion. And this observation was confirmed by them who were heads over them and knew them better than me. The next was an uncommon simplicity and willingness to receive food from anyone. In meeting several different classes I have found in each a great readiness to drink into the spirit of faith and expectation, and a divine hunger after full sanctification.

That night you were with us,² as I came home from the love feast, several spake to me asking whether they might have an opportunity for conversation. I appointed to be at home each [day] from 3:00 to 5:00, and in those two hours I often see several, one after another, for about a quarter of an hour each. And in all the places I have been last in, for many years, that has been the method I have followed, and have found it blessed. At 5:00 I am frequently with some little company who gather to a friend's house on purpose, and at 6:00 or 7:00 is the time for some kind of meeting each night except one. But of all the meetings I am here in, bands are to me the most profitable.³

The subject I have most liberty in is the giving the whole heart to Jesus. And blessed be the Lord, here are many who love that subject. I do think I have tasted of the true liberty of the sons of God within this two months. But they have not a clear evidence of it, partly arising from their dark ideas they before entertained of it. But if two or three should be brought in who could give a rational account of the change, there will be, I believe, a great revival. For here is no opposition. And as to brother Goodwin,⁴ his very soul's delight is to have the people brought forward by any way or in any manner. There seems to be a universal love in the people to their preachers, and really their word is clothed with power.

One afternoon soon after you left us I went to the house where Philly Coussins⁵ (the temporary leader in Mary Bishop's place⁶) and her brother lived. They are servants, both in one family. We spent

¹Mary Bosanquet arrived in Bath, to spend some time, on Dec. 12, 1777; see Moore, *Mary Fletcher*, 124–30.

²JW was in Bath on Dec. 17, 1777, to lay the first stone for the chapel being built there.

³On the third page of this manuscript is a possible revised draft of this paragraph: '... and whether I would give them leave to come and converse with me. I told them with all my heart. And for that purpose I would be at home each day from 3:00 to 5:00. In these times of conversation the Lord have been singularly gracious. Many souls have be blessed. So that I am constrained to cry out, 'The goodness of my God surpasses my warmest wishes.' In meeting the classes and bands I find great freedom and much satisfaction. For it warms my heart to hear the ardent desires they express of being wholly devoted to God. Indeed, the way of simple faith grows each day plainer and plainer, and several souls have been set at liberty within this last month.'

⁴John Goodwin (c. 1739–1808), a native of Cheshire, was admitted on trial as an itinerant preacher in 1768 (see *Works*, 10:353). He would serve for forty years, right up to his death. He was assigned to the Bristol circuit (which included Bath) at this time. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1808), 3:6; and *MM* 31 (1808): 421.

⁵Philadelphia Coussins (b. c. 1758), sister of the later itinerant Jonathan Coussins, was filling in for Mary Bishop in Bath as a class leader. She would marry Theophilus Lessey (1757–1821) in Bristol on Dec. 1, 1778.

⁶Mary Bishop became ill in 1777, closed her school, and went for a while to Southampton to recover.

about two hours with them. Brother Coussins seemed to me to have tasted of the liberty some time before, but did not retain it, neither had clear light into the thing. He was much affected before we parted; went to prayer alone and wrestled with the Lord a long time. About 7:00 he received such a manifestation from the Lord as put him out of all doubt. And the next day he sent his sister to tell me he now felt the answer of all his prayers. He is a most steady soul and walks sweetly.⁷ Philly does certainly enjoy it, but has been amazingly buffeted with temptations at heart till very lately.

When I first came down I thought of brother Taylor⁸ returning almost directly. But providence has detained him on account of the affair I told you of. This gave me some pain, both because it was attended with inconvenience and because I thought he was in a place where he would not be useful. But in this I was mistaken. He is amazingly received, and blessed. And at Bristol, where I had a mind he should not mention he was a preacher, he is quite connected. Indeed I think one end of this journey is to teach me I am a fool and know nothing. Several say surely he is called as a traveller.⁹ I believe I told you the plan on which his family is settled—that I allow them £20 a year and gave them £20 in hand to begin. She is very sickly and hath eight children on her hands (the other 2 are from them). He said how can she maintain these without him? But she said if it is *God's call*, she must submit. This when I see you, I think to advise with you about. For my own part, I have a long time thought it.

Source: Bosanquet's manuscript copy for records; MARC, MAM Fl. 19/2/3.

⁷Jonathan Coussins (1757–1805) came under the influence of Samuel Wells and John Valton in 1777. He would be admitted on trial to the itinerant ministry in 1780 (see *Works*, 10:496). In 1782 he married Penelope Newman. He continued to serve faithfully until shortly before his death.

⁸Richard Taylor, who lived near and supervised Bosanquet's property of Cross Hall, in Yorkshire (see her letter to JW of c. July 1, 1769).

⁹I.e., one of JW's itinerant preachers.

From Ambrose Foley¹

Quinton² Green, near Halesowen, Shropshire
March 18, 1778

Reverend Sir,

Having long waited for an opportunity of conveying a line to you, (blessed be God) the time is now come. And as 'I am a man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath';³ have engaged myself for some years past in frequently reading your *Sermons* to a considerable company who wish well to your labours of love; and as they are, some of them, but babes in Christ, an instructive lesson might (with the divine blessing) greatly establish their faith and much good be done to others; if you have an hour or two to spare, my house, which is a good one, and my heart, which is a bad one, are both open for you.⁴

Pardon dear sir and reverend father in Christ the importunate request of,
Your humble servant,

Ambrose Foley

Address: 'To / The Reverend / Mr. Westley'.

Source: holograph; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box WF1.⁵

¹Ambrose Foley (1734–1827) was a country gentleman whose estate, Quinton Green (or Moncton House, built in 1750), was outside Halesowen, Shropshire, about 5 miles west of Birmingham. His death on May 9, 1827 was announced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* 97 (1827): 189. Foley hosted the earliest Methodist gatherings in his home. As the society grew he built a preaching house off College Road.

²Orig., 'Quintain'.

³Lam. 3:1.

⁴JW did preach in Quinton on Mar. 24, 1781 (see *Journal, Works*, 23:195).

⁵A transcription was published in *WHS* 5 (1905): 92–93.

From Thomas Wride

B[arnard] Castle [Co. Durham]
March 21, 1778

Reverend Sir,

Much writing I would gladly avoid, yet am inclined to make a long preface, to keep myself in countenance. But I must blush or not write. I depend on your kindness to permit me to be plain, whether you shall see good to approve or disapprove.¹

About fifteen years ago I had settled thoughts of marriage, not from constitutional necessity but for temporal conveniency. In a few weeks my design was disconcerted and I was satisfied with the order of providence. About eleven years ago my mind was set on one whose mind was previously set on me; but for what I thought sufficient reason I determined to give her up, and have often been thankful for the victory. When I began to travel, I deliberately laid aside all thoughts of a wife. I refused several offers, one that was called a good one, for as I had power over my own will, I did not choose to be entangled.

This was my real condition when I went first to Ireland. But the customary behaviour of the Irish women tried me, not a little. I was often thoughtful of marriage, but willing to avoid the probable consequences of it, I was well nigh taken by a good woman, against whom I saw no objection but the probability of a train of children (she being younger than me). This was a difficulty I did not *care* or *dare* to face.

About four years ago I became acquainted with one in Yorkshire. The acquaintance has continued ever since. Time nor distance makes any diminution. She knows my thoughts towards her, and my obligation to you. I told her from the first that I could do nothing without you, that I was at your disposal as if you was my father. If I had not told her, she knew it, for there are but few things concerning the Methodists but what she knows well. It was my design to have given you full information of her and my thoughts concerning her, in such time and manner as to have given you the trouble and opportunity of personal knowledge of her on the spot. But in this I was disconcerted by the too late arrival of a letter of information when you was to be in that part. After that time, and before I left Sligo, I told you something of my thoughts, though in a letter on a different subject.

I may be suspected of partiality, but sir I assure you I shall be as honest as I can while I describe the person. Her age was 45, last August. Her stature, rather short, I suppose about five feet. Constitution, healthy in general, but not strong. For beauty, neither adorable nor despicable. Her religion, she has known the Lord, I think, above twenty-five years, and has in the general walked in the light of his countenance. Character, I believe is unimpeached. Her circumstance, she has a brother from whom she hopes for great things. But as for that, I depend on nothing from him but what is present. If I wait for the shoes of a man until he is dead, I may happen to walk bare-footed. At present, and for several years past, he has given to his mother and sister five pounds for year, each; and they live rent free in a house of his. I suppose she will have this during the life of the mother. She expects it after the death of the mother, but I confess I doubt it. At present she has a room, decently furnished, beside some useless lumber household goods. Her apparel is not of the costly sort, but she has more than enough of it. I think, sir, I have given you an *honest* description, and suppose that by reading thus far you know what is likely to follow. I could not marry without passion. It may serve as a spur at my heel, but is not fit to hold the reins.

Now sir, I desire your advice. And if you please to give me your consent, I have no design nor desire to use it at the expense of my reason, nor to proceed without consulting of you from time to time, as far as you shall see needful to direct. The person I have in view was once in Sunderland society, but now lives at Welburn in York circuit. Her name is J[ane] W[oodcock].² It is not to be concluded that you can know her by this description. If, sir, you are doubtful whether I have given her character in a fair light, I am not in the least unwilling for you to have it from any unprejudiced hand. Brother George

¹From this point Wride attempts to encrypt the letter slightly, by writing sections on different parts of the page. This transcription restores to the natural order.

²Thomas Wride married Jane Woodcock (b. 1732) on July 23, 1778, at Bulmer, in Yorkshire.

Hudson,³ I apprehend, has known her for years. If you please to enquire of him, I suppose you will not find me to have overdone in describing her.

What follows (until the con[clusio]n) is but for a blind, in case it be seen by any not concerned to know. Therefore get the key or remain ignorant of the purport, as it doth not concern every pretender.

Finally, and lastly, as the person I am, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son,

Thomas Wride

P.S. Reverend sir, when you was last in Weardale you had a very spirited letter sent you with a fictitious name, vehemently reproving you for not regarding the Minutes of Conference. I do not suppose that you ever learned who was the writer. If you think it worth your while to know, I can procure a circumstantial account of this matter. I do not apprehend you are in eminent danger from the sharpness of his weapon, although he has said, 'I have drawn the sword upon Mr. Wesley, and I will never put it up again.' I knew not of this matter until last Monday was sevensnight when a train of circumstances brought it to open daylight.

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

³George Hudson first appears in the Minutes as a Methodist itinerant in 1765 (see *Works*, 10:304), but likely began a few years earlier. He desisted travelling, due to health, in 1780 (10:497).

From John Baxter¹

Antigua
April 16, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I hope you will pardon the liberty I have taken in writing to you; and as I stand in need of your advice, that you will favour me with an answer.

It is now twelve years since I first became a member of your society, till which time I was an enemy to God. And as for the way of salvation, I knew it not—but trust that since that time I have experienced a good work on my soul.

As I believed my going to Antigua might give me an opportunity of speaking for God, I gladly embraced it. But the enemy disputed every step of my way. For first, when I parted with my brethren at Chatham, I was sorry to leave those whom I loved as my own soul. When I embarked on board the *Active*, to dwell with the ungodly, it was more grievous. In this situation I was for seven weeks, and greatly distressed on account of my undertaking. But I now trust I shall no more doubt either the goodness or the power of God, since he has defended me from dangers seen and unseen.

One instance of which is as follows. As a fleet of American privateers was waiting for our fleet, the *Yarmouth* of sixty-four guns fell in with them. The American commodore ordered the *Yarmouth* to hoist out three boats and come on board, or else he would sink her. But in less than half an hour the commodore's ship was blown up by the *Yarmouth*; and out of three hundred and five men, only four escaped, who floated on the sea for four days before they were taken up by the *Yarmouth*. Five of our men were killed, and one lost a leg, and another an arm.

After this I went from Barbados to Antigua, in the *Yarmouth*. On Thursday, April 2, I arrived at English Harbour. On Friday the 3rd, I went to St. John's, and waited on Mr. H. who received me very kindly. The next day Mr. H. went with me to see our friends.

The work that God began by Mr. [Nathaniel] Gilbert is still remaining. The black people have been kept together by two black women, who have continued praying and meeting with those who attended every night. I preached to about thirty on Saturday night. On Sunday morning to the same number, and at three o'clock in the afternoon to about four or five hundred.

The old standers desire I would let you know that you have had many children in Antigua which you never saw. I hope sir we shall have an interest in your prayers, and that all our Christian friends will pray for us.

Last Saturday I visited St. John's again, and preached to a fashionable company of white women, while the back room was full of blacks, who are athirst for the gospel. I preached on Sunday to the house and yard full of white and black people.

I hope, dear sir, you will give me your advice. Provisions are very scarce. But I have all things richly to enjoy, as I have four shillings a day, besides the king's provisions. I am going to have a house built me, with as much ground as is needful. I think God has sent me here for good to the poor souls, who are glad to hear but unable to maintain a preacher.

That God may spare your useful life, and bless all your labours, is the prayer of, reverend sir,
Your unworthy servant in the gospel,

J. Baxter

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 382–83.

¹John Baxter (1739–1805), had just arrived in Antigua as a government shipwright. Having experience as a local preacher, he soon became the leader of the society formed by Nathaniel Gilbert at St. Johns. Baxter was appointed an 'elder' at the Christmas Conference that formed The Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore in 1784, and ordained the following year by Thomas Coke. He spent the remainder of his life in ministry in Antigua. See Vickers, *Dictionary*, 22–23.

From Thomas Wride

Newbiggin in Teesdale [Co. Durham]
May 9, 1778

Reverend Sir,

This day sevensnight, at Barnard Castle, I received yours of the 20th of April, and for which I return you my sincere thanks. I think to get a few days to go unto her, and if all things are agreeable, to be married. But as I proposed in last, so now I determine for too, not to use your leave at the expense of my reason. So that if I do not find all things as well as my last described them, I will not proceed without your further consultation. The 'sword drawer' is a preacher, was a travelling [preacher].¹ The history is, for substance, as follows:

As soon as you had left Weardale, he took a letter out of his pocket, saying 'Here is a letter for Mr. Wesley. I don't know who it was [that] gave it [to] me. Somebody put it into my hand. I'll open it; and if it be anything worthwhile, I'll send it after him. If not, I'll burn it.' Accordingly he opened it and read it. When he had so done, he gave it violent encomiums. 'It is a sensible letter.' 'It's a clever piece.' 'He's a wit that wrote it.' The letter was then left with sister Wal-r to be sent to you. She took an exact copy of it. Brother Barry had this copy, so that the present is not exact, being only as she took it down from her memory. But [it] is just, although not *correct*; as appears from the memory of William Hodgson of Allendale Town. On the 7th of March this William Hodgson was at (viz., at the house of Steven Watson at [St. John's] Chapel in Weardale) the letter being read. William says, 'I know who wrote that. I remember every word of it. Mr. [David] Evans wrote it. He read it to me. I asked him what he intended to do with it. He said he would leave it for Mr. Wesley somewhere, that he may not know whom it came from.' Since my last, I find three more to whom this secret was entrusted: viz., Mary Wigham, and Elizabeth, her daughter, north of Allendale Town; and John Wilson of Bro[therlee?]. In sight of the two former, David wrote his piece twice over (no wonder it was 'clever') and read it to them. They both remember it to have the name of 'Thomas Standout'; but that which you had was (I think) subscribed 'Thomas Stackhouse'. I have no copy of the performance. But I can tell enough to do *justice* to the piece and its writer. In the first copy the points were exactly copied; but in the present one they are neglected, so I use none.

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Do the Minutes of your Conference stand for anything, or do they not? If they do stand for anything, how is it that such unqualified local preachers are suffered to preach among us. They know how to roar and to make the Scriptures speak blasphemy, but they have no idea of God or their subject. Perhaps, sir, you think that we among the mountains have no sense; but sir, to your great surprise, though we don't pretend to literature yet we pretend to a good share of mother wit.² What is chargeable on the local preacher is also chargeable upon some of the travelling preachers, as witness some of our preachers last year.

Here my copy ends. How strange that one whose gifts were so remarkably deficient should so violently condemn some on whom he hereby reflected.

Here, sir, is what seems odd. For aught I remember, all over West Haven circuit, as well as this (Allendale town excepted), David was looked upon to be exceeding deficient. Yet at Allendale town he was very acceptable and preferred above his predecessors and contemporaries. This I find from various person, some of Allendale who heard him at other places declared he was not like the same man when at other places. Some of Weardale who heard him at Allendale say the same thing. Yet it does not appear

¹See the postscript to Wride's letter of March 21, 1778. Wride goes on to identify the writer as David Evans, who was stationed in the Dales in 1775. Evans desisted from travelling in 1776, was readmitted in 1779, then stepped down again in 1783 (see *Works*, 10:452, 484, 531).

²I.e., natural intelligence.

that partiality wresteth them of Allendale in his favour. For at the same time that they esteemed him as a preacher they sorely disliked one part of [his] conduct, his drinking brandy so freely. So that eight shillings were paid at Allendale for brandy for him alone. I suppose this 'sword drawer' meant his quill when he said 'sword', but had he meant or said 'heel awl' it would have been a far more formidable—as a far more penetrating—weapon. I remember we did commonly in the way of [?] use the words 'heel awl'³ and 'sword' as synonymous. How expert he is at this 'sword', I know not; but if no better at *it* than at the quill, he will cut no great figure in history.

Last Monday morning brother Wilkinson's wife was brought to bed of a daughter.⁴ I am,
reverend sir,

Your devoted servant,

T.W.

What follows is to blind the curious, who I know have no business. May the God of grace help the writer to live unto his glory, that when we stand before the awful tribunal we may be found approved in his sight through Jesus.

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

³A tool used in shoemaking.

⁴Robert Wilkinson (d. 1780) had help establish Methodism in Barnard Castle as a schoolmaster and local preacher, before becoming a travelling preacher in 1768. He was assigned to the Dales in 1777 (*Works*, 10:467). See Jackson, *EMP*, 6:211–22.

From the Rev. John Fletcher [to JW and CW]

Macon, in Burgundy¹
May 17, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

I hope that while I lie by like a broken vessel the Lord continues to renew your vigour, and sends you to water his vineyard, and to stand in the gap against error and vice. I have recovered some strength, blessed by God, since I came to the continent; but have lately had another attack of my old complaints. However I find myself better again, though I think it yet advisable to avoid speaking in public.

I preached twice at Marseilles, but was not permitted to follow the blow. There are few noble, inquisitive Bereans in those parts.² The ministers in the town of my nativity have been very civil. They have offered me the pulpit. But I fear if I could accept the offer it would soon be recalled. I am loath to quit this part of the field without casting a stone at the giant, sin, which stalks about with uncommon boldness. I shall therefore stay some months longer, to see if the Lord will please to give me a little more strength to venture upon a little attack.

Gaming and dress, sinful pleasure and love of money, unbelief and false philosophy, lightness of spirit, fear of man, and love of the world are the principal sins by which Satan binds his captives in these parts. Materialism is not rare. Deism and Socinianism are very common. And a set of free-thinkers (great admirers of Voltaire and Rosseau, Boyle and Mirabeau) seem bent upon destroying Christianity and government. 'With one hand' (said a lawyer, who has written something against them) 'they shake the throne, and with the other they throw down the altars.' If we believe them, the world is the dupe of kings and priests. Religion is fanaticism and superstition. Subordination is slavery and tyranny. Christian morality is absurd, unnatural, and impracticable. And Christianity is the most bloody religion that ever was. And here it is certain that, by the example of Christians so called, and by ever continual disputes, they have a great advantage and do the truth immense mischief. *Popery will certainly fall in France in this or the next century.* And I make no doubt but God will use those vain men to bring about a reformation here, as he used Henry the Eighth to do that great work in England. So the madness of his enemies shall at last turn to his praise, and to the furtherance of his kingdom.

In the meantime it becomes all lovers of the truth to make their heavenly tempers and humble, peaceful love shine before all men, that those mighty adversaries, seeing the good works of professors, may glorify their Father who is in heaven, and no more blaspheme the worthy name by which we are all called Christians.

If you ask what system these men adopt? I answer that some build upon deism a morality founded on self-preservation, self-interest, and self-honour. Others laugh at all morality except that which, being neglected, *violently* disturbs society; and external order is the decent covering of fatalism, while materialism is their system.

O dear sirs, let me entreat you in these dangerous days to use your wise influence, with unabated zeal, against the scheme of these modern Celsuses, Porphyries, and Julians; by calling all professors to think and speak the same things, to love and embrace one another, and to stand firmly embodied to resist those daring men—many of whom are already in England, headed by the admirers of Mr. [David] Hume and Mr. [Thomas] Hobbes. But it is needless to say this to those who have made, and continue to make, such a stand for vital Christianity. So that I have nothing to do but pray that the Lord would abundantly support and strengthen you to the last; and make you a continued comfort to his enlightened people, loving reprovers of those who mix light and darkness, and a terror to the perverse. Which is the cordial prayer of, reverend and dear sirs,

Your affectionate son and obliged servant in the gospel,

J. Fletcher

¹Fletcher had taken a leave from ministry in Madeley, for his health, and was visiting his natal land while recovering his health.

²See Acts 17:11.

P. S. I need not tell you, sirs, that the hour in which providence will make my way plain to return to England, to unite with the happy number of those who feel or seek the power of Christian godliness, will be welcome to me. O favoured Britons! Happy would it be for them if they knew their gospel-privileges. My relations in Adam are all very kind to me. But the spiritual relations whom God has raised me in England exceed them yet. Thanks be to Christ, and to his blasphemed religion.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 384–86 [as corrected in a couple of places in *Arminian Magazine* 17 (1794): 384–86].

From Ann Bolton

Witney
May 19, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I may literally say, 'I have not abiding place here.'¹ On this account I am frequently pained in my mind, as many disagreeable circumstances arise from it. Yet as it appears to be the path Infinite Wisdom appoints me to walk in, I am enabled to say, 'The will of the Lord be done!'²

Upon close examination I do not find a wish to alter my situation, or remove one cross out of my way. But since I saw you last, my path has been more strewn with difficulties and trials than perhaps for any three months together since I have known the Lord. In general, through the help of God, I have possessed my soul in patience. But I fear at some times I have been but barely saved, having been sorely tempted to peevishness and discontent. But oh, had I a thousand tongues, I could not be able to declare the thousandth part of the goodness of God manifested to me in Christ Jesus. My heart reproaches me for nothing so much as ingratitude. I am frequently grieved that I do not make more ample returns for that abundance of love and mercy vouchsafed to me. I am often beginning anew to glorify God, and to labour in my whole deportment to adorn the gospel which I profess to believe. And blessed be God, notwithstanding I still come short, I am yet encouraged to persevere, in hope of apprehending that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.³ Nothing gives me so much pleasure as the thought of being made holy; as I know it is the only way of being capacitated to enjoy God, both in time and eternity.

From my own experience, as well as from some conversations I have had with my friends, I have been led to consider the truth more than ever that the talking of a justified or sanctified state is dangerous, without adverting to that also that we are pleasing or displeasing to God every moment according to our obedience or disobedience. From this I have been inclined to think that our assurance of the divine favour, and confident expectation of eternal blessedness, will grow stronger as we advance in meetness for glory. Is not this consistent with our working out our salvation with fear and trembling?

My reason for thus writing is to beg your advice, as I seem much inclined to press upon the believers to labour after upright walking, in order to keep their witness clear. But I have some reason to think one or two of our good people have been fearful, lest I should set aside 'believing'. But I have endeavoured to give them satisfaction. I believe we have several in this society capable of improving in Christian knowledge, if they had opportunity—for want of which they (indeed I may say 'we') know too little of the doctrines of the gospel. We have thought whether it would not be advantageous to us if a few were frequently to meet, and freely converse as we are able, and so endeavour to help each other. I shall be very thankful for an answer soon, though I deserve it not; and am with fervent prayers for your present and eternal felicity,

Your every obliged,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 440–41.

¹Cf. Heb. 13:14.

²Acts 21:14.

³Cf. Phil. 3:12.

From John Helton¹

Melksham
3rd Mo. [i.e., May] 28, 1778²

[p. 3]

My friend's letter needs no apology. And as it is an apostolic injunction, 'Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you' (1 Pet. 3:15), I find my mind free to comply with it; and trust I shall do it 'with meekness and fear'.³

It is asked, 'What are your reasons for quitting the Methodist connection?'⁴ And 'Have you read a *Letter to a Person [lately] joined with the people called Quakers?*'⁵

To the first question I reply I had many reasons, which will sufficiently appear in my answer [p. 4] to the second query. And therefore, as I intend no reflection on a religious society, many of whom I much esteem, I shall only observe in general on this head that having about a year since met with [Robert] Barclay's *Apology*, I was fully convinced, that the principles, worship, and discipline of the people called Quakers,⁶ were more consonant to scripture,⁷ reason, and to my own feelings than those of the society to which I was united. Indeed, I then saw the cause of the many painful feelings with which I had been for years exercised, as many of my sentiments coincided with theirs, though I knew it not, being carried away with the vulgar opinion of the erroneousness of their principles, etc. And as I believe this is the state of many well-disposed minds, I wish that people of all denominations would not take things upon trust, or on the authority of any man or men; but simply turn their minds to the Divine Teacher in their own breast, even to the Lord Jesus, who is 'the life and light of men', as well as constantly 'search the scriptures'; for I am persuaded, that numbers so implicitly believe all they hear, that it may be said they have no creed of their own.

To the second question I answer, I have repeatedly and carefully perused that *Letter*, and shall give my friend a few free remarks thereon.

But it may be necessary to premise that, on the first superficial view, it struck me; and I believe it has had the same effect on a certain class [p. 5] readers who either cannot, or will not, look beyond the surface of things. This may account for its being deemed unanswerable. For looking into it a second and third time, it became less and less formidable. Not only so, but as I more attentively considered the objections, and discovered the fallacy of the arguments, some difficulties which rested on my mind, were removed; as on a close inspection it appeared that eight out of fifteen of Barclay's propositions were

¹Helton had been stationed in London to assist JW from 1770–75. In 1776 he was moved to Bristol, and on reading Robert Barclay's *Apology* he decided to withdraw from the Methodists and become Quaker, provoking a significant debate at the 1777 Conference in Bristol (see *Works*, 10:463 fn). While this letter is addressed to an unidentified friend of Helton, it is included here because it replies also to JW's earlier published *Letter* on the Quakers.

²This publication was first advertised on June 9, 1778 in the *London Evening Post*.

³1 Pet. 3:15.

⁴Note in original: 'As I have been repeatedly called upon by a number of persons in different parts of the kingdom, it seems necessary to give one general answer to these questions, which I hope may not only prove acceptable, but also beneficial to my friends. My principal inducement therefore, in the publication of this letter, and my apology for troubling the public with it, are, that I think, I owe it as a duty to my friend, to myself, and above all, that truth requires it.'

⁵Published by JW in 1748.

⁶Note in original: 'The purity and gospel simplicity of their principles, worship, and discipline, I found my heart united to, before I was acquainted with any of that religious society; and concluded, that if they, as a people, walked agreeably thereto, they were "burning and shining lights".'

⁷As a Quaker, Helton does not capitalize 'scripture'.

granted to be agreeable to scripture, and these eight propositions (which the objector allows do not 'differ from Christianity') contain the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. And more narrowly looking into those to which he has objected, I found reason to conclude that he now sees things more clearly, and has therefore changed his mind with regard to the seventh proposition on justification, and the tenth on women's preaching. My reasons for this assertion, I expect, will be sufficiently clear when they shall be given in their proper place.

As to the fifteenth proposition, respecting 'conformity to the world', he agrees with Barclay in some things. And how he can prove that his denying flattering titles to be given to men makes 'a difference between Quakerism and Christianity', is a mystery indeed. However, this I am certain of, that if Barclay was mistaken in the several particulars objected to, his errors are harmless, being on the safe side, and such as do not hinder those who hold them, according to the objector's own words, from being 'real Christians; men who have the mind that was in Christ'.⁸ [p. 6]

I conclude therefore that eleven out of the fifteen propositions have nothing different from Christianity in them. Let us then calmly consider the reprobated ones, weighing the arguments which are brought to prove that they 'manifestly differ from Christianity'; and in doing this, let us follow the objector step by step, entering more minutely into the particulars we have just glanced over.

[1.] The first objection (p. 4) is against the latter part of Barclay's second proposition, in which he treats of immediate revelation. The sentence objected to is this: 'Yet these revelations are not to be subjected to the examinations of the scriptures as a touchstone.'

To which the writer of that *Letter* replies, 'Here there is a difference' between Quakerism and Christianity. 'The Scriptures are the touchstone whereby Christians examine all (real or supposed) revelations. In all cases they appeal to the law and to the testimony, and try every spirit thereby.'

I answer, [1] whatever 'manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity' some people may see in Barclay's *Apology*, it is easy to see there is a manifest injury done him by a mutilated quotation, which quite alters the sense of that passage and makes him speak a language which both he and his friends disavow.

He is here represented as delivering, and consequently the people called Quakers as holding, a tenet which must fix a stigma on them, as though they slighted the scriptures, and refused to have their doctrines and practices tried by [p. 7] them. I will give my friend Barclay's own words, and then he may judge how fairly he has been quoted, and whether there is just ground to charge him with underrating the scriptures. His words are, 'Yet from hence it will not follow that these revelations are to be subjected to the examination *either of the outward* testimony of the scriptures *or of the natural reason of man, as to a more noble or certain touchstone.*'

Was it designed, or only an oversight, to leave out almost half the sentence, especially the words '*more noble or certain*'? If it was *only* an oversight, it is highly blameable; for the omission alters the sense of the passage. It is very obvious Barclay's meaning is that however excellent the scriptures are, yet they must be considered as inferior to the Holy Spirit, by which they were dictated. And he is particularly careful, while he contends for the doctrine of inspiration, to guard against the abuse of it, by saying, 'These divine, inward revelations neither do, nor ever can, contradict the outward letter of scripture, or right and sound reason.' And as this sentence was not only joined with, but precisely fixes the sense of that objected to, I marvel that it could be overlooked.

2) I am far from being satisfied with what is brought as a proof of Barclay's error. The objector says, 'In all cases they appeal to the law and to the testimony.'

I could not help applying to this way of proving things what a witty author says, 'Clergymen, [p. 8] generally set out with begging the question'. This is exactly the case in taking for granted that the 'law and the testimony' always mean the letter of Scripture. No surely; for the scriptures speak of 'a law written in the heart', informing us of 'its accusing, or else excusing' (Rom. 2:15); they very frequently treat of 'the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, the word of God' and 'sure testimony' (Rom. 2:15), testifying of him that he is the inward 'life and light of men. The true light' (John 1:4) to the poor Gentile

⁸Note in original: 'The objector's words are always enclosed in single inverted comma's.'

world, who are not so highly favoured as we are with the letter of scripture; 'the true light' to the poor papists, who, by designing men, are forbid the use of them; and 'the true light' to multitudes who through bodily infirmities, etc., are deprived of the outward testimony of scripture. Yet all these have 'the law written on their hearts'; Jesus being that glorious, universal, saving 'light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world' (John 1:9).

3) I think it must clearly appear to every enlightened, unprejudiced mind that in this article, Robert Barclay is far sounder in the Christian faith than the objector. For the latter, in affirming, 'The scriptures are the touchstone, whereby all Christians examine all revelations', seems to me to renounce this glorious gospel promise and privilege, 'When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth' (John 16:13). That they are a touchstone is fully subscribed to; but that they are the only touchstone is denied, as it derogates from the office of the Holy Spirit, which is not only given to but is 'to abide' with the disciples of Christ 'to the end of the world' (Matt. 28:20).

4) That 'the scriptures are not the touchstone to examine all revelations', I prove thus. [p. 9] Holy men of old, who 'walked with God', were frequently favoured with immediate revelations. Yet these men had not the letter of scripture. And 'if the scriptures are the touchstone to examine all (real or supposed) revelations', I should be glad to know, as they were destitute of this touchstone, how they distinguished the one from the other? I take it for granted that they had the same Holy Spirit which Barclay pleads for as the peculiar privilege of Christians, it being promised under the gospel dispensation, 'They shall be all taught of God' (John 6:45).

That 'the scriptures are the touchstone to examine all revelations' cannot be true, for they declare instances wherein they could be no touchstone at all.

Philip had a revelation to join himself to the 'Ethiopian, who was reading in his chariot' (Acts 8:26).

Paul and Timothy had a revelation 'not to preach the word' (at that time) 'in Asia', being 'forbidden of the Holy Ghost' (Acts 16:6). They had a second revelation 'not to go to Bythinia, the Spirit not suffering them' (Acts 16:7). In short, (to pass by many instances of this kind) they had a third revelation to go to Macedonia (Acts 16:10). But if 'the scriptures are the touchstone to examine all revelations,' what scripture could they turn to, capable of satisfying them in any of these particulars?

5) We may bring the matter nearer to ourselves. There is a variety of cases which we may be called to act in, respecting which, although we may earnestly desire to know the will of God, the scriptures may be quite silent. Let me select a single instance, that of the ministry. [p. 10] Pray what scripture can satisfy a man 'that he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost',⁹ to that important office? It will not do to say he has gifts, for I presume that many have gifts (if by gifts we understand man's natural and acquired abilities) who are not called to that important work. And the question is not respecting qualifications, but singly this, whether any scripture can fully satisfy a man thus exercised, that what he feels in his mind is a real, and not a supposed revelation?

[2.] There is something that looks like an objection to the third proposition, which I confess gives the objector the appearance of one disposed to find fault. However he answers his own objection, when he says, 'If by these words be only meant that *the Spirit* is our first and principal leader ... Here is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity!'

I ask how is it possible to understand Barclay in any other sense? And is it not surprising that the objector should bring in an *if*, and seem at a loss for his meaning, when in the same sentence he quotes Barclay's words? 'The Spirit is our first and principal leader.' I wish therefore that, instead of playing upon words, he had given a necessary caution against a common but dangerous error amongst those called spiritual people of making the scriptures [p. 11] supersede the necessity of the Holy Spirit, which our divine Master promised to all his followers when he said, 'But the Comforter, which is the Holy

⁹Note in original: 'When any person offers himself to the bishop to be a minister of the Church of England, he asks him, "Do you believe that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to this office?" He answers, "I trust I am." If this was really the case with all who are styled ministers, we might reasonably expect to see a speedy and happy change take place amongst men.'

Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things' (John 14:26). And which exactly corresponds with what the beloved disciple John testifies to have been experienced by those, whom he addressed in these ever memorable words, 'Ye have an unction from the Holy One; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things' (1 John 2:27). A glorious and comfortable truth! which, when experimentally known, will lead to the highest estimation of the scriptures, as they not only testify of the great love of Christ in what he has done and suffered for sinners, but also as they give a true testimony of his redeeming power which they have witnessed in their own hearts. And without this living knowledge of the heart, however men may idolize the scriptures, it is to them a *sealed book* and a dead letter; which is strikingly set forth in these words, 'The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life' (2 Cor. 3:6).

I have dwelt the longer on this subject on account of its great importance, and because numbers of professors are not only ignorant of it as an experimental truth but are strangers to it even in theory. And I am constrained to say I know not any society of Christians except the people called Quakers that bears a full testimony to the doctrine of immediate divine inspiration. It is true the established church daily prays for, and others preach and talk much about it; but when they come to the point, some laugh at all who make pretensions of this [p. 12] kind, and others charge them with manifestly differing from Christianity.

[3.] The third objection is brought against the seventh proposition, which treats on justification, of which the objector says, 'Here is a wide difference between Quakerism and Christianity.' 'This is flat justification by works.' And adds, 'The ground of this mistake, is the not understanding the meaning of the word justification.'

To which I reply,

1) That Barclay uses the word in a sound proper sense, for being made just implies the remission of sins, as well as the renewal of the mind, which may properly be defined, a change of heart. And as these cannot be separated in the experience of Christians, they are always connected in the scriptures. The apostle Paul, speaking of the wonderful change wrought on some of the most abandoned characters, says, 'And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God' (1 Cor. 6:11).

And it is worthy to be remarked that the term justification is most commonly used for being made just, as in these words, 'For he that is dead, is freed' (i.e., justified) 'from sin' (Rom. 6:7). I apprehend the reason why it is so frequently used in this sense in scripture, as well as by Barclay, is because it is less liable to be abused.

2) The mistaken sense in which some understand the term justification, as implying an [p. 13] imputation of righteous, without the impartation thereof, arises from the absurd idea which men form of the supreme Majesty—gloomy minds representing to themselves, and setting him forth to others as an implacable being, full of vindictive wrath, even against such as have not only been convinced of, but earnestly desire to forsake the evil of their ways. So that for want of just conceptions of the Divine Being, and properly adverting to what the scriptures uniformly declare, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life' (John 3:16); and not clearly understanding that Christ's coming into the world was not the cause but the effect of God's great love to all men; our gracious Creator is set forth in an unamiable light, stripped of his divine perfections; and on this false foundation a superstructure raised which I think is subversive of holiness in heart and life.

3) But I must do justice to the objector, by saying he has publicly confessed that he formerly leaned too much to Calvinism with respect to the doctrine of justification, and has therefore openly asserted, 'We are every moment pleasing or displeasing to God according to the whole of our inward tempers and outward conduct.' If I mistake not, this exactly coincides with Barclay, and is agreeable 'to sound doctrine', as well as to the divine testimony, which every man has in his own breast (2 Tim. 4:2).

4) As there is a common, but very unjust, charge brought against the people called [p. 14] Quakers by some who are ignorant of, as well as by others who I fear designedly misrepresent, their principles, 'that they deny the fall of man, and err in the nature and cause of our justification'; this seems to be a proper place to clear up these points, which I shall attempt to do by making an extract from

Barclay's *Apology*, hoping it will fully satisfy every unprejudiced mind, respecting these important subjects.

Treating of justification, he says (p. 202),¹⁰

First, we renounce all natural power and ability, to bring us out of our lost and fallen condition; and confess, that as of ourselves we are able to do nothing that is good; so neither can we procure remission of sins, or justification by any act of our own, so as to merit or draw it as a debt from God due to us; but we acknowledge all to be of and from his love, which is the original and fundamental cause of our acceptance. [p. 15]

Secondly, God 'manifested' this 'love towards us in the sending of his beloved Son the Lord Jesus Christ into the world' (1 John 4:9), 'who gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour' (Eph. 5:2); 'and having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; and by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, and suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God' (1 Pet. 3:18).

Thirdly, for as much as 'all men have sinned' (Rom. 3:23), therefore all have need of this Saviour, to remove the wrath of God from them due to their offences. In this respect he is truly said to have borne his own body 'the iniquities of us all' (Isa. 53:6); and therefore is the 'one mediator between God and men' (1 Tim. 2:5); so that our former sins stand not in our way, being by virtue of his most satisfactory sacrifice removed and pardoned. Neither do we think that remission of sins is to be expected, sought, or obtained any other way, or by any works or sacrifice whatsoever. So then, Christ by his death and sufferings 'when we were enemies, reconciled us to God' (Rom. 5:10). God is willing to forgive us our iniquities and to accept us, as is well expressed by the apostle Paul, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.' And therefore the apostle, in the next verses adds, 'We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God' (2 Cor. 5:19), intimating that the wrath of God being removed by the obedience and death of Christ, he is willing to be reconciled to them and to remit the sins that are past.

We consider then our redemption in a twofold respect, both which in their own [p. 16] nature are perfect, though in their application the one is not, nor can be, without respect to the other.

The first is the redemption performed by Christ, in his crucified body without us. The other is the redemption wrought by Christ within us, which no less properly is accounted redemption than the former. The first then is that whereby a man, as he stands in the fall, is put into a capacity of salvation, and hath conveyed unto him a measure of that power, spirit, and grace that was in Christ Jesus; which, as the free gift of God, is able to counterbalance, overcome, and root out the evil seed wherewith we are naturally leavened.

The second is that whereby we witness this pure and perfect redemption in ourselves, purifying and redeeming us from the power of corruption, and bringing us into unity, favour, and friendship with God. By the first of these two we that were lost in

¹⁰Note in original: 'I earnestly entreat that all sensible, well-disposed persons would carefully read over Barclay's *Apology for the people called Quakers*,; and I am persuaded they will not only be highly entertained but much profited by one of the most rational, masterly, as well as scriptural performances of any perhaps on such subjects in the English language. It manifests the beautiful uniformity and true gospel simplicity of the doctrines, worship, and discipline of that people, free from all the carnal inventions of men; and also a full answer to every objection brought against them. At the same time it may be discovered that many striking sentiments with which some late authors have enriched their works, were borrowed from the *Apology*.'

Adam, plunged into the bitter and corrupt seed, unable of ourselves to do any good thing, but naturally united to evil, froward and propense to all iniquity, servants and slaves to the power and spirit of darkness, are, notwithstanding all this, so far 'reconciled to God, by the death of his Son' (Rom. 5:10), that we are put into a capacity of salvation, having the glad tidings of the gospel of peace offered unto us in Christ Jesus.

By the second we witness this capacity brought into act, whereby receiving the light, spirit, and grace of Christ revealed in us, we possess a real, inward redemption from the [p. 17] power and nature of sin; and so come to be truly redeemed, justified, made righteous, and to a spiritual union with God. Thus 'he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity' (Titus 2:14). And thus 'we know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death' (Phil. 3:10).

Hence may clearly appear what a manifest misrepresentation it is to charge the people called Quakers with denying the fall of man, and his recovery by Christ. And they equally injure them, who assert that they hold 'justification by works', when they ascribe the whole of man's redemption to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[4.] The fourth objection to the tenth proposition, which treats of the ministry is, that in suffering women to preach 'There is a manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity.' And to support this charge there are two texts of scripture produced, which are the only ones that *seem* to serve the purpose. But that they are not used in their true signification, I hope fully to demonstrate. For

1) First that the silence which the apostle enjoins is 'not asking questions in the church' is evident from a great variety of particulars, as well as from the context. Please to read the chapter and mark the connection. The apostle had been treating of the gift of tongues, and of persons prophesying one after another. There is reason to conclude that in these public assemblies there were people of different nations, as was the case on the day of Pentecost, and that one minister had the gift of one [p. 18] tongue, and a second of another, in the same diversity that they had the other miraculous gifts. For that they all had not an universal knowledge of all languages is clear from the apostle Paul's words, 'I speak with tongues more than you all' (1 Cor. 14:18). How reasonable then is this conclusion, that there were a few inquisitive women in the assembly who, not understanding what the preacher was then delivering, but prompted by curiosity (perhaps from a better motive) might ask questions to the interruption of the speaker and auditory? Therefore the apostle gives this admonition, 'Let your women' (i.e., wives) 'keep silence, and if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for them to speak' (that is, to ask questions) 'in the church' (1 Cor. 14:35). The injunction for 'wives to ask their husbands at home' clearly shows that the prohibition was not a general one, and that it must be confined to asking questions; for what had asking 'their husbands at home' to do with their preaching? It seems a reflection on an inspired writer to suppose he wrote so inconsistently. I think, therefore, that the exposition I have given is easy and natural, does no violence to any part of the passage, and prevents one scripture from militating against another.

2) If this comment be rejected, how shall we reconcile the following scriptures with the common interpretation of that passage: 'And it shall come to pass, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons, and your daughters shall prophesy' (Joel 2:28)? And 'Philip had four daughters who prophesied' (Acts [21]:9). The apostle Paul respectfully mentions several women who 'labored with him in [p. 19] the gospel' (Phil. 4:2–[3]). And one he expressly styles a minister of a particular church. 'I commend unto you Phebe our sister, a servant' (i.e., a minister) 'of the church of Cenchrea' (Rom. 16:1). Nay, if he forbids women to preach, how shall we reconcile the apostle with himself? For he gives as particular directions respecting the manner of women's prophesying as he does of the men's. 'Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head' (1 Cor. 11:4–5). I would ask why such particular directions about the mode of women's prophesying, if it be unlawful for them to speak in the church?

3) To these striking, and, I think, unanswerable scriptures, the objector only proposes a very harmless question. 'But how do you prove that prophesying in any of these places means preaching?'

I answer, this is an easy way of getting free from difficulties. For if I mistake not, the proof lay at his own door. And before he drew the hasty conclusion, 'here is a manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity', he should have proved that prophesying in any of these places does not mean preaching.

4) But as the whole is rested on this single point, I shall attempt to prove that prophesying generally means preaching, and that in those places we are more particularly concerned in it has no other signification. And,

First, the apostle has joined praying and prophesying together. And as praying in a [p. 20] public assembly (for of such he was treating) is universally allowed to be a part, and indeed a very principal part of the ministerial office; and women did exercise this part of the ministerial function, in being the mouth of the people to God; we have here at least a presumptive proof that prophesying means preaching; and I think a demonstration that the speaking in the church which the apostle reproves in women, must be wholly confined to asking questions. Otherwise it would be a prohibition against their praying, as well as preaching. For how could women pray in public if it were a shame for them to speak in the church, in the sense wherein it is generally understood?

Secondly, the apostle, when he uses the word, precisely fixes the meaning thereof. 'He that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort' (1 Cor. 14:3). 'He that prophesieth, edifieth the church' (1 Cor. 14:4). 'For ye may all prophecy, one by one' (that is, all who were qualified for, and called to the ministry) 'that all may learn, and all may be comforted' (1 Cor. 14:31). 'All may learn' from those who prophesied; and women did prophesy; therefore women were *teachers*, by whom 'the church was exhorted, edified, and comforted'.

In this common acceptation we frequently find the word 'prophecy' used in the Old and New Testament. 'Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet'; that is, 'shall speak unto Pharaoh' (Exod. 7:1–2). Judas and Silas, being prophets, 'exhorted the brethren with many words' (Acts 15:[32]). 'Anna the prophetess, coming into the temple, gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him' (Christ) 'to all them who looked for redemption in Israel' (Luke 2:38). 'Zacharias prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the [p. 21] Lord God of Israel, who hath visited, and redeemed his people"' (Luke 1:67–[68]). In all these places prophesying has no other meaning than preaching, and among these preachers we have a female. This exactly agrees with the definition the apostle Paul gives us of the word, when he defines the nature and use of it. 'He that prophesieth, speaketh unto' (1 Cor. 14:3) men, by doctrine and exhortation, for the edification and comfort of the church. And that there was nothing of an extraordinary nature in the prophesying, which the apostle treats of throughout the whole chapter we have been considering, may be learned from the close of it; for the church was to judge of what was delivered. 'Let the prophets speak, two or three; and let the others judge' (1 Cor. 14:29).

Thirdly, should it be granted that it does not mean preaching, it makes the case worse. For then it must have been something greater, as the apostle informs us: 'He that prophesieth, is greater than he that speaketh with tongues' (1 Cor. 14:5). And he exhorts them to 'desire the best of gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy' (1 Cor. 14:1). Hereby signifying that prophesying was above all the spiritual and miraculous gifts which abounded in that church. So that there is but this alternative: if they are not allowed to be ordinary, then we make them extraordinary ministers.

Some persons, when they have been closely pressed, have sought for refuge by granting that these women who prophesied were called to an extraordinary work; which, I think, is giving up the whole point at once, as it grants more than is contended for. And hence we may infer, according to the well-established rule, he [p. 22] that is called to a greater may be called to an inferior work.

Besides, should it be granted that prophesying means foretelling things to come, an insurmountable difficulty yet remains. For if it was unlawful for women, who had that gift, to speak in the church, how were they to communicate what was revealed to them? If by speaking, what could this be termed but the most excellent preaching?

Fourthly, the simple fact seems to be this, that though prophesying sometimes means predicting or foretelling things to come; yet in the places which I have quoted it only means preaching in the common acceptance of the word. And whenever it is used in the former sense,¹¹ it always includes preaching, as publishing these predictions to those concerned. Hence, under the law, such persons were styled *Nebiim*, prophets (from *Ba*, which signifies to come, and to go) because of their coming and going between God and the people. So under the gospel-dispensation they are called prophets (from *pro*, and *phemi*, *dico*, I speak, or utter [p. 23] forth) because ministers are the Lord's messengers, to publish his word of reconciliation to the people. 'He hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation' (2 Cor. 5:19) is the language of an inspired apostle; and therefore he adds, 'We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.'

5) I might have taken a shorter method to convince some persons that there is nothing unlawful in women's preaching, by saying there are several female teachers in the Methodist society; and hence I concluded in the beginning of this letter that the objector has changed his sentiments in this particular. If he has not, there seems a manifest inconsistency in his suffering women to preach.

[5.] The eleventh proposition treats of religious worship, of which Barclay says, 'All true worship to God is offered in the inward and immediate moving of his own Spirit, and all worship which man sets about in his *own* will is will-worship.'

1) It is well worthy my friend's particular notice that, although the writer of that *Letter* objects to, yet he grants the whole of this proposition when, adopting Barclay's words, he says, 'It is true indeed "that all true worship to God is offered in the inward and immediate moving of his own Spirit" and that we cannot truly worship God unless his Spirit move or incline our hearts.' If so, the dispute is at an end; as all that Barclay contended for is granted. [p. 24]

The objector's definition of inspiration is this: 'God moves man, whom he has made a reasonable creature, according to the reason he has given him. He moves him by his understanding as well as his affections, by light as well as by heat. He moves him to do this or that by conviction, full as often as by desire. And he does truly move you to preach, when in his light you see light, clearly satisfying you it is his will.'

I reply, let the Holy Spirit move the heart in what manner he is pleased. For I believe that when the 'affections' are divinely moved, so is the 'understanding'; and when there is divine 'heat', 'light' and 'conviction' are its inseparable attendants. But this moving of the Spirit on the minds of men must be considered as something which we have not at our own command, but is distinct from and very superior to the mere exercise of the rational faculties. This distinction, I think, the objector has not sufficiently attended to, or he would not have given us (what appears to me) an illustration of the subject which explains away the very nature of inspiration. He says, 'You are as really moved by the Spirit when God convinces you you ought to feed him that is hungry, as when he gives you ever so strong a desire, impulse, or inclination.'

I answer, if this assertion is confined to the action of feeding the hungry, or to any other civil or relative duty, it is an undoubted truth, to which every reasonable creature must subscribe. But if it is intended to illustrate the doctrine of inspiration, I object to it as very [p. 25] foreign to that subject, as it confounds things of a very dissimilar nature. The fallacy of this way of reasoning lies in taking for granted that they are similar cases, and consequently that there is no more need for divine inspiration to qualify us to worship the divine Majesty, or preach the gospel, than to feed the hungry. The reverse of which appears to be the truth; for I know it to be my duty at all times to assist the distressed, nor need I wait to be moved by the Holy Spirit to enable me to perform an action, which is in the power of bad as

¹¹Note in original: 'I might produce many testimonies to prove, that prophesying is used in both these senses, but shall only quote the much admired Mr. Henry. In his comment on prophesy, he says,

By the Spirit they shall be enabled to foretell things to come, and to preach the gospel, without distinction of sex, not only your sons, but your daughters; without distinction of age, both your young men, and old men; and without distinction of outward condition, even the servants and handmaids shall prophesy. Joel 2:28–29'.

well as good men. But the case is widely different with regard to religious worship, or preaching the gospel, which require very different qualifications. The scriptures inform us that ‘we know not what to pray for as we ought, but as the Spirit helps our infirmities’. And that ‘the preparation of the heart is from the Lord’. Whereas the above illustration, as well as the practice of the objector, seem to inculcate this doctrine that without immediate divine inspiration we are as well qualified at any time to pray or preach as we are capable of feeding the hungry. To this kind of inspiration, I apprehend, there is not any infidel who can have the least objection.

But how does this agree with his assertion, ‘God truly does move you to preach when in his light you see light, clearly satisfying you it is his will?’ Has Barclay said anything stronger on the subject? The question therefore is, Do any at any time, without this *clear, satisfying light*, stand up to preach? Several persons have frankly acknowledged to me that they have attempted to preach when this *clear light* has been absent—at a [p. 26] time too when they have had a clear sense of being disqualified for the work—and have bewailed the necessity they were then under of acting contrary to their own judgment. And this, I believe (for I speak from experience), must frequently be the case with well-meaning men who, fit or unfit, are in the practice of preaching at certain stated times. I fear there are others who are strangers to, feel no want of, and therefore do not wait for the divine aid to qualify them for this great work. To such persons the words of our Lord, on a similar occasion, are quite pertinent: ‘Your time is always ready’ (John 7:6).

Again, if that only is ‘true worship, which is offered to God when his Spirit moves and inclines our hearts’, it naturally follows that ‘all other worship must “be false worship”’, which is performed when the heart is not thus moved and inclined. It therefore is our indispensable duty to wait till his Spirit move and incline our hearts, without which we shall fall under the charge, ‘This people draweth nigh to me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me’ (Matt. 15:8). Therefore it is that we have so many solemn cautions against inconsiderately rushing into the presence of the Lord. ‘Keep thy foot’, saith Solomon, ‘when thou goest into the house of God’ (Eccles. 5:1). That is, let thy mind be deeply and awfully sensible of the perfections of the supreme Majesty, in whose presence angels veil their faces and in silent adoration bow before him. ‘Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth. Therefore let thy words be few’ (Eccles. 5:2). What a check, [p. 27] and just reproof, is this to the forwardness of the creature who, without waiting for divine aid which qualifies for ‘worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness’ (1 Chron. 16:29), presumes, like ‘Nadab and Abihu, to offer strange fire before the Lord’ (Lev. 10:1)!

Hence we see the duty and reasonableness of silent waiting on the Lord, as ‘the preparation of the heart is from him’ (Prov. 16:1), without which we shall incur the censure of ‘offering unto God the sacrifice of fools’ (Eccles. 5:[1]). This is strongly enforced in the following words: ‘We know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Rom. 8:26–27).

2) But of this silent waiting the writer of that *Letter* asserts, ‘In this there is a manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity. This is will-worship, if there be any such thing under heaven. For there is neither command nor example for it in scripture.’

I answer, this is merely begging the question. For, if there is such a ‘manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity’ in this particular, then some scripture condemns it, which scripture should have been produced. But should it be granted (which I must deny) that ‘there is neither command nor example for it in scripture’; yet unhappily this proof proves too much, and may be retorted with greater success, that ‘there is neither command nor example’ under the gospel-dispensation [p. 28] for ‘liturgies, singing men, organs’, and all those superfluous ornaments, which have been borrowed from the Church of Rome, and are diametrically opposite to the simplicity of the gospel, being the inventions of men and introduced into the church in the times of apostasy, to supply the want of the divine presence. We may therefore safely conclude, ‘This is will-worship, if there be any such thing under heaven’; for there is neither ‘command nor example for it in scripture’; nor did it take place in any Christian assembly till the

inward 'glory had', in some measure, 'departed from it'.

3) All the objections that are brought against this silent waiting on the Lord, arise from not rightly considering the true nature of religious worship—which may justly be defined a simple act of the mind, and all external acts are at best only so many outward expressions of it.

If this be granted, which I think is self-evident, it will follow that as there may be external acts of devotion which do not arise from the internal actings of the quickened soul, so on the contrary the mind may be reverently exercised in divine worship when no verbal expressions are uttered. Thus our blessed master defines the nature of all true worship: 'God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth' (John 4:24). It therefore highly concerns all who desire to worship the divine Being acceptably to beware of 'sparks of their own kindling' (Isa. 50:11), and of the too common, but fatal, deception in supposing divine worship to consist in mere [p. 29] outward acts, while the heart remains insensible of these divine feelings of contrition for sin, poverty of spirit, and filial gratitude to the Father of mercies. If we are destitute of these dispositions, however specious our performances may appear, and however frequent we may be in the use of them, we shall only resemble the carnal Jews who fancied religion consisted in the splendour of their temple, and outward acts of devotion, and neglected to seek that rectitude of mind which renders our offerings acceptable in the sight of the divine Being.

4) From what has been said, I think it is evident that the necessity of silent waiting upon the Lord has its foundation in the nature and fitness of things. For as it is the 'Holy Spirit which helps our infirmities'; and 'we know not what to pray for as we ought' (Rom. 8:26), till we are thus assisted; it follows that 'we cannot truly worship God, unless his Spirit move and incline our hearts'. A silent waiting therefore for the moving of the Holy Spirit is not only reasonable, but our indispensable duty; and the not waiting for this divine assistance before we begin any act of religious worship is no less absurd than it would have been for a diseased person at the 'pool of Bethesda' to have stepped into the water before the 'angel came down to trouble it' (John 5:4). So that were the scriptures perfectly silent on this head, the nature of the duty fully evinces its expediency. And I may safely add that all those who are unacquainted with the reverential awe which expresses itself in the silent breathings of the soul in humble gratitude to [p. 30] the Author of our being, and is what the scripture emphatically styles 'pouring out of the soul in prayer' (1 [Sam.] 1:15), are but outward-court worshippers, who have not yet entered into 'the holy of holies'.

I confess that to natural (and I fear to some who are called spiritual) men it appears the foolishness of folly to see a congregation waiting upon God in silence. And therefore they are ready to condemn and speak evil of that which they do not understand. So true is the declaration of an inspired writer, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned' (1 Cor. 2:14). Whereas to the enlightened mind, it appears not only scriptural but highly rational, and is at once an acknowledgment of all the divine perfections: the omniscience, omnipresence, almighty power, and boundless goodness of our gracious Creator and Benefactor; as well as of our entire dependence on, and expectation of receiving spiritual good, immediately from him. And why should it be thought incredible that that glorious, infinitely exalted, and happy Spirit 'whose offspring we are; and in whom we live, and move, and have our being' (Acts 17:28), should manifest his divine power and presence to the waiting mind, without the medium of an outward instrument! We must assent to this, or deny the scriptures which abundantly declare it, the experience of Christians who bear testimony to it, as well as derogate from the infinite perfections of the Almighty Creator. Let us not then, like the foolish Israelites, say, 'Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak to us, lest we die' (Exod. [20:19]). Rather, may it be the language of our hearts, 'Let all creatures in heaven and earth [p. 31] keep silence', that 'that still small voice' which proclaims 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth' (Exod. 34:6) may be heard and known, as it were, in the very center of the soul. Here is 'the Lord's holy mountain', where he makes unto his redeemed people 'a feast of fat things, a feast of wines, well refined on the lees' (Isa. 25:[6]); that is, a pure spiritual enjoyments; 'and where he destroys the covering and veil, that are spread over all nations'.

[4]] All that the objector hath urged, respecting the lawfulness of appointing times and places for public worship, falls to the ground, and only proves he mistook Barclay's meaning in these particulars; for the uniform practice of the people called Quakers from the beginning, hath fully testified that they consider it as a duty to appoint times and places for their religious assemblies.

Many persons also greatly misapprehend Barclay, in supposing that he pleads for entirely silent meetings, when he only pleads for a retired waiting for the divine aid, which alone qualifies to pray or preach.

[5]] Let us now more minutely consider preaching, as it cannot properly be styled worship. And yet so ignorant are the bulk of mankind, that it is looked upon as almost the whole of religious worship; and at the same time so vitiated is the taste of many professors that they cannot distinguish 'the chaff from the wheat' (Jer. 23:28), nor can they relish any other kind of preaching than that which has a tendency rather to amuse than profit the minds of the hearers. [p. 32]

But in order to understand the true ground of the ministry, let us look back and consider on what foundation the first ministers stood. The scriptures are abundantly clear on this head. They inform us that 'holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost' (2 Pet. 1:21). 'As the Spirit gave them utterance' (Acts 2:4). Of the ability which God gave, they 'prophesied one by one' (1 [Cor. 14:31]), being so attentive to their gift, that 'if any thing was revealed to another sitting by' (1 Cor. 14:30), he that 'was speaking held his peace, the spirit of the prophets being subject to the prophets' (1 Cor. 14:32).

From these passages of scripture, we may infer the following particulars.

First, that their discourses were not premeditated; they delivered to the people what was immediately given them from the Lord. So that, in truth, they could say, 'Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ' (1 John 1:3); and 'the things which we declare unto you, we have heard, we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life' (1 John 1:1). Even that living word manifested in the heart which David compares to fire, for saith he, 'While I mused, the fire burned, and at last I spake with my tongue' (Ps. 39:3).

Secondly, as they prophesied 'one by one', there must have been some time of silence, to prevent two or three speaking at once.

Thirdly, the present mode of one man's preaching for an hour, without the gospel privilege of admitting as many as are moved by the Lord to deliver his message, was not known among the first ministers. [p. 33]

And lastly, the practice of the people called Quakers, in the ministration of the word, corresponds in all these particulars with the conduct of the primitive ministers of Christ.

If it is not too absurd an idea, let my friend picture to himself one of the apostles writing down his sermon, or conning over some old commentator, picking out a sentence here and there, committing them to memory, and then retailing them to his auditory for the word of God. But I have done—as the very supposition is so absurd that to name it is sufficient. For these ministers were to be so led and influenced by the Holy Spirit that they were enjoined, 'Take no thought, how or what things ye shall say, for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye shall say' (Matt. 10:19). And as all true ministers stand on the same foundation, having the same commission, as well as the same gracious promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway, to the end of the world' (Matt. 28:20); it follows that they should live in a state of continual waiting and dependence on the Lord, 'speaking from the ability which God giveth, and not in the enticing words of man's wisdom' (1 Cor. 2:4). Or, as the apostle has it in the same chapter, 'Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth' (1 Cor. 2:13). Here we have a clear distinction between the true and the false minister. The former under the divine influence publishing the counsel of God, 'in the demonstration of the Spirit'; and the other amusing the people with his own inventions. Of whom, Bishop Tillotson makes this pertinent remark. 'Speculative men wrought a great part of their divinity out of their own brains, as spiders do cobwebs out of their own bowels.'¹² [p. 34] And as they are distinguished in this particular, they are equally so in another. The one having 'freely received' (Matt. 10:8), according to his Lord's command, and the

¹²Note in original: 'Tillotson's *Works*, Vol. I. Sermon 48. p. 460. 10 edn.'

example of true ministers, freely communicates to the people. The other, whom our Lord calls an 'hireling' (John 10:12), being influenced by lucrative motives, desires to be 'put into the priest's office, that he may eat a morsel of bread' (1 Sam. 2:36). They are also equally distinguished by their language. That of the true shepherd is 'I have coveted no man's silver or gold, or apparel. Yea, you yourselves know, that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me' (Acts 20:33–34). 'Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but we' (two bishops, Paul and Timothy) 'wrought with labour and travail night and day' (2 Thess. 3:8); 'because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God' (1 Thess. 2:9).

How widely different is the language of an 'hireling'? Like those of old, who 'knew not the Lord', they are ready to say, 'Give flesh to roast for the priest' (1 Sam. 2:15). And should any mildly expostulate with them that this is contrary to the injunctions of Christ to his ministers, 'Freely ye have received, freely give' (Matt. 10:8), they are ready to reply, 'Nay, but thou shalt give it me; or if not, I will take it by force' (1 Sam. 2:16).

And they are very conspicuous in a fourth particular, our Lord having drawn a striking picture of the true and false teacher. Of the latter he says, 'They love long robes, the uppermost rooms at feasts, the chief seats in the synagogues, and to be called of men, "Rabbi, Rabbi"' (Matt. 23:[5–7])—that is, [p. 35] they sought to be distinguished by their dress as well as by titles, were ambitious of the chief places in church and state, to be the head of a party, head of their brethren, 'lording it over God's heritage', expecting implicit faith and passive obedience from their hearers. This spirit early crept into the church, and was severely reprehended by our Lord. When there was a strife among the disciples, who should be the greatest, he said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them, are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so. But he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve' (Luke 22:25–[26]). And his particular charge to them was, 'Be not ye called rabbi' (doctor) 'for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father. Neither be ye called masters. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant' (Matt. 23:8–[11]).

[6.] The twelfth proposition treats of baptism, on which Barclay observes, 'that as there is but "one Lord and one faith", so there is but "one baptism"' (Eph. 4:5). And that this *one baptism* is not an outward baptism of water, I think he very fully demonstrates.

To which proposition the writer of that *Letter* objects, 'Yea, one outward baptism which you deny. Here therefore is another difference between Quakerism and Christianity.'

I reply that this way of proving things, by simply affirming or denying, is very far from being satisfactory; and yet I cannot find anything else offered as a proof here. [p. 36]

But this is a subject of considerable moment, and as several persons, not rightly understanding it, have run into great errors themselves, and at the same time have charged the people called Quakers with being 'no Christians'; it may be necessary to examine this matter to the bottom.

1) Since 'life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel' (2 Tim. 1:10), there is an end to all shadows, signs, and figures. Thus I understand our blessed Lord, in his conversation with the woman of Samaria, 'Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father' (John 4:21). 'God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth' (John 4:24). A plain intimation of the entire removal of all types and shadows, they being no longer necessary, when the substance is come.

2) It is confessed on all hands that water-baptism is only a sign or figure. And the sign and thing signified by it are two distinct things. This is granted by the objector. For I suppose when he says, 'Yea, one outward baptism', he would not be understood that this 'outward baptism' of water was the *one baptism* which the apostle intended. And yet he must do this, or hold two baptisms. Robert Barclay makes this *one baptism* an inward baptism of the Holy Ghost. The objector allows this inward one, but says, 'Yea, one outward baptism', in direct opposition to the apostle's assertion, *one baptism*.

3) That water-baptism was not instituted by Christ, as some ignorantly affirm, is very clear [p. 37] when we consider that it was used by John, before our Lord made his public appearance. Not only so, but it is well-known by those who are acquainted with the Jewish customs that it was one of their ceremonies.

Therefore calling it 'an institution of Christ' tends to mislead the ignorant, and is contrary to truth.

4) Taking things for granted, without examination, is the reason that some not only say 'It is an institution of Christ', but that he commanded it when he commissioned his disciples to 'go and teach all nations, baptizing them in' (or, as some render it, *into*) 'the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' (Matt. 28:19). This, I grant, is Christ's baptism. But look at the text, and see if water is mentioned in it. That nothing of such an outward, superficial nature could be intended by our Lord is evident from the nature of his superior dispensation, which is all *spirit and life*. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that our Lord should abolish some shadows and outward figures, and substitute others. I consider therefore the baptism enjoined by the founder of the Christian religion as contra-distinguished to, and essentially different from John's. The one outward, of water; the other inward, by the Holy Ghost. Were not the 'covering or veil spread over all nations' (Isa. 25:7), and that the 'natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God' (1 Cor. 2:[14]), we should marvel that the words of Christ have been so commonly interpreted in the most gross and outward sense. Especially in this instance, as John the Baptist in the clearest manner distinguishes between water-baptism and the baptism of Christ. 'I indeed', [p. 38] says he, 'baptize you with water. But he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire' (Matt. 3:11). And this exactly agrees with the prophecy of Malachi, who prophesying of the Lord Jesus, whom he styles 'the messenger of the covenant', he adds, 'for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap' (Mal. 3:1–2). So his people know him, when by 'the brightness of his' glorious, inward 'appearance', he 'consumes the man of sin' (2 Thess. 2:8). And they, feeling the painful operation pointed out by the expressive emblem of fire, are ready to ask, in the striking language of the prophet, 'Who may abide the day of his coming! And who shall stand when he appeareth! When he sits as a refiner, and purifier of silver' (Mal. 3:[2]–3); not to destroy, but to 'purge them, as gold and silver, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit' (2 Cor. 7:1), for this great and gracious purpose, 'that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness' (Mal. 3:3). The parallel text to this, and which seems to be a beautiful illustration of it, we find in the prophecy of Ezekiel, which contains a gracious promise of that change of heart which is productive of all holy tempers, as well as uniformity of conduct. The passage is peculiarly expressive, and may every mind not only discover its beauty, but earnestly desire to experience the full import of these words, '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 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 an heart of flesh' (Ezek. 36:25–[26]).

Here our Lord's words appear in their true, spiritual meaning. 'Go, teach all nations'; that is, instruct them fully into the great and [p. 39] gracious designs for which the Son of God was manifested. And 'baptize them into the name' (that is, into the nature) 'of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' (Matt. 28:19). This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the words of the apostle Peter: 'And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost' (Acts 11:[15–16]).

If it be objected 'that to baptize in this sense of the word, is the office of the Holy Spirit', I answer it is true. But ministers may be said to baptize instrumentally, and in this sense we must understand the apostle Paul when he says, 'I have begotten you through the gospel' (1 Cor. 4:15).

To call any thing short of this the baptism of Christ must prove, and indeed has proved, a fatal mistake to many. For multitudes erred, by falsely concluding that as they had been sprinkled with water in their infancy, or immersed when adults, they were thereby 'regenerate, and grafted into Christ's church',¹³ though remaining entire strangers to 'the mind which was in Christ' (Phil. 2:5)! To all such the apostle Peter declares, 'Not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ' ([1] Pet. 3:21). This is the real inward baptism, which unites to and makes us mystically one with Christ; of which the [p. 40] apostle Paul treats when he says, 'Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death' (Rom. 6:3).

¹³Note in original: 'In the office of baptism used by the established church, it is taken for granted, that all who are sprinkled with water, are thereby "regenerate and grafted into the church of Christ". This supposition appears to me unscriptural, absurd, and highly dangerous.'

‘For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ’ (Gal. 3:27). ‘By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been made to drink into one Spirit’ (1 Cor. 12:13). The baptism here treated of cannot possibly mean an outward one of water, for many who have been sprinkled with or immersed in water ‘have not put on Christ’, nor do they ‘walk as he also walked’ (1 John 2:6).

Again, the same apostle, writing to Titus, says, ‘Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost’ (Titus 3:5). And lest any should apprehend this washing to be some external, he guards against so dangerous a delusion by adding, ‘which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour’ (Titus 3:6). This is that baptism which qualifies for the enjoyment of God here, and for his glorious kingdom hereafter. And which the lip of truth has declared, ‘Except a man be born again’ (which is only another word for baptized) ‘he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ For, ‘He that believeth and is’ (thus) ‘baptized shall be saved’ (Mark 16:16).

That I have put no false gloss on these scriptures is abundantly confirmed by the words of our Lord to his disciples after his resurrection. ‘John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence’ (Acts 1:5); and which promise had its accomplishment when, on the day of Pentecost, the new gospel [p. 41] dispensation was opened, ‘and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost’ (Acts 2:4).

5) That water-baptism was sometimes used in the apostle’s days is not denied. And it is equally true that circumcision and the observance of the ceremonial law was not only in use, but pleaded for by weak Christians. Shall we from hence infer the necessity of our coming under those shadows, which are termed ‘weak and beggarly elements’ (Gal. 4:9)? Which is equally the case of all figures under the gospel dispensation. But if the practice of some in the use of water-baptism (for I think it is proved that they had no precept for it) is obligatory, what reason can be assigne, that their practice in circumcision should not be equally binding on us?

Some persons ignorantly plead ‘that Christ himself was baptized’, and therefore enforce it as the duty of all his followers. By the same way of reasoning we may conclude that, as Christ was circumcised, so should all Christians.

6) In the Acts of the Apostles, and in the several letters to the churches, we are informed of the very extensive labours of the apostle Paul in planting churches. But what was the apostle’s practice with respect to these gathered churches? To be sure, if he understood his commission ‘to baptize all nations’ to mean water-baptism, he would not only have been in the constant use of it, but particularly careful not even in a single instance to transgress his Lord’s command. But he not only assures us that he was not in the practice of it, by declaring [p. 42] ‘I only baptized Crispus, and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas’, but he also informs us that water-baptism was no part of his commission: ‘Christ sent me not to baptize’ (that is, with water) ‘but to preach the gospel’ (1 Cor. 1:17). Words cannot more clearly point out in what light the apostle Paul considered water-baptism.

Besides, it would puzzle the ablest disputant to prove that the apostles themselves were baptized with water. It is very clear to me that they were not. For who could baptize them? The scriptures assure us that ‘Christ baptized not’. And if they were not baptized according to the present mode of reasoning, they were no Christians; and consequently incapable of administering what they call ‘an ordinance of Christ’.

[7.] The thirteenth proposition treats of the communion of the body and blood of Christ; which Barclay considers as ‘inward and spiritual, of which the breaking of bread by Christ with his disciples, was a figure’.

It will help my friend to answer the objections brought against this proposition, by considering,

1) That as our blessed Lord was born under the law, he became subject to all its rites and ceremonies. His last act therefore was the observance of the passover. So that this was no new institution, but as one of the evangelists informs us ‘eating the passover with his disciples’ (Mark 14:14). And which is confirmed by our Lord’s words while they partook of the supper. ‘With desire I’ [p. 43] ‘have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer’ (Luke [22]:15). And as it was the common practice for the master of the feast, after supper, to take bread and the cup and after giving thanks to God to distribute them among the guests, our bless Master conformed thereto, desiring them to do that act in remembrance

of him. Had it been a duty to be continued amongst Christians, no doubt but our blessed Lord would have been more explicit. For from what then passed, as recorded by the evangelists, we can only consider the command as confined to that single action performed by the apostles. And how can we think otherwise, when we are informed that 'Christ is the end of the law' (Rom. 10:4)? That is, of the shadowy dispensation. So attached indeed were some even of those who embraced the Christian religion to these outward things that it became necessary sharply to reprehend them. 'O foolish Galatians' is the language of Paul to that church, 'after that ye have known God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage. Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain' (Gal. 4:9–11). Not only so, but the apostle saw it needful to caution such superficial persons not to condemn those who were under a superior dispensation. Writing to those who were more spiritual, he says, 'Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ' (Col. 2:16–17).

That many of the Corinthians, who were 'carnal and walked as men' (1 Cor. 3:3), should be fond of these shadows we need not marvel, and therefore in [p. 44] condescension to their weakness, and to prevent their relapsing into idolatry, they were indulged in the use of this figure. Nor was this a singular case. For in condescension to some who were 'weak brethren', Paul had both Timothy and Titus circumcised (Acts 16:3), and in several instances he himself conformed to the ceremonial law (Acts 21:23[–26]), assigning reasons for this part of his conduct in these words: 'To the weak I became as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some' (1 Cor. 9:[22]).

2) Whether it is the duty of all Christians to be found in the practice of the supper may be answered by asking another question. We are informed that our divine master, immediately after the supper, 'poured water into a basin' and washed the disciples feet, and then said unto them, 'Ye call me master and lord! And ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your lord and master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you' (John 13:13–15). Here we have both the precept and example of our Lord for feet-washing, in a much more explicit manner laid down than that of the supper. Is it not then the indispensable duty of all Christians to be found in the practice of it?

Those who are very much attached to outward ceremonies answer this question by saying 'that it was only a figure, by which our Lord designed to teach his followers the important doctrines of humility, and benevolence towards each other'. [p. 45]

And is there not the same reason for concluding with Robert Barclay that 'the breaking of bread by Christ with his disciples was a figure', by which he intended to instruct all his followers into the necessity of spiritually eating his flesh and drinking his blood? As he has expressly declared, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you' (John 6:53). And to guard against a gross carnal sense which some have put on these words, our Lord added, 'The flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life' (John 6:[63]). And which is fully explained, when he says, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and sup with him, and he with me' (Rev. 3:20).

Why our Lord's words in one place must be understood in a figurative sense, conveying spiritual truths to the mind, and in another place be interpreted in the most gross and outward signification is something mysterious.

3) But it has been pleaded that 'the apostles, who are supposed to have known the mind of their master, were in the practice of water-baptism, and the Lord's supper'.

I answer, this seems to be the strongest argument which can be urged in favour of them. But that it is not impregnable will appear by considering the following particulars.

First, should it be granted that the apostles were in the use of them, it will not follow that it becomes a duty to us, as nothing can be [p. 46] a duty without a divine precept; 'For where no law is, there is no transgression' (Rom. 4:15).

Secondly, the apostle Paul's practice and declaration, 'I baptized Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel', quite overturns the argument.

Thirdly, this argument falls under its own weight, as it proves too much. For agreeably to this way of proving things feet-washing (1 Tim. 5:10), anointing with oil (James 5:14), love feasts (Jude 12), saluting each other with the kiss of charity, having all things in common, yea, and circumcision itself (Acts 16:3) must all be introduced into the church, as they were in use with the apostles, which may be seen by consulting the texts referred to.

[8.] The fifteenth proposition which is objected to, as differing from Christianity, is most of all surprising, because that writer himself, as far as he went, has borne a true testimony against the evil of conformity to this world.

[1]] But why it should be criminal to conform to the world in dress, and yet make 'a manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity' because that people testify that the world is equally evil in its customs and language, must appear mysterious to every thinking mind. And the most favourable construction that can be put upon it is to say the writer's own mind has not attained to the clearness of the *perfect day*.

2) It appears to me that he has not done Barclay justice in fixing only upon the word [p. 47] 'thou'; detaching it from the connection in which it stood, and then holding it up as a scarecrow, as though he made the whole of the plain language to consist in using 'thou' instead of 'you'. Whereas it is the very smallest and lowest link in the chain. And I am fully satisfied that, had any one singled out from the objector's writings some particular sentence, quite detached from its connection, and then ridiculed it, every candid mind would have disapproved such treatment. Let me, out of many, select a single instance which seems full to the point. The objector has wrote against conforming to the world in dress, and pointed out the danger of an imputation in the lowest degree, saying, 'A ruffle, from one, may grow to twelve inches.'¹⁴ Now should any person single out this sentence, taking no notice of its connection, but in a kind of triumph exclaim, 'Where do the scriptures forbid wearing a ruffle? And 'The placing religion in such things as these is such egregious trifling as naturally tends to make religion stink in the nostrils of infidels and heathens.' Was any person thus to expose this well-designed caution to contempt, every fair reasoner would condemn such a procedure.

And yet this very thing the objector is guilty of. Barclay had proved to a demonstration the apostasy of the Christian world; and, among other things, that its present language and customs are inconsistent with the simplicity, truth, and purity of the gospel. The dispute therefore is not about the single pronoun 'thou', whether it is more scriptural and grammatical to use it to a single person than 'you', for this is very obvious to all who are not blinded [p. 48] by custom or prejudice. For after all the torturing of invention to make 'you' to a single person proper, it can never be done, as it destroys the just and necessary distinction between the second person singular and plural.

Besides, [applying] 'you' to a single person was evil in its origin, being invented to flatter the vanity of one of the Roman emperors, by addressing him in the plural number as though he was more than mortal.

It is also evil in its nature, as it is contrary to truth to use the plural number to one person.

And, it is a departure from that scriptural language, used by God himself, and by all holy men; for a false, flattering, heathenish language, which was invented by vile sycophants to please men of corrupt minds.

But as I hinted, although this is a part of the plain language, yet it stands connected with several things of greater importance. Therefore the objector should not have passed them, but ought to have proved, if it could be done, that it is quite consistent with 'speaking the truth from the heart' (Ps. 15:2) to call persons 'master and mistress', and to subscribe ourselves their 'humble servants', when no such relation subsists between us. Not only so, but that it is lawful indiscriminately to give to poor, ignorant, sinful mortals (and some of them the most worthless characters) the titles which belong to the supreme

¹⁴JW, *Advice to the People Called Methodists with Regard to Dress* (1760), II.5.

Being: such as, 'reverend', 'most reverend', 'right honourable', 'worshipful', 'majesty', 'your holiness', etc. [p. 49] Whether this is 'speaking the truth from the heart'? Or is it not, with a witness, giving 'flattering titles to men', of which one who lived under a much inferior dispensation to ours said 'I know not to give flattering titles. In so doing my maker would soon take me away' (Job 32:22)?

3) Robert Barclay therefore concludes, 'It is not lawful for Christians to give or receive those titles, Your Majesty; Your Lordship.' And the reason he assigns is 'that they alone belong to the supreme Being'.

To which it is objected, 'In this there is a difference between Quakerism and Christianity.' 'St. Paul gives the title of "Most Noble" to the Roman governor.'

From this objection we may learn that it is not only lawful to give these titles to men, but also that it is very criminal to withhold them, if it makes us differ from Christianity. This, I think, is a perfectly new discovery, and what some would term the opposite extreme.

That Paul once gave the title of 'Most Noble' to Festus, Barclay grants; but adds, 'He would not have called him such if he had not been truly noble. And indeed he was, in not giving way to the fury of the Jews against him.'

To which the writer of the *Letter* objects, 'The scripture says quite otherwise. That he did give way to the fury of the Jews against him' [p. 50]

It seems to me, that the objector is guilty of two mistakes. First, in taking for granted that Festus, when he asked Paul, 'Wilt thou go to Jerusalem?' was in the secret of the Jews' intention to kill him; which is highly improbable, as the event fully proves. And the second error is in asserting that the scripture says 'that Festus did give way to the fury of the Jews against him'. I think the scripture says the very reverse. The desire of the Jews was that Festus would send Paul to Jerusalem. But Paul's request was to go to Rome, to be judged by Caesar. Let the scriptures then decide to whom Festus gave way. His words are these: 'Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? Unto Caesar thou shalt go' (Acts 25:12). We may therefore safely conclude that Festus acted nobly by Paul, in withstanding the powerful interest of 'the high priest, and the chief of the Jews, who desired favour against him, that he would send him to Jerusalem' (Acts 25:2–[3]).

4) But it has been objected by others, that 'the apostles themselves frequently gave the appellation of 'Sirs' to the people. As, "Sirs, ye should have hearkened to me. Sirs, be of good cheer ..."' (Acts 27:21, 25).

To which I reply that it is universally allowed that the word *andres* [and] *viri*, rendered 'sirs', has no such signification, and ought to have been translated 'men', as it is literally. 'Men, ye should have hearkened unto me. Men, be of good cheer.' There is but one exception to this, throughout the Acts of the Apostles. There we are informed that the awakened jailor, when in great distress of mind, addressed the apostles saying, 'Sirs', (i.e., Lords) 'what shall I do to be [p. 51] saved' (Acts 16:30)? This was his heathenish language, which he had not then parted with, but which was never used by the apostles.

And that this corrupt language, and these flattering titles, are not suitable to the simplicity and dignity of a Christian, I can prove from a comment on these words, 'The elder unto the elect lady' (2 John 1), which I expect the objector himself can have no objection to. On that scripture the author has this remarkable comment.¹⁵

Kuria (which our translators have rendered 'Lady') is undoubtedly a proper name both here, and in verse 5th. For it was not then usual to apply the title 'Lady' to any but the Roman empress; neither would such a manner of speaking have been suitable to the simplicity and dignity of an apostle.

Here are two things granted: first, a corruption of language; and secondly, that this corruption of language is incompatible with the 'dignity and simplicity' of the gospel dispensation.

¹⁵Note in original: 'See Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament*'.

5) Another branch of the plain language consists in a testimony against that spirit of apostasy in departing from the simple, scriptural language used by God himself and by holy men in all ages in calling months and days by those proper names which the Almighty gave them, and adopting in the place thereof those heathenish, idolatrous names which were given [p. 52] them in honour of their false gods. This will clearly appear by considering the origin of some of the months, and of all the days of the week now commonly used; and which may be seen by consulting Chambers' and Johnson's dictionaries, from which I have mostly borrowed the following remarks, respecting the change of the names of months and days.

1. The first month was by the Romans called January, in honour of Janus, an idol with two faces, to whom the first day of this month was dedicated by the heathens, with feastings, dancings, masquerades, etc. In opposition to which, the Christians observed it as a day of fasting and humiliation.

2. The second month, according to an ancient testimony, was called February, in honor of the Prince of the infernal regions. Pliny informs us, that the first twelve days of this month were spent in offering sacrifices to the infernal powers (devils) to render them propitious to their deceased friends; and as Pluto (the supposed prince of the infernal regions) was called Februus, in honour of him this month was called February.

3. The third month was by Romulus, one of the Roman emperors, styled March, in honour of his pretended father Mars, feigned to be the god of war; and therefore commanded that religious worship should be paid him.

4. The fourth month is supposed to have been called April, in honour of an imaginary goddess, known by the name of Venus, who was [p. 53] worshipped by the Romans, and to whom the most abominable, wanton rites were paid.

5. The fifth month is thought by some to have been termed May, in honour of the senators of Rome. By others it is supposed to have been called, in honour of Maia, the mother of Mercury, one of the pretended deities, whom the idolatrous Romans worshipped.

6. The sixth month was styled June, in honour of an heathenish goddess named Junone.

7. The seventh month has taken its name July, from Julius Caesar, one of the Roman emperors.

8. The eighth month was called August, in honour of one of the Roman emperors, who was styled Augustus. The title of Augustus (which signified venerable, sacred, magnificent) was first given to Octavius, one of the emperors, as expressive of something divine and elevated in him, above the common pitch of mankind; and from that time all the Roman emperors were flattered with the title of Augustus Caesar; that is, Sacred, Magnificent King.

9. September, October, November, and December, are the old numerical Latin names for these months, which were not changed. But it would be improper to use them now, though quite proper before the style was altered. The Romans began their year the month called March, and therefore September was the seventh month of their year, but the ninth of ours. [p. 54]

And as the idolatrous Romans made these changes in the names of several of the months, in honour of their emperors or false gods; so our pagan ancestors changed the names of all the days of the week, calling them by the name of the idol which they worshipped on that day. Hence

The first day of the week was called by our idolatrous Saxon ancestors, Sunday, (the day of the sun) because it was set apart for the worship of the sun.

The second day of the week they named Monday, (Moon's-day) as they commonly worshipped the moon on this day.

The third day of the week was termed Tuesday, in honour of an idol called Tuisco Mars, who was worshipped by that barbarous and idolatrous people on this day.

The fourth day of the week was styled Wednesday, and dedicated to one of their idols called Wooden, whom they worshipped on this day.

The fifth day of the week they named Thursday, in honour of one of their idols called Thor, whom they worshipped on this day.

The sixth day of the week they styled Friday; and this day was dedicated to, and called after one of their idols, named Freya.

The seventh day of the week they styled Saturday, in honour of the planet Saturn, the [p. 55] supposed father of the heathen gods, to whom idolatrous worship was paid on this day.

Whether it be agreeable to the purity of the Christian religion to retain the names of these idols, and have months and days called after them, I leave my friend to judge; with reminding him that God's people of old (when they took possession of the land of Canaan, from which the inhabitants were driven out, on account of their idolatry) were enjoined, 'Make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let it be heard out of your mouth' (Exod. 23:13). 'For I will take away the names of Baalim' (Heb. lords) 'out of his mouth' (Hosea 2:17). 'And I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered' (Zech. 13:2). 'Then will I turn to the people a pure language' (Zeph. 3:9).

6) Robert Barclay says, 'It is not lawful for Christians to kneel, or prostrate themselves to any man'; and the reason he assigns is that 'these are the alone outward expressions of our adoration towards God'.

To which it is objected, 'If this is not lawful, then some law of God forbids it. Can you show me that law?'

I answer that 'these are the alone outward expressions of our adoration towards God' is a striking reason why it should not be done, if the Almighty had not expressly forbidden the 'bowing down to any thing in heaven or earth'. It is also condemned by the apostle Peter, who, when Cornelius bowed down to him, said, 'Stand up; I also am a man' (Acts 10:26). And the angel, before whom John fell down, said, 'See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant' (Rev. 22:9). [p. 56]

7) They nearly agree with regard to plainness of dress. But there is a reflection on the people called Quakers, as though they placed it only 'in colour and shape'.

With regard to colour, it is very obvious that they lay no stress upon it. And as to shape, they only condemn the continually changing with every new, useless fashion. And therefore they more nearly keep to the primitive dress of their forefathers, which was not peculiar to them, but the way the nation in general dressed at that time.

With respect to the quality and price of clothes, perhaps many of them, as well as of every other religious society, have exceeded their ability. At the same time, every candid person must acknowledge that in modesty of apparel, and freedom from superfluous ornaments, those of that society who are consistent with their principle are good examples to their neighbours. But is it not a contradiction in terms for a person gravely to exhort his audience 'not to be conformed to this world' (Rom. 12:2), and to caution the people against superfluity of dress, when at the same time he himself is clothed from head to foot in a needless, expensive garment, which our Lord condemned in the Jewish teachers and cautioned his disciples against an imitation of them? 'Beware', says Christ, 'of the scribes, who love to go in long clothing' (Mark 12:38), 'and to be called of men "Rabbi, Rabbi"' (Matt. 23:7).

8) Barclay says, 'It is not lawful for Christians to swear, as our blessed Lord has commanded, "Swear not at all"' (Matt. 5:34). And the apostle James says, 'Above all things, my brethren, swear not' (James 5:12). [p. 57]

To which it is objected, 'Christ himself answered upon oath before a magistrate. Yea, he would not answer till he was put to his oath.'

I reply, Christ did not swear, but simply answered, 'Thou hast said' (Matt. 26:64). And because the high priest adjured him by the living God, to make this an act of Christ's, and so countenance that

which he absolutely forbids, is a strange mode of wresting the scriptures. What were our Lord's reasons for not answering does not become us to say, as the scriptures are silent on this head. But to suppose that 'he *would* not answer till he was put to his oath' is indeed a most astonishing supposition! And I appeal to my friend whether it is not more worthy of the Son of God to suppose that he then answered, not to encourage, but to discountenance swearing. For its language seems to be, 'Stop, presumptuous man! No more profane the sacred name!' 'Thou hast said.' That is, 'I am the Son of God.'

Besides, oaths are not only unlawful, as the great master has enjoined his servants, 'Swear not at all'; but they are pernicious to civil society—so much false-swearing as we have in the land having a direct tendency to harden men's hearts, and so prepare them for every act of wickedness. For it is a melancholy truth that what on account of the strict nature of oaths, their frequent repetition, and the shameful, yea, shocking manner of administering them (few knowing what they swear) there are hardly any offices a man can enter upon but he has this alternative, either to be [p. 58] perjured or else ruined by a faithful discharge of his office.

As for Custom House oaths, little or no regard is paid to them. Nor indeed is it hardly possible for a master of a ship to invoice or clear out his vessel without being perjured every time.

How far oaths of allegiance to kings are binding, the history of our own nation furnishes us with awful instances. Here we are informed of all ranks of men now swearing fidelity to the prince, and shortly after dethroning him. We may therefore safely conclude, 'because of swearing, the land mourneth' (Jer. 23:10).

That swearing was looked upon by Christians as unlawful, we have several clear and undoubted testimonies handed down to us, agreeing that they considered swearing as forbidden by Christ. Therefore when an oath was tendered, the general answer was, 'I cannot swear. I am a Christian.'

9) Robert Barclay has joined swearing and fighting together, as being both forbidden by our Lord, and therefore contrary to the spirit of the gospel.

The writer of that *Letter* says, 'Whatever becomes of the latter part of this proposition (*fighting*), the former is no part of Christianity.'

Whether this was intended as a tacit acknowledgement that war is unlawful, or whether he was *then* sensible of the great impropriety for one professing to be a minister of Christ to countenance that murderous spirit which is gone forth [p. 59] into all Christendom, cannot be determined.¹⁶ But as wars have many advocates, who not only speak for but also take an active part in them, let us consider what can be said in justification of their conduct.

As the practice is not only highly irrational, but quite contrary to the peaceable and loving spirit, which the gospel of Christ recommends, we must not expect that it gives any countenance to it. And yet the abettors of war think they can prove its lawfulness from John the Baptist's answer to the soldiers, 'Do violence to no man, and be content with your wages' (Luke 3:14); and our Lord's saying to his disciples, 'Let him that has no sword, sell his garment, and buy one' (Luke 22:36).

To the first of these scriptures I answer, Let all soldiers take this advice, 'Do violence to no man', and I am bold to affirm that there will be [p. 60] a final period to wars. For maiming and shedding the blood of our fellow-mortals, and thereby sending them (perhaps unprepared) into an awful eternity, is the

¹⁶Note in original: 'Since the writing of that *Letter*, he has in the strongest terms testified against war; which testimony I wish to preserve, that it may be a standing witness, not only against war, but against those tracts which he has lately published that countenance war.

The passage I refer to, is as follows,

But there is a still greater and more undeniable proof that the very foundations of all things, civil and religious, are utterly out of course in the Christian as well as the heathen world. There is a still more horrid reproach to the Christian name, yea, to the name of man, to all reason and humanity. There is war in the world! War between men! War between Christians! I mean between those that bear the name of Christ, and profess to 'walk as he also walked'. Now who can reconcile war, I will not say to religion, but to any degree of common sense? Wesley on *Original Sin*, p. 56'.

greatest violence we can offer them.

Should it be granted that John tolerated the use of war (which I am far from believing), yet this is not to the point—as he was a Jew, and it was allowed that wars and swearing were lawful for them, till it was prohibited by the founder of Christianity. And as the gospel dispensation was far more excellent than John's, therefore our Lord asserted that though he was the greatest of all the prophets, 'yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he' (Matt. 11:11). That is, the gospel dispensation is eminently superior to his. John was so sensible of this that he bore this public testimony. 'He must increase, but I must decrease' (John 3:30); which words undoubtedly referred to their different dispensations.

That divorcement, wars, and swearing, though allowed to the Jews 'because of the hardness of their hearts' (Matt. 19:8), are unlawful for Christians, is evident from the following scriptures, which are full to the point, and need no comment. 'It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement' (Deut. 24:1). 'But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery' (Matt. 5:31–[32]). Again, 'Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself (Lev. 19:12). But I say unto you, Swear not at all, etc. (Matt. 5:34), for whatsoever is more than "Yea, yea"; "Nay, nay", cometh of evil. Ye have heard that it hath been said, [p. 61] An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth (Exod. 21:24). But I say unto you that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also' (Matt. 5:38–[39]). And the apostle James leads us to the true source of wars, when he enquires, 'From whence come wars and fightings? Come they not from hence, even of your lusts, which war in your members' (James 4:1)?

The other scripture brought to prove the lawfulness of war is our Lord's saying to his disciples, 'Let him that hath no sword, sell his garment and buy one.'

To which I reply that this scripture has its difficulty, but that our Lord never designed to countenance fighting by it I am as fully convinced of as that I have an existence. My reasons are these.

First, when the disciples answered, 'Lord, here are two swords' (Luke 22:38), he replied, 'It is enough.' Which answer sufficiently evinces that this scripture must not be confined to a literal meaning. For what could two swords avail, against that armed multitude which our Lord knew was coming out against him? And the general opinion of those styled the 'Fathers' was that this scripture had a mystical signification.

Secondly, this seems to be confirmed by what passed between our Lord and Peter, who in his intemperate zeal smote the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear, for which our Lord reproved him, saying, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels' (Matt. 26:53)? 'Put up therefore [p. 62] thy sword into its place.' As though he had said, 'Peter, thou hast mistaken me. I do not need these carnal weapons. No: I utterly prohibit the use of them'. 'For all they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword' (Matt. 26:52).

Thirdly, wars are not only forbidden by, but are directly opposed to the spirit of the gospel. Here we are enjoined, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use and persecute you' (Matt. 5:44). 'Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good' (Rom. 12:[20–21]). 'That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to arise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust' (Matt. 5:45). When Isaiah in vision saw this glorious gospel-day, he sang, 'They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more' (Isa. 2:4). I believe that this prophecy is fulfilled in every heart, where the Prince of Peace reigns.

I sincerely wish therefore that well-disposed persons, who have been blinded by custom, and carried away with the current of evil example, would seriously consider this subject, and I am satisfied they will see the great impropriety of setting apart times of prayer, for imploring the God of love to give success to destructive weapons. And I am persuaded that with great truth it may be said to many, 'Ye know not what ye ask.' Or, as our Lord said to his disciples on a similar occasion, 'Ye know not what

manner of spirit ye are of' (Luke 9:55). For if these prayers have any [p. 63] meaning, it is that every bullet may do execution, and every sword may be bathed in blood. And to return thanks to the divine majesty for success of this kind argues a mind ignorant of the divine perfections, to whom such prayers and thanksgivings are as acceptable as the 'cutting off a dog's neck, or the offering swine's blood' (Isa. 66:[3]).

That frantic mirth also which discovers itself in public rejoicings on these occasions is a disgrace not only to the Christian name, but to humanity itself. The pure principle therefore leads to an uniform testimony against such ungodly customs. And happy are they who are faithful to it, though they are the derision of a thoughtless giddy multitude, and even on account of their truly Christian testimony, suffer the 'spoiling of their goods' (Heb. 10:34).

And all those who take an active part in wars are highly concerned to enquire what is their principle of action. And whether a dispute between princes will justify them in the sight of God for seizing on the property and destroying the lives of their fellow-creatures, even though they have the sanction of human laws.

I know that the common objection is, 'If these pacific principles prevail, our property will become a prey to every invader.' Yes. 'If the Lord has forsaken the earth' (Ezek. 9:9). But if 'the Lord reigneth' (Ps. 93:1), and we 'fear his name, he will be a wall of fire round about us' (Zech. 2:5). A remarkable instance of which we have in the case of the Jews, who being enjoined by God, 'Thrice in the year shall all your males appear' (at Jerusalem) 'before the Lord'; the promise of God to them was, 'Neither shall [p. 64] any man desire your land, when you shall go up to appear before the Lord your God thrice in the year' (Exod. 34:23). Which promise Josephus, the Jewish historian, informs us was so punctually fulfilled that though their enemies knew these stated seasons, and that their cities and towns were then defenceless, yet at these times they were never invaded, 'the terror of the Lord' being 'upon their enemies that were round about them' (Gen. 35:5).

Nor need we look so far back, as the settlement of the people called Quakers in the province of Pennsylvania furnishes us with a recent proof of what I have advanced, and which has been so remarkable as to engage the attention even of infidels. The fact is this. That province, surrounded by savage nations, and destitute of warlike instruments, either offensive or defensive, yet for almost a century enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity, while the other provinces have been repeatedly attacked by their savage neighbours.

Not only so, but the pacific principles of that people, and their upright conduct towards the natives, in purchasing the land from them (though it was granted by the crown), have made such an impression on the minds of this savage people that to this day they have lived in perfect harmony with them, and speak of William Penn, the first proprietor of that province, with the greatest respect.

I have now freely delivered my sentiments. I hope it has been done in a proper temper. For although truth leads to the greatest plainness, yet it dictates no improper reflection, much less abusive language, which are too common in some of the most [p. 65] admired controversial writings. I intended to close the whole with a few remarks on the conclusion of that *Letter*. But on a review, finding it made up of a number of mere declamatory assertions, calculated to misrepresent and fix a stigma on a religious society of people, and totally destitute of argument, I pass it over, as a proper answer would lead to some degree of severity which has been my study to avoid.

However, I must say that I fear more pains are taken by persons of all denominations to proselyte to a name, than to something more substantial. When alas, what do names signify, if we are strangers to the love of God and the love of our neighbour? And what will it avail us that we are orthodox in our principles, while our hearts are heterodox? We may boast of our well-composed forms of prayer, or pique ourselves that we have laid aside these inventions of men, silently to wait on the Lord. Yet if our own hearts are not divinely changed from the love and spirit of the world, into the love and image of God, though we differ in name and sentiment, we all belong to one family, and are out of the true church; having only a name to live, while we are in reality 'without God in the world' (Eph. 2:12). And should death cut the slender thread of life, the immortal spirit which is disunited from God and in a state of

impurity would be incapacitated for inhabiting his glorious kingdom, and therefore must be excluded 'from his presence' (2 Thess. 1:9).

I therefore earnestly wish that all blind party zeal may come to an end; that instead of labouring to fix a stigma on those who see it their duty to dissent from us, our great concern may be to guard against a narrow, unchristian [p. 66] spirit. And may the uniform language of our hearts and lives be, 'Henceforth know we no man after the flesh' (2 Cor. 5:16). 'But whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother' (Matt. 12:50).

This is the ardent desire of

Thy affectionate friend,

J. Helton

Source: John Helton, Reasons for Quitting the Methodist Society; Being a Defence of Barclay's Apology, in answer to a Printed Letter (London: J. Fry, 1778).

From John Haime

Whitchurch
June 1, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

This comes to you from a worthless worm. But I can stay [i.e., delay] no longer. I am like bottles filled with new wine. O what a blessing it is to see God in everything and everywhere, and to be truly sensible there is not a thought in my heart nor a word of my tongue but is known to that God whom I love and fear! My heart now burns with desire to love him more and serve him better. I think that I am in some measure sensible that I am not worthy of the least favour that comes from his merciful loving hand. But blessed be his holy name, he delights in mercy.

I can now say by a blessed experience I am as weak as helpless infancy My flesh trembles at the greatness and glory of God. Yet I can say with humility, to men and devils, 'Behold, God is my salvation!'¹ I think I can say with one lately, 'I have nothing to hope, nothing to fear, but the blessed Lord! Hold out faith and patience a little longer, and the crown is our own forever.'

I have been looking over all your letters which I have received since August 12, 1742.² I have often read them with great pleasure, but never with so much as now. The Lord made them such a blessing to me as I cannot express. It fired my soul in such a manner that if I had had the wings of a dove I would have found you, if you had been in the farthest part of the world. Love constrains me to acknowledge how greatly I am indebted to you under God. To think how you bore with me, and bore me up so long. In your letters there was a salve for every sore. When I was like to sink and the predestinarian devil at the same time was at me—then I should have a letter that removed that mountain by the blessing of God. Glory be to his holy name, that his tender mercy is over all his works. I bless and praise the Lord for universal redemption, [and] that ever I heard that it preached. The truth of that doctrine will stand when heaven and earth shall pass away.

Dear sir, I cannot utter what is in my heart. The love which I find there to and for you burns like fire. I find my love increases to all mankind. But your love and kindness to my soul and body too makes my weary soul melt within me. The Lord increase it more and more. I rest in full assurance of your prayers.

I conclude with my love and duty to you. The Lord bless you and strengthen you, and bring your back in peace. Amen.

John Haime

I shall be glad with a line from you with your directions, if you please. I have put in your brother's letter that he sent me, just as it is, word by word.³

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jo Haime / June 1 1778 / a[nswere]d 12'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/70.⁴

¹Isa. 12:2.

²Only three letters of JW to Haime are known to survive in some form: May 1743, June 21, 1748, and Sept. 16, 1766.

³See John Haime to CW, c. May 1, 1778; and CW to John Haime, May 7, 1778. CW told Haime he did not think the autobiographical reflections Haime had drafted (at JW's suggestion) was worthy of publication.

⁴A polished transcription was published in *AM* 20 (1797): 354–55.

From Thomas Rankin

[Virginia]
June 24, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

You have the narrative of the Rev. Mr. [Devereux] Jarratt.¹ I send this as a supplement to it.

At our little Conference held in Philadelphia, May 1775, Mr. [George] Shadford was appointed Assistant for Brunswick circuit in Virginia. He found there about eight hundred joined together, but in a very confused manner. Many of them did not understand the nature of meeting in class, and many of the classes had no leader. He resolved to begin in good earnest, and the preachers with him were like-minded. Their constant custom was, as soon as preaching was over, to speak to all the members of the society, one by one. If the society was large, one preacher spoke to a part, and he that came next, to the rest. By this means they learned more of our doctrine and discipline in a year than in double the time before. The fruit soon appeared: the congregations swiftly increased, and many were pricked to the heart. Many that were a little affected desired to see the nature of meeting in class. And while one was speaking either to those that were groaning for redemption or those who had found peace with God, these were frequently cut to the heart and sometimes enabled on the spot to praise a pardoning God. Nay, sometimes four, five, or six found peace with God before the meeting was over.

The work of God thus increasing on every side, more preachers were soon wanting. And God raised up several young men, who were exceeding useful as local preachers.

After Mr. Shadford had been about eight months in the circuit, Mr. Jarratt desired his parish might be included in it—that all who chose it might have the privilege of meeting in class, and being members of the society. He soon saw the salutary effects. Many that had had but small desires before began to be much alarmed, and laboured earnestly after eternal life. In a little time numbers were deeply awakened, and many tasted of the pardoning love of God. In a few months Mr. Jarratt saw more fruit of his labours than he had done for many years. And he went on with the preachers hand in hand, both in doctrine and discipline.

When Mr. Shadford took an account of the societies before he came to the Conference in 1776, they contained two thousand, six hundred, and sixty-four persons: to whom eighteen hundred were added in one year. Above a thousand of these had found peace with God, many of whom thirsted for all the mind that was in Christ. And diverse believed God had ‘circumcised their heart, to love him with all their heart, with all their soul’.²

This revival of religion spread through fourteen counties in Virginia, and through Bute and Halifax counties in North Carolina. At the same time we had a blessed outpouring of the Spirit in several counties bordering upon Maryland.

Our Conference was at Baltimore Town, on the 22nd of May. Here I received a letter from Mr. Jarratt, part of which I insert.

May 11, 1776

I praise God for his goodness in so plentifully pouring out of his Spirit, on men, women, and children. I believe threescore in and near my parish have believed, through grace, since the quarterly meeting. Such a work I never saw with my eyes. Sometimes twelve, sometimes fifteen find the Lord at one class meeting. I am just returned from meeting two classes. Much of the power of God was in each.

¹Devereux Jarratt had written JW, dated June 29, 1773, published in *AM* 9 (1786): 397–99). But Rankin is referring to a larger document which he forwarded to JW. JW combined it and Rankin's current letter to produce [Devereux Jarratt,] *A Brief Narrative of the Revival of Religion in Virginia* (London: R. Hawes, 1778). See *Bibliography*, No. 399.

²Cf. Deut. 30:6.

My dear partner is now happy in God her Saviour.³ I clap my hands exulting, and praise God. Blessed be the Lord that ever he sent you and your brethren into this part of his vineyard! Many children from eight to twelve years old are now under strong conviction. And some of them are savingly converted to God. I was much comforted this morning at the White Oak chapel. The people there are of a truly teachable spirit, those particularly who profess to have obtained the pure love of God. They are as little children. When you consider how the work is spreading on every side, you will readily excuse me from being at your Conference.

Monday, June 24. I left Leesburg, in company with Wright Brickell (a truly devout man, who now rests from his labours⁴) and came to Petersburg on Saturday the 29th, where I preached, about 3:00 in the afternoon, and then rode on to Mr. Boisseau's,⁵ about ten miles farther. A little company was waiting for me, and God was with them of a truth.

Sunday, 30. I was comforted by the sight of my dear brother Shadford. But I was weak in body, through riding so far in extreme heat, and much exercised in mind; and did not know how I should be able to go through the labour of the day. We went to the chapel at 10:00, where I had liberty of mind and strength of body beyond my expectation. After preaching I met the society and was more relieved, both in body and mind. At 4:00 in the afternoon I preached again, from 'I set before thee an open door, and none can shut it.'⁶ I had gone through about two thirds of my discourse, and was bringing the words home to the present now, when such power descended that hundreds fell to the ground and the house seemed to shake with the presence of God. The chapel was full of white and black, and many were without that could not get in. Look wherever we would, we saw nothing but streaming eyes and faces bathed in tears, and heard nothing but groans and strong cries after God and the Lord Jesus Christ. My voice was drowned amidst the groans and prayers of the congregation. I then sat down in the pulpit, and both Mr. Shadford and I were so filled with the divine presence that we could only say, 'This is none other than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!'⁷ Husbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven, wives their husbands; parents their children, and children their parents; brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. In short, those who were happy in God themselves were for bringing all their friends to him in their arms. This mighty effusion of the Spirit continued for above an hour, in which time many were awakened, some found peace with God, and others his pure love. We attempted to speak or sing again and again, but no sooner we began than our voices were drowned. It was with much difficulty that we at last persuaded the people, as night drew on, to retire to their own homes.

Tuesday, July 2. I rode with Mr. Shadford to Mr. Jarratt's; who with Mrs. [Martha] Jarratt received us with open arms. I preached the next day, not far from his house, to a deeply attentive congregation. Many were much affected at the preaching, but far more at the meeting of the society. Mr. Jarratt himself was constrained to praise God aloud for his great love to him and to his people.

Sunday, 7. I preached at White's chapel, about twenty miles from Mr. Jarratt's. I intended to preach near the house, under the shade of some large trees, but the rain made it impracticable. The house was greatly crowded, and four or five hundred stood at the doors and windows and listened with unabated attention. I preached from Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones.⁸ And there was 'a great shaking'.⁹ I was

³Martha (Clairborne) Jarratt (1744–1826).

⁴Wright Brickell (d. 1777), a Norfolk sea captain and one of the original book stewards of the Methodist Societies in America, is buried in the Old Stone Church cemetery in Leesburg, VA.

⁵Apparently Capt. James Boisseau (1736–84), a descendent of Rev. James Boisseau, a Huguenot immigrant to Virginia. The family maintained a chapel near Richmond. Rankin spells 'Bosheua'.

⁶Cf. Rev. 3:8.

⁷Cf. Gen. 28:17.

⁸Ezek. 37:1–14.

⁹See Ezek. 37:7.

obliged to stop again and again, and beg of the people to compose themselves. But they could not. Some on their knees, and some on their faces, were crying mightily to God all the time I was preaching. Hundreds of Negroes were among them, with the tears streaming down their black faces. The same power we found in meeting the society, and many were enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable. In the cool of the evening I preached out of doors, and many found an uncommon blessing.

Everyday the ensuing week I preached to large and attentive congregations. Indeed the weather was violently hot, and the fatigue of riding and preaching so often was great. But God made up all this to me by his comfortable presence.

Thursday, [July] 11. I preached to a large congregation at the preaching house near Mr. Jarratt's. After preaching at several places on Friday and Saturday, on Sunday, 14, I came to Mr. Boisseau's, where I preached and met the society. The congregation was, as before, abundantly larger than the chapel could contain. And we had almost such a day as fourteen days ago, only attended with a more deep and solemn work. What a work is God working in this corner of Mr. Jarratt's parish! It seemed as if all the country, for nine or ten miles round, were ready to turn to God.

In the evening I rode to Mr. Smith's, and found a whole family fearing and loving God. Mr. Smith, a sensible and judicious man, had been for many years a justice of the peace. By hearing the truth as it is in Jesus, he and his wife first, and then all his children, had attained that peace that passeth all understanding. He observed, 'How amazing the change was which had been lately wrought in the place where he lived! That before the Methodists came into these parts, when he was called by his office to attend the court there was nothing but drunkenness, cursing, swearing, and fighting most of the time the court sat. Whereas now nothing is heard but prayer and praise, and conversing about God, and the things of God.'

Monday, 15. I rode toward North Carolina. In every place the congregations were large, and received the word with all readiness of mind. I know not that I have spent such a week, since I came to America. I saw everywhere such a simplicity in the people, with such a vehement thirst after the word of God, that I frequently preached and continued in prayer, till I was hardly able to stand. Indeed there was no getting away from them, while I was able to speak one sentence for God.

Sunday, 21. I preached at Roanoke¹⁰ chapel to more than double of what the house would contain. In general the white people were within the chapel, and the black people without. The windows being all open, everyone could hear and hundreds felt the word of God. Many were bathed in tears and others rejoicing with joy unspeakable. When the society met many could not refrain from praising God aloud. I preached to a large company in the afternoon, and concluded the day with prayer and thanksgiving.

Tuesday, 23. I crossed the Roanoke River, and preached at a chapel in North Carolina. And I preached everyday to very large and deeply attentive congregations, although not without much labour and pain, through the extreme heat of the weather.

On Tuesday, 30, was our quarterly meeting. I scarce ever remember such a season. No chapel or preaching house in Virginia would have contained one third of the congregation. Our friends, knowing this, had contrived to shade with boughs of trees a space that would contain two or three thousand persons. Under this, wholly screened from the rays of the sun, we held our general love-feast. It began between 8:00 and 9:00 on Wednesday morning and continued till noon. Many testified that they had 'redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins'.¹¹ And many were enabled to declare, that it had 'cleansed them from all sin'.¹² So clear, so full, so strong was their testimony that, while some were speaking their experience, hundreds were in tears and others vehemently crying to God for pardon or holiness.

About 8:00 our watch-night began. Mr. Jarratt preached an excellent sermon. The rest of the preachers exhorted and prayed with divine energy. Surely for the work wrought on these two days many

¹⁰Orig., 'Ronoaky'.

¹¹Cf. Col. 1:14.

¹²Cf. 1 John 1:7.

will praise God to all eternity!

Thomas Rankin

Source: published transcription; Devereux Jarratt, *A Brief Narrative of the Revival of Religion in Virginia* (London: R. Hawes, 1778), 27–35.¹³

¹³ *A Brief Narrative of the Revival in Virginia*; JW's publication of a letter sent to him by Rankin, dated June 24, 1778. See *Bibliography*, No. 399

From Peter Jaco

[London, the Foundery]
Sunday, June 28, 1778

However painful the subject (particularly to me who loved her), I must inform you that our dear friend, good sister M'Donald¹ (whose memory will be ever precious to hundreds in this city and elsewhere) is happily escaped to Abraham's bosom, in a moment the most unexpected!

On Friday morning she attended the preaching at five o'clock as usual, and likewise the intercession in the afternoon. After this she went to visit some of her class who were sick, came home and ate her supper and went to bed as well as she had been for some years.

About twelve o'clock on Friday night she was seized with convulsions in her bowels, and continued in the most excruciating pain till about 4:00 in the morning, when without a sigh or groan she breathed out her pious soul into the arms of her merciful Redeemer.

Between ten and eleven o'clock on Friday night I asked her, 'Do you find Jesus precious to you now?' She answered, 'Yes, he is precious indeed! O my dear Jesus! Thou art precious, thou art altogether lovely!' From the time I left her, till 3:00 in the morning, she earnestly desired that my wife² might be sent for. When she came she said, 'Talk of Jesus. I cannot speak through excessive pain: but you can speak. O talk of the lovely Jesus! Do you not see him? There he is! Let me go to him. O my dear friend, I am glad to see you. You are the only one I can trust.' She seemed to have much to say, but had not strength.

My wife finding her change fast, asked her, how do you find your soul now? Have you any doubt or fear? She answered, 'No, nothing but love! Unbounded love! Christ is precious! O precious Christ! precious Christ!' and then quietly yielded up her soul into the hands of God! Thus died an Israelite indeed in whom was no guile.³

I do not think she has left her fellow in London, if in all England! Though weak in her mental powers, which often exposed her to innocent infirmities, I do not think she has left many behind her so simple and upright of heart. I verily believe she enjoyed to the last all she professed for a great part of forty years! May our last end be like hers!

Peter Jaco

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 409–10.

¹Elizabeth MacDonald (or McDonall), had been a servant at the Foundery for several years. She was buried June 30, 1778 in Bunhill Fields.

²Elizabeth (Curtis / Hawksworth) Jaco (1727–94). They married in 1763.

³See John 1:47.

From John Francis Valton

Stanley
July 4, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As the Conference is now approaching, I will lay my case before you, that you may be better able to judge how to dispose of me.

I labour under such weakness of body at present that I cannot do my duty in meeting the people (after I have preached to them) so much as their several states require. If I visit from house to house, I am so debilitated in an hour or two that I can be of no use any longer.

Dear sir, I would not have you think that it is to shun travelling that I *now* speak thus. I bless the Lord that I am free to travel or to sit down.

I cannot help saying (although it may seem a breach of modesty) that the Lord makes use of me both to wound and to heal wherever he sends me. And I have thought that perhaps some good might be prevented if I contracted my sphere of action. But at such times it immediately occurs to me, 'The Lord has no need of *thee*; he can do without thee.'

If I know my own heart, I have no choice either to live or to die, to travel or to desist; but am entirely free to follow the will of God. My soul is all life and spirits, but my infirm body is like a jaded horse. If it was no sin to kill my body, I should not care what became of it; but should rejoice to be worn out in his service.

If you should think that in these circumstances I am improper to travel, I have thoughts of settling at Stroud, where we have seven or eight places of preaching within four miles of it; which would be a wholesome exercise to me, while it afforded me opportunities of preaching as much as I should be able.

Since I have now opened my mind to you, dear sir, as in the presence of God, I shall leave you to judge for me and esteem your determination as a law.¹

I bless God my soul is truly happy! I behold my approaching dissolution with pleasing anticipations, and yet have no desire of anything but that the will of God may be done. May he be with you at the Conference, and make you wise as an angel of God! I wish you every blessing from above, and am, dear sir,

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

John Valton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 496–97.

¹Valton was appointed to the Bristol circuit at the 1778 Conference (see *Works*, 10:476).

From Damaris Perronet

Shoreham
July 6, 1778

Honoured Sir,

We adore him who returns you to us again, and still compasses you about with songs of deliverance. May the light of the Most High shine in every grateful heart, and his wisdom and blessing be in all your counsels.

I saw Mr. [Michael] F[enwick]¹ at Canterbury, and hope he sees now where this false meteor has led him. I am far from thinking his uneasiness is only disappointment. I hope he suspects himself. I told him it was the envy of Satan, who was imposing on his understanding in order to hinder his usefulness; and that Methodism was not intended to turn people from one outward thing to another, but to bring spirituality among all; and that wherein they were called, they should there abide with God. I think his gifts are improved, and that he is fervent in prayer.

There is a *good* prospect at Canterbury, and before this fell out there was a *great* one.

Dear sir, let me beseech you, for the sake of our Redeemer, to press it on our preachers to visit every prison they can. If there was more willingness to take up this cross, the Lord would be well pleased. His providence would work with his people, and many of the outcasts would escape to glory.

One man died in peace out of Maidstone goal the last assizes. And two more are powerfully wrought upon by the work of God: one of whom has chose to go on board a man-of-war rather than work on the Thames, and the other we suppose will be pardoned.

That God may direct and prosper you in all your undertakings is, reverend sir, the ardent wish of
Your friend and servant,

D. Perronet

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 497–98.

¹Michael Fenwick had been appointed in Lincolnshire by the 1777 Conference (see *Works*, 10:466), and would be moved to Kent in 1778; but then is not appointed again until (possibly) 1789 (*ibid.*, 10:678).

From the Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady¹

Knightsbridge
July 22, 1778

Whereas some time since a wicked, scandalous, and false report was diffused in various parts of this kingdom by the followers of Mr. John Wesley, purporting that I have changed some of my religious sentiments, especially such of them as relate more immediately to the doctrines of grace, I thought it my indispensable duty on the Sunday after I received this information, which was the 13th of June last, publicly to declare myself, from the pulpit in Orange Street chapel, to the following effect:

It having been industriously circulated, by some malicious and unprincipled persons, that during my present long and severe illness I expressed a strong desire of seeing Mr. John Wesley before I died, and of revoking some particulars relative to him which occur in my writings. Now I do publicly and most solemnly aver that I have not, nor ever had, any such intention or desire; and that I most sincerely hope my last hours will be much better employed than in conversing with *such* a man.

To which I added:

So certain and so satisfied am I of the truth of all that I have ever written that, was I now sitting up in my dying bed with a pen and ink in my hand, and all the religious and controversial writings I ever published (more especially those relating to Mr. John Wesley and the Arminian controversy), whether respecting facts or doctrines, could at once be displayed to my view, I should not strike out a single line relative to him or them.

Matters rested thus, when I received a letter, dated July 17, 1778, from a friend who lives near an hundred miles from town [i.e., London], in which letter is the following passage:

I cannot help feeling an uncommon emotion and surprise at the report, that you have recanted all that you have written and said against John Wesley, and many like things; and that you declared as much to your congregation a few weeks ago. I was told this by two persons, who said they were there present at the time. How am I amazed at such falsehoods! The party, and name, and character that are established by lies have no good foundation, and therefore can never stand long.

This determined me to publish the present address to the religious world. I pray God to give the *perfect*² liars grace and repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. And may every blessing of the upper and of the nether springs be the portion of those who maintain, who experience and adorn, the glorious gospel of the grace of God.

Should any hostile notice be taken of this paper, I do not intend to make any kind of reply. I am everyday in view of dissolution. And in the fullest assurance of my eternal salvation (an assurance which has not been clouded by a single doubt, for near an year and an half last past) am waiting, looking, and longing for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹While not addressed to JW, this letter is clearly directed at him.

²Alluding sarcastically to JW's affirmation of Christian perfection.

I once intended subjoining to this paper the specific outlines of my religious sentiments.³ But, on farther reflection, I believe it may be more expedient to refer the reader to the several writings I have published—every one of which I do hereby, as a dying man, ratify and declare to be expressive of my real religious principles; from any one of which principles I have never varied, in the least degree, since God enlightened me into the clear knowledge of his truth, which is now within a few weeks of twenty years ago.

I was awakened in the month of August 1755, but not (as has been falsely reported) under Mr. John Wesley, or any preacher connected with him.

Though awakened in 1755, I was not led into a full and clear view of all the doctrines of grace till the year 1758, when, through the great goodness of God, my Arminian prejudices received an effectual shock, in reading Dr. Manton's sermons on the 17th of St. John.⁴

I shall remember the years 1755 and 1758 with gratitude and joy, in the heaven of heavens, to all eternity.

Augustus Montague Toplady

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle* (Aug. 20, 1778), 180; and as a pamphlet – *The Reverend Mr Toplady's Dying Avowal of his Religious Sentiments* (London: J. Mathews, 1778).

³Note in original: 'If the reader wishes to see a doctrinal compendium of these, he will find it, in a sermon of mine entitled, 'A Caveat against unsound Doctrines'; every part of which I hereby avow to be declarative of my fixed and ultimate judgment.'

⁴Thomas Manton, *A Second Volume of Sermons ... containing ... XLV [sermons] on the Seventeenth chapter of St. John, and ...* (London: Astwood, 1684).

From the Rev. Peter Lièvre¹

Deptford
July 29, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I sincerely thank you for your kind letter,² and will always study to merit the affection you so kindly express therein.

I think I should be very scrupulous in going abroad, unless I could clearly be ascertained of the call of providence. Money (for its own sake) has very few charms for me. I am perfectly happy in that respect in my present situation; but there may be an attachment. However, if God should please to enlarge my ability for usefulness, I pray he may continue my inclination, or I durst not answer for a deceitful heart.

I bless God, I earnestly desire to lay up treasure above, where neither rust nor moth can corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.³ I have as yet made but a poor progress! I have hardly begun. But I think to devote myself more fully to Jesus, and in the meantime to thank him ever for this desire. May he who is the author of every good desire blow this spark into a flame of holy, humble love!

No thirst of gold my soul inspire,
Nor earthly baubles move,
Give me the treasure I desire,
The riches of thy love.

I am fully convinced of the danger and spiritual loss to which I should be exposed abroad, particularly if I should go without the call of providence. But if God should call me there, I will trust him for the rest. I only pray that his will may be done in me, with me, and by me; and that I may be kept from doing my own. I shall rejoice to see you again in Deptford. In the meantime I remain, reverend and dear sir,

Your most affectionately dutiful nephew,

P. L.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 498–99.

¹Peter Lièvre (1746–1819) was a great-nephew of JW; the grandson of his sister Susanna (Wesley) Ellison and Richard Ellison, by their daughter Susanna (Ellison) Lièvre and Elie Lièvre. He was ordained in June 1776 and serving currently as a curate in Deptford, Kent. He would later become as well Master of the Free Grammar School of Lutterworth, Leicestershire, and in 1803 be named vicar of Arnesby, Leicestershire.

²This letter, in which JW may have suggested that Peter go to Ireland (where JW was currently) is not known to survive.

³See Matt. 6:20.

From Mrs. Martha Ward¹

Cork
August 29, 1778

Reverend Sir,

Sometime before I received your last favour,² I was delivered from the temptation under which I had laboured for a long time, and now see and adore the design of God in suffering me to be thus afflicted, in order to separate a soul he loved from the sin he hated.

As I am now at full liberty I see that, though the work was not always carried on in the same manner, yet it never was wholly at a stop. I find that when, instead of looking to Jesus, I have parleyed with the tempter (and perhaps in a measure given way), though I have contracted darkness and doubt, yet I have always been preserved from falling into sin. But notwithstanding all my trials and temptations, I believe the work of sanctification is wrought in my soul. Yet I see lengths and breadths thereof which I have not yet attained, and feel an earnest hungering and thirsting after it.

Poor Mrs. M. distresses me sore. She continues tried to the uttermost, and sometimes is ready to despair, even of life. However she still holds fast her integrity. And though she is robbed of all the comforts of religion, her zeal for the good of souls and her love to the cause of God, are not in the least abated. The time when this trial came upon her was when she was in secret prayer, and when her whole soul was on the stretch for greater degrees of holiness. Dear sir, if you will pray for her, and write to her, you will oblige both her, and

Your unworthy servant,

M. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 549.

¹Orig., 'S. Ward'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

²This letter is not known to survive.

From Dorothea (Garret) King

Dublin
September 24, 1778

Reverend Sir,

There is a friend of mine who lives out of town (and at present desires his name to be concealed) who wishes to be fully informed concerning Kingswood school, as he intends becoming a subscriber towards its support.

At present I have nothing to write but what you know already, unless it be that the blessings of heaven are still continued to a most unworthy worm! But unworthy as I am, he is still my portion, the spring and end of all my desires. By his assistance I live in constant union with him, and overcome all the temptations of Satan. Yet I am conscious I live far below my privileges, and fear my strength is too much spent for that which does not immediately promote my best interest. Therefore my humility and love are weak, compared to what they might have been, had I been more faithful. And I think the work of God in the souls of those under my care would prosper more if I was more devoted to him.

I entreat you, sir, to pray that my heavenly Father may stir me up to greater diligence in redeeming my time, and that I may be more useful in my day and generation. I am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

D. K.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 550.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
September 25, 1778

Many thanks to my dear father for his truly welcome letter from Macclesfield.¹ The contents caused my heart to rejoice on Helly [i.e., Hester] Roe's account in particular. May she ever stand her ground and be found untired at last. A letter I received from near Nantwick (a few days ago) informs me that, in the midst of many oppositions, the God of love is still upholding her feet, and her heart stands fast believing in him. Her way is thorny, but the love of Jesus sweetens all.

I would sooner have returned my sincere thanks for the kind inquiries made in the other part of your letter, had I known how to direct to you the two last [months?]. I can truly answer in the affirmative and, blessed be God, my soul daily rejoices in hope of the day when mortality shall be swallowed up in life. Yes, I do live in glorious hope of meeting you, my dear sir, at God's right hand, and spending with you and all who have won the well-fought day 'a whole eternity of love'.² O blessed hope! Shall I, unworthy as I am, see his face (whose visage was marred more than any man's) 'with all his father's greatness in full glory shining'? Yes, I humbly trust I shall. For though of late my dear Lord has given me very abasing views of myself, yet my soul hangs on him. And the more poverty I feel in my own spirit, the more closely does my soul cleave to the adorable saviour. And he gives me to feel such a measure of perfect love as casts out all fear but what is truly filial. I feel my soul sensibly hungering and thirsting after all the fullness of God. How little do I know that love which has knowledge! O my dear sir, what a field do I see before me! Surely I shall only live to walk in it.

The other morning, just as I waked, with power these words were brought to mind: 'Hitherto have ye asked nothing. Ask, that ye may receive, that your joy may be full.'³

For more I ask, I open Lord
My heart t' embrace thy will.
Turn and beget me Lord again,
With all thy fullness fill.⁴

Amen. My dear sir, pray for me that I come not short in anything of that grace or glory the Lord waits to give.

A few days ago I was conversing with one of the Lord's highly favoured ones about the deep things of God. He spoke to me of the assurance of hope and said the apostle, in writing to the Hebrews in the sixth chapter and at the eleventh verse, exhorts those that were partakers of faith and love 'to show the same diligence toward attaining the full assurance of hope';⁵ which he added he believed was a divine testimony of the Holy Spirit given to the soul that it should never fall. I asked 'Do you think this [is] the privilege of all that are renewed in love?' He told me he believed it was and that all such should give the same diligence to attain it they before time did to attain purity of hearts. I could not help thinking if such a testimony is to be enjoyed it is no wonder I have it not, for I never believingly sought it; but if it is, I do not desire to rest without it. Tell me what you think on it. Does the word of God promise us such a state? I bless God I never feel an anxiety about what [is] to come, but live the present moment and believe for the next. And daily does my soul rejoice in hope of the glory which shall be revealed at the revelation of

¹This letter, c. Aug. 12, 1778, is not known to survive.

²CW, 'Hymn #9', st. 13, *Funeral Hymns* (1746), 14.

³John 16:24.

⁴Cf. CW, 'Grace after Meat', st. 4, *HSP* (1739), 37.

⁵Cf. Heb. 6:11.

Jesus Christ. But I don't know I ever expected any such thing as a divine testimony that I should never fall. I want to be a Bible Christian throughout, and therefore trust, my dear sir, you will excuse my troubling you on this subject, as God has always made you a father to my soul. And while you continue to favour me with your friendship, I wish to improve your valuable blessing, which may the Father of mercies return in blessing on your own soul.

I have abundant cause to bless God in regard to my dear father.⁶ He is greatly restored again, and my health is better than when you were here. I have been three weeks in the north, chiefly on the edge of a cold moor. It has agreed with me well. O that my added days may praise my gracious Lord. May every new covenant blessing attend my dear father. While memory remains your concluding charge shall be fulfilled by, my dear sir,

Your ever affectionate, though unworthy, daughter,

Eliz. Ritchie

Address: 'To / The Revd Mr Wesley'.

Annotation: another hand, '22nd'.

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* 11 (1788): 550–52.

⁶John Ritchie (d. 1780) was an apothecary / surgeon in Otley, Yorkshire.

Elizabeth Mary Morgan

[Bristol?]

September 26, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for the plan you have given me for a course of reading.¹ I would wish to use with diligence every inferior means. But I am aware that in order to persevere it is needful that I begin not upon too large a scale, for which reason I apprehend I must retrench the outlines you have drawn.

And first, as I am unable, through weakness of sight, to read at all before breakfast, I must take the hour after (from 9:00 to 10:00) for reading the Scripture. And oh that this may prove an effectual light to guide me through all the subsequent parts of the day, that I may not wander from my primary object!

Allowing then one hour in the morning for exercise, I have but two left for study; and two more in the afternoon will be as much as I shall be able to get.

I confess I wish some practical knowledge of logic, but I doubt whether I shall be able to proceed when I lose the benefit of your instructions. Natural Philosophy, as a recreation of the mind, I might pursue occasionally, and I think your *Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation* will suit me best.

The abridgement of Mr. Hutchinson I have begun reading a year ago, and much desire to go through with it.² The other books you mention under the same head I shall get in their turn.

History is a path I love. But as I know I can make no progress therein without help, I have not resolution enough to begin it. What I already know of it gives me a general idea of those countries most commonly spoken of—viz., the Grecian and Roman states.

If I thought of buying Rollin's *History*, I should scarce know which to choose, the original or the translation. Indeed the former would be more agreeable to me, though perhaps I should get more help in reading the latter.³

Metaphysics I should like to gain some knowledge of, but I fear it is too abstruse a study for me to enter on with no assistance but that of books. And therefore, unless some future period should afford me the privilege of your instructions, I despair of succeeding in any attempt of that kind.

I add no more at present, as I hope to see you soon. In the meantime I send you these few lines to supply (in some measure) the want of a free conversation. This, I hope sir, will be a sufficient excuse for troubling you at present. That God may be your director here and your great reward forever is, reverend sir, the sincere desire of

Your much obliged, and humble servant,

E. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 552–53.

¹JW's list was clearly similar to that which he supplied Miss L. [Mary Lewis?] c. Sept. 1778.

²*An Abstract from the Works of John Hutchinson. Esq.; being a Summary of His Discourses in Philosophy and Divinity*, edited by George Horne and/or Robert Spearman (Edinburgh: Printed by R. Fleming, 1753).

³Charles Rollin (1661–1741), *The Ancient History of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Macedonians and Grecians*, 13 vols. (London: Knapton, 1734–39); the original was in French.

From Samuel Wells

[Tiverton?]¹

September 30, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I had no hope that the Calvinists would ever be upon *tolerable* terms with the Arminians, when Mr. Fletcher's two-fold essay came out.² And I cannot say that my hopes are much, if at all, increased by his proposal.

But a fear lest the Calvinists (who always seem to me to watch for an opportunity of coming among us for the purpose of winning Arminians over to Calvinism) should avail themselves of Mr. Fletcher's proposals, so as to do fresh injury to the cause of real religion, excited my writing the rough copy of a letter to him, which I knew not how to send him, as he is out of the land; but which I therefore take the liberty of presenting to you, that if you please you may attend to these circumstances, if not you may cast the whole aside at discretion.

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As I humbly conceive that, though such an association of moderate men, Calvinists and Arminians, as you recommend in your two-fold essay, section 6th [pp. 36ff], may greatly conduce to the spirit of love and forbearance, if it can be effected on good terms; yet as³ admitting of bigots would be exceedingly injurious to the peace of Christian societies, I take the liberty of suggesting some such regulations as I hope may deter the bigoted of either opinion from attempting such an union, hoping if you see any propriety in these hints you will perfect them where they are defective.

1. No Arminian can be esteemed a member of this reconciling society who believes Calvinist sentiments inconsistent with salvation.

2. Neither can any Calvinist be esteemed a member who believes Arminian sentiments inconsistent with salvation.

3. No Arminian should expect admission to preach in a Calvinist's pulpit, unless he sees it his duty in that pulpit entirely to lay aside his peculiar sentiments and only preach practical religion, peace, and love.

4. No Calvinist should expect admission to preach in an Arminian's pulpit unless he sees it his duty in that pulpit entirely to lay aside his peculiar sentiments and only preach practical religion, peace, and love.

5. And no Arminian is worthy to preach in a Calvinist's pulpit who can in his own inveigh and speak bitterly against the Calvinists.

6. Nor is any Calvinist worthy to preach in an Arminian's pulpit who can in his own inveigh and speak bitterly against the Arminians.

7. As no Arminian preacher would be willing that a Calvinist should avail himself of his acquaintance with a Calvinist congregation to instill Arminianism into *his* people, so he ought not to avail himself of his acquaintance with a Calvinist congregation to instil Arminianism into them.

8. Nor therefore should any Calvinist avail himself of his acquaintance with any of an Arminian congregation to instill Calvinism into them.

9. Neither should they spread such books among their different congregations as have a tendency to effect this, though they may spread such books among their own congregations as

¹Wells was assigned the Tiverton circuit at the 1778 Conference.

²John Fletcher, *Bible-Arminianism and Bible-Calvinism; a Two-Fold Essay* (London: Hawes, 1777).

³Orig., missing 'as'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

they see good.

10. Nor should they engage or encourage others directly or indirectly to influence the minds of professors to forsake their religious connexions and sentiments, and come over to their own.

11. He that cannot fully assent these propositions, whether he is a Calvinist or an Arminian, is unfit for this society.

12. And he that breaks through these restraints, notwithstanding his exclamations against bigotry and his professions of catholic love, as he is himself a bigot and acts dishonestly, he ought to be refused the liberty of preaching in his brother's pulpit, without his brother's incurring the charge of bigotry.

I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

Samuel Wells

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 501–03.⁴

⁴Note added in *AM*: 'P. S. Mr. Wells was an exemplary young man, who lately died of a putrid fever.' Samuel Wells was buried on Dec. 1, 1779 in Rye, Sussex.

From Peter Jaco (autobiography)¹

London
October 4, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am sorry I cannot comply with your desire so effectually as I could wish, having left the papers containing the particulars of God's dealings with me some hundred miles off. At present I can only give you some circumstances as they occur to my memory.

I was born of serious parents at Newlyn, near Penzance, in Cornwall, in the year 1729. When capable of learning I was put to school, where I continued till I was near fourteen. But being of a gay, lively disposition, and my master being given to drink to excess (on which account I soon learned to despise both him and his instructions), did not make that proficiency which I otherwise might have done. As I could not endure the school under such a teacher, my father took me home and proposed several businesses to me, but I chose rather to be under his care and to be employed with him in the pilchard fishery: first because I knew him to be a perfect master of his business, and secondly because I knew he was a truly serious man.

From my infancy I had very serious impressions and awful thoughts of God; which, with the care and precepts of my parents, prevented my running into many excesses incident to youth. Though in other respects I was bad enough. I was exceeding proud, passionate, and ambitious; and so fond of pleasure that at anytime I would neglect my ordinary meals to pursue it. But amidst all my follies I was still miserable, and often to such a degree that I wished I was anything but a rational creature. After many a restless night I was ready to say with Job, 'He scareth me with dreams, and terrifieth me with visions.'² I frequently resolved to leave my sins. But, alas! my goodness soon vanished away. Thus I repented and sinned. And as I was totally ignorant where my strength lay, I was frequently at the point of giving up all striving against the torrent and of gratifying every passion as far as my circumstances would permit.

About the year 1746 God sent his messengers into our parts, who proclaimed free and full redemption in the blood of Christ. But though this was the very thing my conscience told me I wanted, yet I would not give up all to come to him. No, I would dispute for his servants, fight for them (an instance of which you, dear sir, saw the first time you preached on the green between Penzance and Newlyn, when a few lads rescued you from a wicked mob), but I would come no nearer. However, going one Sunday night to hear Stephen Nichols, a plain, honest tinner,³ the word took strange hold on me, and seemed like fire in my bones. I returned filled with astonishment, retired to my apartment, and for the first time began to take a serious review of my past life and present situation with regard to eternity. My eyes were now truly opened. I saw myself a poor, naked, helpless sinner, without any plea, but 'God be merciful to me'.⁴ My convictions became more and more alarming, till I was driven to the brink of despair. And though my religious acquaintance (for I immediately joined the society) did all they could to encourage me, I would often say 'I have no hope'. In this deplorable state I continued for near four months, when one Sunday (may I never forget it!) as I was attending to the exhortation before the sacrament, when the minister pronounced 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh

¹JW was soliciting autobiographical accounts from his lay preachers by early 1777 (see JW to Elizabeth Woodhouse, Jan. 21, 1777, *Works*, 29:319–20). When he launched *AM* a year later, he inserted such accounts (usually as extended letters), with this as the first example. This became such a regular feature that when an account was late in, and an issue was published without it, JW not only apologized but promised a more extended account the following month; see *AM* 5 (1782): 403.

²Cf. Job 7:14.

³Stephen Nichols was a local preacher in the 1747 Minutes (*Works*, 10:205), as a travelling preacher in 1758 (10:282), but not admitted until 1770 (10:380). Nothing more is heard of him.

⁴Cf. Luke 18:13.

damnation to himself' (a very wrong translation) 'not discerning the Lord's body',⁵ I immediately concluded, 'Then I am lost forever.' Yet, through the persuasion of my father I stayed and resolved if I did perish I would perish in the means of grace. Accordingly, in the afternoon I set out by myself for church, a mile distant from the town (for solitude was all my comfort). I had not walked far before it was strongly suggested to my mind, 'Jesus Christ died for the vilest sinner.' I immediately replied, 'Then I am the wretch for whom he died!' In that moment it seemed to me as though a new creation had taken place. I felt no guilt, no distress of any kind. My soul was filled with light and love. I could no more doubt of my acceptance with God through Christ than I could of my own existence. In this state I continued near two years, and am firmly persuaded might have still continued in it but for my own unfaithfulness.

I was now convinced it was my duty to do all I could for God, and accordingly reproved sin wherever I saw it, without regarding the character or station of the person; and wherever I found a disposition to receive it, added a word of exhortation.

Some years after, my friends thought I might be more useful if I was to exhort *in the society*. With much reluctance I made the attempt. But though God blessed, in a very remarkable manner, my feeble efforts, I was with difficulty persuaded to continue it.

When you, sir, visited us in 1751 you persuaded me to enlarge my sphere, and appointed me to visit several societies. I accordingly complied, but still with unwillingness. In your next visit to Cornwall you thought I was not so useful as I might be, and proposed my taking a circuit. *This* I could by no means think of. I looked on myself as an occasional helper, having a good deal of time on my hands; and if a preacher was ill, or unable to keep his circuit, I thought it my indispensable duty to fill his place. But though I knew I was called to this, I could not see that I should go farther, on account of the smallness of both my gifts and grace.

In the year 1753 you proposed my going to Kingswood school. And accordingly, having settled the terms, I set out for Bristol in April 1754. But to my great disappointment, I found the school full and a letter from you desiring me to come immediately to London. This, together with your brother's telling me that if I returned back to my business he should not wonder if I turned back into the world, determined me to comply with your desire. At the Conference in London the 4th of May 1754 I was appointed for the Manchester circuit, which then took in Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and part of Yorkshire. Here God so blest my mean labours that I was fully convinced he had called me to preach his gospel. Meantime my hardships were great. I had many difficulties to struggle with. In some places the work was to begin; and in most places, being in its infancy, we had hardly the necessities of life. So that after preaching three or four times a day, and riding 30 or 40 miles, I have often been thankful for a little clean straw with a canvas sheet to lie on. Very frequently we had also violent oppositions. At Warrington I was struck so violently with a brick on the breast that the blood gushed out through my mouth, nose, and ears. At Grampound I was pressed for a soldier; kept under a strong guard for several days without meat or drink but what I was obliged to procure at a large expense, and threatened to have my feet tied under the horse's belly while I was carried eight miles before the commissioners. And though I was honourably acquitted by them, yet it cost me a pretty large sum of money, as well as much trouble.

For many years I was exposed to various other difficulties and dangers. But having obtained help from God, I continue to this day! And, all thanks to *him*, I wish to live and die in his service. At present I find my mind as much devoted to him, as I ever did. I see and feel the necessity of a greater conformity to Christ. May I never be satisfied till I awake up after his likeness!

Thus, dear sir, I have given you a brief account of my life, as far as my memory would assist me. If it is useful to any soul, my purpose is fully answered.

Peter Jaco

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 541–44.⁶

⁵Cf. 1 Cor. 11:29.

⁶This letter is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 1:260–64; with an addendum about Jaco's death.

From 'Amicus'

[Bath] Somersetshire
October 9, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I am not certain what opinion you may form of a person who takes the liberty of addressing you thus publicly. It is not without reluctance that I find myself under the necessity, as a friend of mankind, of disturbing your tranquillity by performing what I judge to be my duty to you and to the world. As far as I know myself, I will give you no occasion to complain of the asperity of your correspondent, or of your not being treated both as a gentleman and a soldier.

Sir, it was to the grief of many of your well-wishers that you ever meddled with politics during the unauspicious era in which England and America are at open war with each other. It was to their surprise that a minister of the gospel of peace should act so inconsistent a part as to furnish fuel to a fire which had already spread with such rapidity as to threaten the very existence of the empire. And what must they think of you *now*, when they see you are still governed by the same spirit, advancing positions which the wise and moderated on all sides think *dubious*, with an air of authority which nothing can warrant but personal and incontrovertible knowledge?

Pardon me, reverend sir, for thinking that your late political sermon on Ezekiel 1:16,¹ which you ushered into the world as calculated to heal the wounds which the unhappy exertion of a power that seems to be at variance with the English constitution has made, is so far from answering my expectation for that end as to furnish a fresh proof that your talents were never formed for political disquisitions in a free country. Don't think that I have a wish to deprive you of the liberty of judging for yourself in politics and religions. Far be it from me to entertain such a sentiment. But what mostly surprises me is that you should meddle in a controversy which was agitated with all the warmth that generally attends struggles between opposites, in the very carnal spirit of a degenerate age. Is this the way to heal breaches? Have you ever found it so in the religious world? We should have expected from the meek, charitable Mr. Wesley, who talks so much about love to our neighbours (and who very lately, within my hearing, was illustrating the extent of that precept by our Saviour's beautiful parable of the traveller who fell among thieves, in order to convince the Jews that they should love even the Samaritans²) a compassionate address to the contending parties.

Really, reverend sir, I am quite at a loss to discover your charity towards the people of America, unless it be charity to charge a whole community with the enormities of individuals. According to my views of Christianity you would have acted a far more consistent part had you steadily pursued the paths of virtue, inculcating the pure, peaceable principles of the New Testament on the inhabitants of England and America, and thus have your witness in heaven that in simplicity and godly sincerity you have conducted yourself in the world. But how differ from this are you thought of by many! They charge you with duplicity, with making your devotion to a court idol, with sacrificing your integrity in the support of despotism, and with manifesting such a malignity of heart as cannot be reconciled with the most lax notions of the religion of Jesus Christ.

My business is not to judge betwixt you and the public. My intention on another occasion is to lay before you my thoughts on your late sermon, to which I have already referred. And permit me to hope that your assistance will not be denied me, if I should request it, to explain such parts of your discourse as now appear too sublime for my comprehension. In the meantime I am, reverend sir,

Yours,

Amicus

Source: published transcription; *General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer* (Oct. 23, 1778), p. 4.

¹JW, Sermon 113, 'The Late Work of God in North America', *Works*, 3:594–608.

²Luke 10:30–37. JW was in Bath on Sept. 7, 1778; but no mention is made of his text.

From the Rev. James Creighton

Belturbet¹
October 26, 1778

My Dear Sir,

I stand much in need of a judicious friend in many respects. I am quite² alone. There are none of the Methodists near me, nor are there any yet thoroughly awakened within my cure. The fault I must own is mine. I have not been zealous enough. Nay, I have been an unfaithful servant. Yet this has not proceeded from the fear of man, but I wished not to act precipitately and to raise the prejudices of the clergy as little as possible. I meant well, but I see I have acted wrong. Had I been persecuted, I should have been much bolder. But the people are so civil to me that it has, in a great measure, proved my ruin. It is difficult I see to steer in the middle path.

I have had such a sense of my ignorance and inability that I have been frequently tempted to think I ought to refrain entirely from preaching. But again I thought I might perhaps be of some use here where the people are exceedingly ignorant. And though they are ready to listen to me, yet they are not willing to hear a Methodist. Could I once open a door here for the Methodist preachers, I should willingly go to any part of the globe that God should call me to. I wait to know more of God's will. And unfaithful as I have been, yet it is my sole desire that he may be glorified, whatever he is pleased to do with me.

I thought if I could do any good, poor Ireland wanted it most; and especially the miserable, dark, benighted region where I am at present. Therefore I had resolved to continue here after I should be discharged from my curacy. But I am now inclined to go to England or anywhere else, if God will give me utterance. For at present I am utterly unfit to appear before a congregation. Were I near you I should be too happy. But oh my weakness, my ignorance, and inability to fill the place of your assistant! I believe the country would suit my constitution much better than the city, as it never was very strong. Though we much lament the want of discipline in our church, and must confess that many things of lesser moment might be altered for the better; and though I admire the economy of the Methodists, so far as I know it; yet I entirely agree with you that they ought not to leave the Church. So long as they mingle with the members of it they may be a means of bringing them in. But if they separate, they will thereby stop the ears and eyes of thousands. These have been my sentiments long before I heard that they were yours. I never was bigoted to opinions, and hope I never shall. My ancestors indeed were Calvinists, and of Scottish extraction. But I was educated, from my childhood, in the principles of our established Church. I remain, dear sir,

Your very humble servant, and affectionate brother,

J. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 608–09.

¹Orig., 'Belterbelt'. Belturbet is in County Cavan, Ireland.

²Orig., 'quiet'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

From Lady [Darcy (Brisbane) Maxwell]

Edinburgh
October 28, 1778

Reverend Sir,

Although I have obtained a measure of victory over attachment to persons, places, and things, yet I am not without a desire to see you once more while in the body, if the Lord will. I therefore feel a degree of pain from your passing to and from Ireland repeatedly without coming to Edinburgh.¹ May I ask from whence proceeds this coolness to your Scotch friends? What have they done to forfeit your regard? I confess, appearances are against *me*. But they are only appearances. In heart I am the same, and surely while I love God I shall esteem you. You justly say, 'Why then do not you write to me sometimes?' I am to blame for my silence; it is one proof amongst others that I do not fully walk up to my privileges. I hope you will forgive and forget my seeming neglect herein. Have you no thoughts of coming to Scotland when you are so near as Leeds? If it is the Lord's will, I wish it. If otherwise, I am satisfied, as I am sure his will is best. I wish you and your brethren much of the divine presence. May he overrule all your determination, for his own glory and the good of his people!

The society here has not prospered remarkably for some time past. Their attendance upon the means of grace depends much upon the preachers being acceptable, and indeed it is so with the outward hearers also. For this reason ought not some pains be taken to find out those who are most likely to find acceptance with the people? Without meaning to detract from any, you know some are more acceptable to the people than others, perhaps equally if not much more valuable men. It is now some years since I was delivered from giving way to a desire for one preacher in preference to another, unless I viewed it closely connected with the prosperity of the work of God. In this view I will take the liberty to name three, any one or two of whom would be very acceptable, and I hope useful too: Mr. [Alexander] M'N[ab], Mr. [Thomas] R[utherfor]d, and Mr. R—s.²

That God may direct you in all things is, reverend sir, the fervent prayer of
Your most humble servant and affectionate friend in Jesus,

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 611–12.

¹JW made a brief trip to Ireland in 1777, and a longer one in 1778, while not visiting Scotland either year.

²Likely Benjamin Rhodes, or Robert Roberts.

From John Atlay (autobiography)

October 30, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I was born at Sheriff Hutton, in the county of York, in December 1736. I was kept at school till fourteen years of age, and was then employed by my father in all the branches of husbandry. His violent temper (though he seriously feared God) sometimes drove me almost to despair, and sometimes earnestly to seek God, from whom I had deep impressions from my childhood. I used to go to the sacrament at all opportunities from the time I was sixteen years old, and was often deeply affected thereby, and so lastingly as to be preserved from outward sin.

In January 1759, when I was about two and twenty, I heard Hannah Harrison³ give an exhortation. Five or six of us went into the room together, just as she was repeating,

Come, Lord! the drooping sinner cheer,
Nor let thy chariot-wheels delay!
Appear, in my poor heart appear!
My God, my Saviour, come away.⁴

I was cut to the heart. I could neither speak nor stir. I was convinced there was something in religion which I had never known. We returned home. But those words, 'My God, my Saviour, come away', were continually sounding in my heart. And from that time another young man and I forsook all our trifling company.

About a month after I heard John Manners at York, and was deeply convinced that I was a lost, undone sinner. I could not sleep all night, and in the morning invited him to come and preach in my father's house. When I came home on Sunday I told my father. He was exceeding angry, and protested he should never preach there. I pleaded much, but in vain. When he went to church, I shut myself in and earnestly prayed that God would change his heart. He came from church and said, 'I have never been so uneasy at church in all my life. I could not keep those words out of my mind, "If thou rejectest this offer of salvation, perhaps thou wilt never have another." He shall come, whatever be the consequence.' I took knowledge that God heareth prayer. He came on Tuesday, and preached to a large, quiet congregation; and that night my father and two sisters were convinced of sin.

For near three weeks I could scarce either sleep or eat, but just enough to keep life. On April 1, having spent most of the night in prayer, I felt those words applied to my soul with inexpressible power, 'Fear not; for I have redeemed thee.'⁵ I then saw, as I had never done before, the whole mystery of our redemption, and could not possibly doubt but that I was reconciled to God through the Son of his love.

For about three weeks I was unspeakably happy in God, and thoroughly devoted to him. My soul was all joy, praise, and prayer, without any intermission. My sister was mentioning this to T. B., for whom I had the highest esteem. He replied, 'Ah, poor Johnny! The devil has deceived him, as he has done many. He has taken him up to the mount; but he will throw him down, and not leave a whole bone in him.' This wicked, rash speech my sister told me. Immediately I was struck with horror. I thought, 'He is a better judge than me, certainly I am deceived.' I was stripped of all. My love and joy were gone, and for some weeks I was in the blackness of despair; and, but for fear of being a stumbling-block to others, I should have put an end to my wretched life.

One evening I went out, and turning back when I was almost out of sight of the house, I thought, 'I will give one look; for I shall see it no more.' I was walking down the side of the hill, when I was

³See 1761 in-letters.

⁴*HSP* (1742), 92, st. 9.

⁵Isa. 43:1.

penetrated with these words, 'Be not faithless, but believing'.⁶ I looked round, but no one was near. The words came a second time; and then the following, 'Fear not; for I *have* redeemed thee'.⁷ I kneeled down on the grass, to return God thanks. All my fears and sorrow were gone. And from that hour I never had a moment's doubt of God's love to me.

From this time I was exhorting every company wherein I was. And God continually confirmed what was spoken; but especially to the class whereof I was leader, most of whom were justified in a few months. Afterwards I was persuaded to hold weekly prayer-meetings, at which I likewise gave a word of exhortation. By seeing the fruit of which I was more and more stirred up, till zeal for God as it were ate me up. After a time I was desired to supply the place of one and another preacher. And when Mr. [John] Pawson and Mr. [Richard] Henderson were in the York circuit, Mr. Henderson being taken ill, I was prevailed upon to supply his place for a month. And afterwards, though I followed my father's business the rest of the week, I generally preached two, three, or four times on a Sunday.

In August 1762 I was working in the field, when John Manners came to me and reproved me for my unwillingness to give myself up wholly to the work of God. He told me I must travel or be damned, and that God had now made a way for me by removing one of the labourers in the York circuit into Abraham's bosom. I was now determined, and on Tuesday, September 22, I set out, though with fear and trembling. Here I continued till the August following. John Manners died in April; but while he lived, he greatly encouraged me to go on in the work I had begun.

The next year I was appointed for Birstall circuit, where I met with some difficulties. From my first awakening I had conversed with some who (though at that time they were no Calvinists) frequently used Calvinian phrases. From these I had learned to do the same. This caused the Calvinists to take much notice of me, but gave great offence to my brethren. I now began to inform myself more perfectly, by reading and meditation; and I prayed much for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This, I found, was exceeding profitable.

The next year I was sent to Whitehaven, where I continued that and the following year. Here I was much given up to God in reading, meditation, and prayer—in which I spent six or seven hours every day, while the rest was spent in preaching and in visiting the sick and the tempted. While I continued here my soul was frequently comforted, and the work of God greatly revived.

My next remove was to Scotland, where I stayed three years. My custom was to attend the kirk at every opportunity, where I heard the doctrines of Calvin set forth to the best advantage. My manner was to weigh the arguments I heard in every sermon, and by this means I found that Calvinism was not built on a good foundation; and I have often thought that I should have been a Calvinist, if it had not been for the sermons I heard in Scotland.

Near two years of the time I was in Scotland I spent in Glasgow. Here I gave myself up to God in good earnest. Religion was now, more than ever, the one business of my life. I had few trials, but many mercies and comforts. My last year was at Edinburgh. Here I had many trials; however I had this comfort, that the work of God greatly revived.

From Scotland I returned to Yorkshire, where I spent three years. But I cannot say that my labours were remarkably successful at this time. However I was frequently refreshed in my own soul.

From Yorkshire I came to London, where I have continued between five and six years. All this time I have been fully exercised with various labours, cares, and trials; but, by the grace of God, I am kept amidst them all. I still love and fear him, and his service is my chief delight. I desire to be wholly devoted to his service, and to continue therein all the days of my life,

I am, reverend sir,
yours, etc.,

John Atlay

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 577–81.

⁶John 20:27.

⁷Isa. 43:1.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
October 30, 1778

Reverend Sir,

After a long delay, I once more take up my pen to acquaint you with the Lord's gracious dealings with me.

It is now near eight years since my soul experienced that depth of distress, and afterward that joy and consolation inexpressible. I bless God [that] since that time I have been enabled in all circumstances to trust him with greater firmness, and cleave to him with more steadiness than ever before.

The first four or five years my consolation abounded. I had few outward trials. And as for inward exercises, I was enabled so immediately to look to Jesus that I was seldom if ever oppressed by them. The greatest trial I met with in that part of my life was the dreadful pain in my head and face. This put all my grace to the trial for weeks together, but great was the Lord's mercy and salvation in this day of trouble.

For the last two or three years past it has been given me not only to rejoice but to suffer adversity. A variety of concurring circumstances have rendered my way indeed rough and thorny, insomuch that at times my spirit has been sorely grieved and afflicted. But how unspeakable is the Lord's goodness in keeping my soul from reasoning or perplexity. For although my sensations are different from what they were—I do not experience that joyous, delightful calm of mind—yet I am not conscious of any decay of life or vigour of soul. Nay, I am rather persuaded my confidence in God is greater than it was. Though was I to hearken to Satan, and compare my past experience with what it has been lately, with a transient view only, I should be alarmed and discouraged. But blessed by God, in this respect he manifests his tender care, and guards me by his watchful eye!

When I take a survey of the trials and crosses I have endured, and what wonderful deliverances the Lord hath wrought out for me, I am encouraged to persevere through all future difficulties. But I feel great need of momentary dependence on Omnipotence for help.

Your advice respecting my experience will be esteemed an additional favour by, reverend sir,
Your obliged servant,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 663–64.

From John Pawson (autobiography)

c. November 1778

Reverend Sir,

I was born at Thorner, near Leeds in Yorkshire, in the year 1737. My parents were reputable people, belonging to the Church of England; and, though strangers to the life and power of religion, would not suffer me to run headlong into the vices of the age, but brought me up in the fear of God and gave me, according to their ability, a good education. My father, being in the building business, brought me up in the same way, on which I entered in the fifteenth year of my age.

At this time I was serious and had no desire to follow the multitude to do evil. I attended the service of the Church [of England] constantly, and met in a small society of Church people, belonging to the high church in Hull,¹ where I lived with my brother-in-law. Whether these were acquainted with the power of religion I know not, as I was at that time an entire stranger to it myself. Yet I did not doubt but all was well with me, and thought if I died I should certainly be happy with God.

About the year 1755 I fell in company with two persons who talked much concerning the people called Methodists. I had then an hatred against them above all others, supposing them to be a weak and wicked people. I condemned them altogether, and had no desire either to hear them preach or to read any of their writings. But from the account that one of them gave of his wife, who was a Methodist, I began to have a more favourable opinion of them and thought I should be glad to hear them. Accordingly, I went one evening with an intention to hear. But when I came to the door I was ashamed to go in, and so walked round the preaching house and returned home.

About the year 1756 I began to follow my business at Harewood House [in Leeds], the seat of Edwin Lascelles, Esq. Here I fell in with a company of very wicked young men. And though I was preserved from following them into gross sin, yet I was now a greater enemy to the Methodists than ever. But about the year 1758 a young woman who was a Methodist lent my father two sermons preached at the parish church in Leeds by the late Rev. Mr. Henry Crooke of Hunslet. He read them, and recommended them to me. In reading these I began to see that I was not in a state of salvation. I saw first, that justification by faith was the doctrine of the Church of England; and secondly, that the Scripture teaches it as necessary to salvation. I also saw that the Methodists were the people of God, and that they preached no other doctrine than that which I found even in my prayer book.

I now began to spend my leisure hours in reading such books as treat on that subject, and was astonished that I could not see these things before. In the latter end of June I went to Otley to hear a Methodist preacher, when I was more surprised than ever. The serious, devout behaviour of the people struck me with a kind of religious awe. The singing greatly delighted me, and the sermon was much blest to my soul. They suffered me to stay [for] the society meeting, which I had great cause to bless God for. I returned home full of good resolutions, but little thought what trials were coming upon me. I thought certainly none who love me can be offended at my seeking the salvation of my soul. But I soon found my mistake, for those who had formerly been my greatest friends now became my open enemies. All my relations were exceedingly offended, and threatened me much, if I would not leave this way. My uncle in particular, who before promised to be kind to me, now resolved to leave me nothing, which resolution he made good. My father and mother were exceedingly troubled, supposing me to be totally ruined. And my brothers and sisters were of the same mind. My father threatened many times to turn me out of doors, and entirely to disown me. But the love he had for me (I being his eldest son) moved him to use every means he could think of to prevail on me to forsake this despised people, whom he hated above all others. He mourned to see me 'run wilfully to my own ruin'. My mother also frequently wept much on my account.

This was indeed a time of great trial to me. My father's threatening to disinherit me did not trouble me at all. But the consideration of the danger their souls were in distressed me exceedingly. I therefore did not regard what I suffered, so my parents might be brought out of their Egyptian darkness. To this end I bought the best books I could meet with, some of which my father read, but it seemed to no

¹Likely St. Silas church, of the Sculcoates neighbourhood.

good purpose.

About this time my brother was awakened, and also my younger sister's husband. My eldest sister and her husband likewise began to have a favourable opinion of this way. This made my father more severe with me, supposing I was the occasion of all this mischief. For the present he prevailed on my brother to hear this preaching no more. However it was not long before he set out in the way of salvation. My father, when he saw he was so far from gaining ground that he was continually losing it, grew exceeding uneasy and knew not what course to take. However he now entered upon a new scheme. He began to be mild and gentle, and to use soft words. He told me I might buy what books I pleased, only I must not go to hear the preaching. I might learn as much, if not more, by reading Mr. Wesley's writing, as by hearing the lay preachers. He said the Methodists being a people so universally hated, it would ruin my character to go among them.

I now found it hard work to withstand my father's good nature. Accordingly, preaching being one Sabbath-day near our house, I could not break through. When it was over, I walked into the garden and wept bitterly. From thence I went into a solitary place, where no one might see me, and bemoaned myself before the Lord. O the anguish I then felt! I was scarcely able to look up. My father soon found me, and took me into the fields to see the grass and corn. But this would afford me no relief. He was greatly troubled on my account, supposing that I should run distracted. We returned home in time to attend the service of the church; and in the evening, according to our custom, we read in our own house. When I had done reading, my father seemed to approve of what I read. I was glad and began to speak to him in as mild a manner as I could. But he was soon much offended, and said, 'I find thou art now entirely ruined. I have used every means I can think of, but all to no purpose. I rejoiced at thy birth, and I once thought thou wast as hopeful a young man as any in this town. But now I shall have no more comfort in thee, so long as I live. Thy mother and I are now grown old, and thou makest our lives quite miserable. Thou wilt bring down our grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Thou intendest to make my house a preaching house when once my head is laid, but I shall take care it shall never be thine. No, I will leave all I have to the poor of the parish, before the Methodists shall have anything to do with it.'

I was exceedingly affected while he spoke in this manner. He then desired me to promise I would hear this preaching no more. I told him (when I could speak for weeping) that if I could see a sufficient reason I would make him that promise, but not till then. He replied, 'Well, I see thou art quite stupid. I may as well say nothing. The Methodists are the most bewitching people that ever lived, for when once a person hears them it is impossible to persuade them to return back again.' I then left him and went to bed, but my trouble was very great. I was tempted to think that I was disobedient to my parents. But I clearly saw that I must obey God rather than man; and that I must obey them only so far as was consistent with his will.

My brother and I now began to take sweet counsel together. And we strove to oblige our parents with all our might, taking particular care that no business was neglected on account of our going to hear the preaching. We frequently prayed together in our bedchamber, and several times my mother got upon the stairs to hearken. At last she desired to join in prayer with us. Afterwards my father listened upon the stairs, and after some time he also desired to join with us.

The minister of the parish now began to be apprehensive that he should lose my father, and with him the whole family. In order to prevent this, he carefully gathered all the false accusations he could hear of against the people, and brought them to my father. He laboured with all his might, both in public and private, to make them appear detestable. By so doing he created me much trouble. I told my father that these things were entirely false. But he was so provoked that I thought he would make good his former resolution of quite disowning me. However, I thought I would write to him my whole mind. Accordingly, I began by showing him the wretched state of my soul, and the danger I apprehended to be continually hanging over my head. I then expostulated with him and asked, 'What worse am I in any respect since I heard the Methodists? Am I disobedient to you or my mother in any other thing? Do I neglect any part of business? Must not everyone be accountable to God for himself? Doth our law condemn any man before it hears him, and know what he doth? Why then do you condemn the Methodist preachers whom you have never heard? If you will hear them only three times, and then prove from the Scripture that they

preach contrary thereunto, I will hear them no more.' My father read this letter, accepted of the proposals, and accordingly went to hear. He seemed to like the first tolerably well. The second he did not like at all. The third he approved of very much, and went to hear a fourth, which he liked better than all the rest. Yet he was not convinced. However, he now began to pray that the Lord would show him the way of salvation. A little after, he went on a Sunday morning into the stable, where he thought nobody could hear or see him, and prayed earnestly unto the Lord. Here it was that the light of the Holy Spirit broke in upon him. He now had a clear sight of his sinful and lost condition, and was brought into such distress that, like David, he roared for the very disquietness of his soul. He was now ashamed and confounded, and could hardly hope for mercy. This was a day of glad tidings to me, a day which I trust I shall thankfully remember so long as I live. I now had liberty to cast in my lot with the people of God, which I immediately did. My father also invited the preachers to his house. Accordingly, he prevented *my* turning it into a preaching house (as he had formerly said) by doing it himself. From this time we had preaching in our own house, and all the family (which were eight in number) joined the society. This was about January 1760.

For some time, though I knew myself to be without God in the world, I was dull and unaffected, and often applied those words to myself,

Still every means in vain I try,
I seek him far and near,
Where'er I come, constrain'd to cry
My Saviour is not here.

God is in this, in every place,
Yet O, how dark and void!
To me 'tis one great wilderness,
This earth without my God.²

About this time the Lord began to revive his work among us. My father having received the preaching into his house, many of our neighbours came to hear. Our society also increased, which was matter of great joy to me. But it was my continual prayer that the Lord would take away my heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh. I cried day and night unto him, that he would give me a broken and a contrite heart, and it was not long ere he inclined his ear. I went to hear the word at a neighbouring village, when, in the beginning of the service, the power of God came mightily upon *me* and many others. All on a sudden my heart was like melting wax, my soul was distressed above measure. I cried aloud with an exceeding bitter cry, the trouble and anguish of spirit that I laboured under far exceeding all description. The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in my flesh, and the poison of them drank up my spirits. Yet in the height of my distress I could bless the Lord that he had granted me that which I had so long sought for. I now sought the Lord with my whole heart, and neglected no opportunity of hearing his word, or of waiting upon him in every means of grace. Yet many times I did not hear one half of the sermon, my distress being so exceeding great. I had such a clear sight and deep sense of my exceeding sinfulness that I was humbled in the dust. I daily walked mournfully before the Lord. The things of this world were made quite bitter to me. I could take no delight in any of them, my mind being so occupied with grief for my past sins, and with desire to be delivered from them. My business became a burden to me. I was quite confused and brought very low, so that any one who looked on me might see in my countenance the distress of my mind, for I was on the very brink of despair.

One morning as I walked in the fields, bemoaning myself like Ephraim of old, my heart sunk within me like a stone and I was about to conclude that it was all in vain for me to expect any mercy. But the Lord would not suffer the spirit to fail before him, and the soul which he had made. He revived my drooping heart with that comfortable word, 'O tarry thou the Lord's leisure. Be strong, and he shall

²CW, 'Hymn for One Convinced of Unbelief', st. 10–11, *HSP* (1749), 1:41.

comfort thine heart.³ I was now, for a season, enabled both to hope and quietly to wait for the salvation of God.

About this time one of my acquaintance was brought to enjoy a clear sense of the love of God when he had only heard about three sermons. This utterly confounded me. I could in no wise account for it. I did not consider that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years. I thought he was deceived, and that it was impossible he should be converted so soon. But the next morning the preacher gave public thanks to God on his account. I was then constrained to believe all was well with him. I returned home, and immediately retired into my chamber, but here I had not sufficient opportunity to give vent to my grief. I therefore walked into the barn, where I thought no one could see or hear me. Here I prayed, and wept, and roared aloud, my distress being greater than I was well able to bear. Yet I was not quite without hope, but expected, vile as I was, that the Lord would at last be gracious unto me. But I was not so private as I supposed, for I found my brother was in another part of the barn, in as great distress as myself; and my father and mother soon heard our cries, and came to us, and in a little time my eldest sister and her husband. We were now six in number, and all in the same distress. I suppose if some of the good Christians of the age had either seen or heard us, they would have concluded we were all quite beside ourselves. However, though the children were brought to the birth, there was not strength to bring forth. I continued destitute of comfort, but steadfastly purposed to abide as at the door of mercy.

One Saturday evening I went to a little village to hear preaching, and it being a new place, abundance of people gathered together. The power of God so accompanied the word that many began to tremble. There was a mighty shaking among the dry bones, and the power of the Lord was not only present to wound but to heal also. For this night my father found redemption in the blood of Jesus, and the preacher gave public thanks on his account. When I heard that my father had obtained mercy, I was so far from being able to rejoice with him that my soul sunk as into the belly of hell. I heard very little of the sermon, but continued kneeling all the time of service. And after it was ended, I still continued trembling, weeping, and crying aloud for mercy. I returned home as well as I was able, for my bodily strength was quite exhausted. My head was as the waters, and mine eyes became as a fountain of tears. I was truly willing to be saved by grace. I was naked, and stripped of all. I had nothing of my own to depend upon for life and salvation. I had nothing to pay; no money or price to bring with me to procure the favour of God.

I passed this night in sorrow and great heaviness, and was glad when the day returned. It was the Lord's day, and the preacher intended to meet our society, in order to wrestle with God in behalf of those who were in distress. I went with a heart full of sorrow, panting after the Lord as the hart after the water brooks. The service began, and the power of God was present in a very wonderful manner. When prayer was made in behalf of those who were in distress, I was bowed upon my knees in the middle of the room, and, if possible, was in greater anguish of spirit than ever before. I heard one, whose voice I knew, cry for mercy with all his might, as if he would rend the very heavens. Quickly after, in the twinkling of an eye, all my trouble was gone, my guilt and condemnation were removed, and I was filled with joy unspeakable. I knew, by experience, that the Lord was merciful to my unrighteousness, and remembered my sins no more. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart. I loved him from an experimental sense of his love to me. O how my soul triumphed in the God of my salvation! This glorious deliverance was wrought by his Holy Spirit, applying those words, 'Thou art mine.' Sometime after, my brother told me the words were in the prophecy of Isaiah. I rose early in the morning and took my Bible, which I opened at random, and they were the first words which I cast my eyes upon! Isaiah 43:1. This was a kind of renewal of the promise of God to me, and I was enabled to praise him the more.

The day upon which the Lord brought my soul out of prison was Sunday, the 16th of March 1760, which I trust I shall thankfully remember so long as I live. The change passed upon my soul was exceeding great. I was brought out of darkness into marvellous light—out of miserable bondage into glorious liberty—and out of the most bitter distress into unspeakable happiness! I had not the least doubt of my acceptance with God, but was fully assured that he was reconciled to me through the merits of his

³Ps. 27:16 (BCP).

Son, who was now unspeakably precious to my soul. I was also fully satisfied that I was born of God or renewed in the spirit of my mind, and I could heartily praise the Lord that he had taken that severe method in bringing me home to himself. For by this means my justification was so clear to me that I could neither doubt nor fear. The work of the Spirit of God in renewing my soul was also the more conspicuous. And this caused me to prize the liberty into which I was brought, and made me more afraid of being entangled again with the yoke of bondage. I now walked comfortably with God, enjoying sweet communion with him. I could both *do* and *suffer* his will with all cheerfulness. Yet Satan soon began to assault me, and laboured to perplex me with evil reasoning, telling me I should not always have so great a value for God or for spiritual things as I now had. But as I was happy for the present, I did not regard all he could say, knowing that I had nothing to do with hereafter. I had only to live by the faith of the Son of God, who now appeared as altogether lovely.

About six weeks after, the preacher proposed dividing our little society into two classes, and desired me to meet one of them. This was a sore trial to me. But when he insisted on my doing it, I was obliged to take up the cross. From the first or second time I met it I continually walked in the light of God's countenance. No creature shared my affections with God, but I served him with an undivided heart. I had no distressing temptations, but had constant power over all sin, so that I lived as upon the borders of heaven.

About this time my elder sister and my younger sister's husband were brought into the Christian liberty, and a little after, my mother and younger sister. This gave me fresh cause to bless the Lord for his goodness.

December 28, 1760, the Lord spoke peace to my brother, while I was praying with him. Now I had more cause to praise the Lord than before. My brother had laboured for a whole year in sore distress of mind, and was many times brought to the brink of despair. I do not remember to have seen any one in the like circumstances for so long a time. But God broke all his bonds asunder, and caused him to walk in the light of his countenance.

We now began to have a public meeting for prayer every Sunday evening, but had no person among us who could give a word of exhortation. This troubled me much, for I was afraid the people would grow weary of coming together if we continued only to sing and pray, as they were obliged to stand or kneel all the time. I thought it would be much better to read a sermon to them, that they might sit down a little. Accordingly I got the Homilies of the Church, which were entirely new to the people. These I read, and, as I was able, explained; in doing which I found great liberty. This proved a blessing to many. But the minister of the parish (being an open enemy to all that is good) began to be offended, and laboured to prejudice the people against me. He seemed not to regard what he said either in public or private, if by any means he could turn the people aside. But they did not regard him. Nay, the more he said, the worse they liked him. So that when he saw he could prevail nothing, he determined to leave the town, which in a little time he accordingly did. When I had read the most profitable of the Homilies, I took Mr. Burkett on the New Testament and read many particular passages therein, and enlarged where I thought it needful.⁴

After this I began to take the Bible itself and, in my poor manner, expounded part of a chapter from time to time. And notwithstanding my insufficiency, much good was done. But this exposed me to fresh trials. The people from the neighbouring societies began to invite me to go and give them a word of exhortation. But as I well knew my own weakness, I absolutely refused. But the assistant prevailed on me to go to a neighbouring town on a Sunday evening. The people, whether I would or not, thrust me into the pulpit. I trembled exceedingly. However, I spoke as well as I could, and the same evening returned home, greatly ashamed of what I had said. I was in hopes they would trouble me no more. But so far was I deceived in this that, about Lady Day 1762, the assistant employed me among the local preachers. I now knew not what course to take. Yet I durst not decline the work. However, I was almost determined to remove into some distant part of the country. But the love I had for the society to which I belonged would

⁴I.e., William Burkett, *Expository Notes with Practical Observations on the New Testament* (London: Parkhurst, Robinson, & Wyatt, 1700).

not suffer me. I was, therefore, obliged to do what I could, and I found God was with me.

In August following, the Conference was at Leeds, and the assistant desiring me to attend, I took up my cross and went. Several young men were proposed as candidates for travelling preachers, and I among the rest. When you, sir, asked me if I was willing to give up myself to the work, I told you I was conscious of my inability, but if you and the brethren thought good to make trial of me, I should deliver up myself to you. Accordingly, I was ordered for the York circuit. When I was gone, God raised up my brother to take my place, who was soon as well-beloved by the people as I had been. I had till now met a few people in Harewood, where I had followed my business. I had suffered much in my mind on their account, as I had no hope of any settled preaching there. As all the town belonged to one gentleman, I thought he would never suffer it. And as no one could receive the preachers without his consent, my labour would be in vain. The few people here were also much cast down when they heard I was going to leave them. But after my removal, I was invited to preach among them, which I accordingly did, to a multitude who came together. And from that time they have had the gospel preached among them and, to the great surprise of many, without any of the opposition they so much expected.

I now entered upon my circuit. Here the assistant behaved to me with all the tenderness of a parent, and the other preachers acted, in their places, in like manner. The people not only bore with my weakness, but seemed glad to see me wherever I came. And I often found myself unspeakably blest in speaking to them. I desired nothing more than to glorify God with my body and spirit, which I knew he had redeemed. Yet I met with many trials from various quarters. In many places the press-gangs attended our preaching, and threatened what they would do. But the Lord restrained them. In other places we had much persecution, especially in Beverley, where the magistrates absolutely refusing to do us justice, we seldom could preach with any degree of satisfaction to ourselves, or those who desired to hear us. When we complained against three young men who disturbed us much, and they were brought before the mayor and aldermen, they said the information was insufficient, being only signed by myself. The mayor then insisted that I had been examined upon oath before him, and that having sworn to men that I did not know, he would indict me for perjury and send me to York castle. When they would permit me to speak, I told them that I was so far from having taken a false oath that I had taken no oath at all; that there were now present three very sufficient witnesses, who would all make oath if it was required, that neither I nor any other person had taken any oath on the occasion. When they heard this, they began to be a little more calm. But as they were determined to do us no justice, we quietly withdrew. However, the work of God prospered much in those parts this year. Many joined the society, and many found redemption in the blood of Jesus.

The next year I and three others were ordered into the Haworth circuit. We found the people in those parts, in a very languishing condition. There seemed an universal mourning for the loss of that eminent servant of God, Mr. [William] Grimshaw, who died the year before. Many said, 'Farewell to all prosperity in these parts; the work of God will come to nothing.' But to our unspeakable comfort, there was a blessed revival. The society was exceedingly quickened and enlarged, and it was thought there was more good done in this one year than in four years put together before.

In August 1764 I was ordered for Norwich. Here the congregations were in general very large, while our society increased considerably. But during the winter we had almost continual mobbing. The rioters frequently broke the windows, interrupted us in preaching, and abused the people when service was ended. We made complaint to the mayor but he would not do us justice, which encouraged the rioters and led them to commit still greater outrages.

I was now removed to Colchester for a season, when preaching had just begun in a place about six miles from it. Here they did not treat us in a friendly manner. The mob, being encouraged by the churchwardens, were exceeding violent. They assembled in great numbers before the house, having got a drum and a large quantity of horns, with which they made such a prodigious noise that the people could not hear. Meantime the constable and churchwardens came into the house, and asked me if I would go with them to the quarter sessions the next day. I told them I would. They said, 'Then we need not show you the justice's order.' I then desired our friends to bring my horse. They said, 'You had better walk to the end of the town.' I did so. The mob gave me a free passage, but followed me, beating the drum,

sounding their horns, and shouting with all their might. I walked slowly down the street before them, in great peace and tranquillity of mind. When we came to the bridge at the end of the town, I stopped till my horse came. They now encompassed me on every side, yet none of them struck me, or so much as cast any dirt or stones at me, although I had no man with me. But after I was gone, they abused the poor people who had come from Colchester with me very much.

The next day I appeared at the sessions. The principal justice was a clergyman belonging to the cathedral in Canterbury, a very candid, sensible gentleman. He said he would not have me think he had sent for me by way of persecution, but as complaint had been made to him by the churchwardens and others of the inhabitants of Nayland that certain strangers, who acted in the capacity of preachers, had come at unseasonable hours in the night and made very great disturbance in the town, he, as one of his Majesty's justices of the peace, was obliged to enquire into it, and therefore required me to answer to certain questions drawn up in writing. He read the questions, and I answered them. So that he was quite satisfied, and promised that we should have peace for the time to come; but hoped we would forgive all that was past.

In a little time I returned to Norwich, where I spent the remaining part of the year in great peace. We were obliged to preach in the open air all that summer. We had also a good prospect of a revival of the work of God in Yarmouth, having procured a convenient chapel, which had been built for the Anabaptists. We had abundance to hear from time to time, and much good was likely to have been done. But one of our leaders turning Calvinist, sowed such discord among the society that nothing but confusion followed. The people scattered so effectually that the wound then given could never be healed.

From hence I went to Birstall in Yorkshire, and spent a year with much satisfaction, my own soul being frequently comforted, while the work of God in a good measure revived.

The two following years I spent in Lancashire. The first of which was exceeding agreeable; only the death of my dear fellow labourer, Paul Greenwood, exceedingly affected me. On the one hand, I mightily rejoiced that so dear a servant of God was taken to his reward; and on the other, I mourned bitterly at the loss of so dear a friend. The last year I spent in these parts was a time of great trial on various accounts.

From Lancashire I went to Staffordshire, and stayed only a single year. But I had the satisfaction to see the work of God greatly revive. Many new societies were raised, and a considerable number of the old ones were quickened and established.

The two following years I spent in London, with some degree of satisfaction both to myself and others, but cannot say much concerning the success of my labours here.

From London I went to Bristol, where I continued three years. I have reason to bless God that my poor labours were acceptable and, I hope, in some measure useful to the people.

The four following years I spent about Leeds and Birstall in Yorkshire. In the latter of these there was a very great revival of religion. Hundreds of sinners were awakened and turned from the evil of their ways, and many received a comfortable assurance of the favour of God.

From Yorkshire I am again returned to London. What successes, trials, or comforts I may meet with, I know not. But I am still determined to continue at my Master's feet, that he may fulfil in me all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

With regard to the Arminian controversy, although I have frequently heard the Calvinists preach, and also read many of their writings, yet I never had the least doubt of Christ's tasting death for every man, or of his willingness to save to the uttermost all who come unto God through him.

I am, reverend sir,
Yours, etc.

John Pawson

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 25–40.⁵

⁵A later, enlarged version of this account was included in Jackson, *EMP*, 4:1–108.

From Dorothy (Furly) Downes

Leeds
November 1, 1778

Reverend Sir,

It must be matter of praise to every well-wisher of Zion that he has given you that wish of your heart, a chapel built in the metropolis for the pure worship of God. May the prayers that were offered up at the opening thereof be answered!¹ May the Lord vouchsafe his continual presence there! May he yet long continue you to go in and out before his people! May we as a people be more wholly devoted to him! And may I, and every individual, be wholly possessed of the most ardent desires to glorify him!

Through the tender mercy of my Saviour I remember continually that I am not my own. And from a consideration of the great price I am bought with, I thankfully offer up all I have and am to him.

He saves me in a manner I should have thought impossible, did I not feel it. But I want to be as active as fire in his service. I would have my mind incessantly, with such activity, tend toward God. I would have every power and faculty of my nature ardently burn with love to him. O for that pure flame which glowed in the martyr's breast! But this corruptible body presses down the soul. For often when my heart seems all on fire for God, I have not power to offer up a single petition with readiness of mind, through the very relaxed state of my nerves! O how good, how kind is Jesus, to join his all prevailing intercession to such imperfect prayers and praises!

Sometimes I meet with things that are very humbling. But the Lord makes me feel that it is all love to my soul, and that it is quite right he should do what he will with his own. When I view afflictions and crosses in this light, I can with great fervency praise him for them all.

Dear sir, if you will favour me with the continuance of your advice and prayer, you will greatly oblige

Your obedient servant,

D. D.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 665–66.

¹Downes's letter is dated the day that JW opened the New Chapel in City Road, London; see JW, *Journal (Works)*, 23:111–12).

From Thomas Rankin (autobiography)

London
November 16, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I shall divide the following account into three parts: first, from my childhood to my being convinced of sin; secondly, from my being convinced of sin, till I found peace with God; thirdly, from that time to the present day.

I was born at Dunbar, in the shire of East Lothian. My parents had the fear of God and endeavoured to bring up their children therein—all of whom, except two daughters and myself, died very young. We were early taught the principles of religion. My father used frequently, in the evenings, to catechize my two sisters and me, and used to be very close therein. At school we were taught in the same way. By these means the fear of God was planted early in my mind, so as to make me afraid of doing what other boys did without fear or shame.

I continued at school till I was thirteen years of age, and went through a regular course of English education. I paid close attention to my learning, and excelled diverse of my schoolfellows. As to the state of my mind, though I had some fear of God, I was prone to anger and soon offended. But the awe I stood in, both of my father and of my master, made me afraid of quarrelling with my schoolfellows. Yet when I thought I was used ill, I would fight till I died, if I did not get the victory. Whenever this came to my father's ears I was sure to be severely beaten. This made me dread fighting. Yet when I was greatly provoked I regarded nothing, my passion getting the entire victory over me. But afterwards I used to be greatly distressed, weeping and crying to God that I might do so no more. I formed resolutions against anger again and again; but, as the early dew, they soon passed away.

In the midst of all this, I loved to read the word of God. I constantly went to church and used private prayer. When I was about twelve years of age my father had me taught to play on several instruments of music, which served to keep me out of the company of idle boys. When the sacrament was to be administered I used to be much affected, and frequently wept at the thoughts of Christ dying for sinners. But these impressions soon wore off, and trifling conversation scattered the dawns of divine grace. Thus I went on till I was fifteen years of age. I was now fond of reading history, travels, and voyages, and this also kept me from bad company.

Soon after this a troop of the Queen's dragoons came to lie at Dunbar. There were ten or twelve of the men, and some of their wives, who were pious Christians. They met twice every day for singing and prayer, and many of the inhabitants of the town attended their meetings. I went with some other young people to see and hear this strange thing, religious soldiers. I felt a great affection for them, but I could not understand what they meant by being born again. Several of the townsmen began to be more concerned for their souls than ever they had been before. This made a great noise, and many lies were told of them, as it too often happens on such occasions. However, I continued to go to the meetings, and was more watchful than ever over my words and actions. I both read the Scriptures and prayed more, and had a real desire to save my soul. I conversed with several of the soldiers, and some others who had felt the power of divine grace, among whom was one who had been at school with me. He often urged upon me the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. But I used warmly to maintain that this was not the privilege of every child of God, and that I might be in the divine favour and not know my sins forgiven.

About this time it pleased God to call my father away. He spent most of his time in reading and prayer for some days before he died. I have reason to believe that he died in peace. I was much affected at his death, and many of the advices he had formerly given me came with redoubled force to my mind.

I now thought, as God had taken away my father, I was called in some degree to act in his place, by observing family worship and by assisting my mother in the business as I had never done before. I endeavoured to act in all things from a steady and conscientious principle, and had the approbation of God and my own conscience. And it was often suggested to me that I knew more of religion than some of those who spoke of knowing their sins forgiven. These vain thoughts of myself were confirmed by conversations with some of those on whom God had wrought a real change. In several little disputes I had

with them, they had so little to say that I put them to silence. But I frequently was followed home to my chamber with this thought, 'If what these people say is true, I am in the wrong way. And if they are right, how can I oppose them!'

Being now entered upon the seventeenth year of my age, I heard several of the preachers who came from Newcastle; in particular, Mr. [Thomas] Seccomb and Mr. [James] D[eaves]. Mr. Seccomb I thought spoke like a sensible man. But as for Mr. D[eaves], I thought he was out of his senses, and heartily despised him; and on his account I looked on the religious soldiers, and those who met with them, with more contempt than ever. The result of this was that I frequented their meetings less, grew more fond of trifling company, and indulged myself in dancing and music more than ever I had done before.

I was now in great danger of being overcome with sin of diverse kinds. I was fond of going to public dancings, and pleased with the company of young women, and they with mine. But blessed be God, he did not suffer me to follow my evil heart, but filled me with terror whenever I entertained an unchaste thought. I still kept up the form of religion, and went on for several months grieving the holy God, and then repenting and resolving to do so no more. At this time I was unwilling to converse with any of the people called Methodists. If I did, I always came from them with a wounded conscience.

I had now a strong desire of going abroad. I did not love the business my father had left, and several of my relations who went to sea influenced me to do the same. When I mentioned this to my mother, she could not bear the thought of it, so I laid the design aside.

About this time I went to reside at Leith, two miles from Edinburgh. Soon after I came there I determined to seek the Lord in earnest. Mr. Lindsay, minister of North Leith, was a pious man and an affecting preacher.¹ I heard him every Lord's day, and fully resolved to dedicate myself to God. In order thereto, I purposed to partake of the Lord's Supper. I spoke to Mr. Lindsay, with fear and trembling, and he opened the nature of the sacrament and gave me encouragement to come. Accordingly, I went on the Lord's day, when it was to be administered. I was very much affected in hearing the word of God, and in partaking of the bread and wine. And for some weeks after the things of eternity were the very delight of my soul. O how precious was the word of God! How did I love private prayer! To converse about the ways of God was my meat and my drink, by night and by day. Thus I went on for several months, drawn by love and allured by the goodness of God my Saviour.

About this time I heard Mr. [George] Whitefield preach. I was strangely surprised that I never heard him before. And as he was now returning to England, I heard him no more, but remembered much of his sermon and was encouraged to go on in the ways of God.

While I was thus striving, and hoping in the mercy of Christ, I was left all on a sudden as dark as midnight. All my hopes and joys were gone, and I was truly miserable. I do not know that I had done anything to cause this change. But I saw clearly afterwards, if God had not taken this method, I should have rested satisfied in the drawings of the love of Jesus and never sought after a sense of his pardoning love. In this truly wretched state I went on for above six months, and all the while I was like Noah's dove: 'I found no rest for the sole of my foot.'² The time drew near when the sacrament was to be administered again. I resolved to go once more. But for several weeks before, whenever I thought upon it, I was filled with horror. As the time drew nearer my temptations were stronger, and all I had done in sinning against God from the time I first received the sacrament to the present day was brought home to my mind, with such aggravations that I thought I had 'trampled upon the blood of the cross, and crucified the Son of God afresh, and that now, for me there remained no more sacrifice for sin'.³ My soul was now all storm and tempest. What to do, and where to go, I knew not. Neither had I any person I could freely open my mind unto. At last, after a variety of windings and turnings, I resolved once more to receive the sacrament. These lines were the language of my soul:

¹Rev. George Lindsay (1705–64).

²Cf. Gen. 8:9.

³Cf. Heb. 10:29.

If I ne'er find the sacred road,
I'll perish, crying out for God!⁴

In this situation of mind, I went on the Sunday morning to hear the sermon before the sacrament. I was thereby encouraged to hope in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. In this confidence I went to the table. In putting the wine to my lips, a little of it spilt upon the ground. Satan suggested, that 'Christ's blood was spilt for me in vain'. I thought I should have dropped to the ground. How I got to my seat, I know not; but the distress I now felt was inexpressible. All the temptations I felt before were nothing compared to this. In this dreadful situation I continued for some hours, when it pleased God to remove the violence of the temptation and to give me a dawn of hope.

From my being thus deeply convinced of sin, I begin the second part of my account, which will take in both my conversion to God and my being called to preach the gospel.

I now sought for salvation from the ground of my heart. 'Escape for thy life, look not behind thee',⁵ was continually following me. I wept and prayed, and searched the word of God as one digging for hidden treasure. When I was informed that Mr. Whitefield was expected in Edinburgh, I was overjoyed at the news. I went to Edinburgh, and for several weeks heard him evening and morning. I now saw clearly that nothing stood between Christ and my soul but unbelief. I wrestled with God in prayer, night and day. My whole time was spent in seeking salvation. I sought, but found it not.

About two days before I found peace, I arose in the morning greatly distressed, went out into a garden, and mourned over my deplorable state. All at once I had such a view of the wrath of God that my soul sunk down into despair. I felt a taste of that misery which the damned in hell feel. I had not the least glimpse of hope. All the sins that ever I had committed appeared as nothing, when compared to my grieving the Spirit of God and quenching that light, and those dawns of divine love, which I at times had felt from the fifteenth year of my age. I was now in my eighteenth. I was strongly tempted to lay violent hands upon myself. I said, 'Strangling is better than life. Why do I tarry any longer?' At that instant, these words darted into my mind, 'How can I do this great evil, and sin against God!' I stood amazed and confounded. I could only say, 'Lord, undertake for me!' I went into my chamber and cast myself down upon my face on the bed. One came in and asked if she should send for the doctor. I said 'No', and begged to be left alone. Soon after I was deprived of my senses, and seemingly fell into a trance. It appeared to me that I was lying in the bed, and my soul near entering into the world of spirits. To die, I thought, was but a trifle; but to go to hell-fire was dreadful. Yet, after a while, I was willing to go to hell, if God could not otherwise be glorified. I saw the justice of God demanded it, and cried out, 'Thy will be done.' I looked to the foot, the sides, and the head of my bed, and thought I beheld it surrounded (as thick as they could stand) with fiends of the most horrible aspects, ready to convey my soul to eternal flames. They seemed to look upon me with a hellish triumph, which words cannot describe. I had, at that time, such a view of eternity as I never had before or since; and also of the soul's immortality. I had also such a view of the holiness and justice of God as was unspeakable. Just as my soul seemed waiting for her separation from the body, this thought darted into my mind: 'O! where is the sinner's friend? Where is the Lord Jesus Christ?' In speaking these words, I lifted up my eyes to heaven and I thought I beheld the heavens open, and there appeared a most glorious person, who looked upon me and smiled. I cried out, 'That is the Lord Jesus Christ! That is the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!' I gazed upon him a considerable time, and then looked for my hellish attendants, but they were gone and I saw them no more. I was then restored to the use of my senses, and arose from the bed. All my misery and despair were gone. I could draw near to God with confidence, and praise all the day dwelt on my tongue. I had no testimony that my sins were pardoned, but my load was gone and my spirit was easy. In this temper I continued all that day and the next, looking out for the salvation of God. When I arose the following morning, that load returned and seemed to increase till about eight o'clock, when I

⁴John Cennick, 'Seek Thy Face', st. 7, *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God*, 2nd edn. (London: Milles, 1741), 14.

⁵Gen. 19:17.

retired into the garden and began to wrestle with God in mighty prayer. I cried out, 'I have wrestled long, and have not prevailed; O let me now prevail! Lord, let it be now!' In the twinkling of an eye the mighty power of God overwhelmed me, and that word came with power, 'And he blessed him there'!⁶ I was so overwhelmed with the love of God that I thought I should then have died. O what a change did I feel! My wounded spirit was healed. My darkness turned into day, and my hell into heaven. I was so swallowed up in the love of God all that day, and for many days and nights following, that the desire of food and sleep departed from me.

My distress had before brought my body so low that I had all the appearance of a deep consumption. I was advised to go to my native air. Accordingly I went to Dunbar, being so weak that I could not walk ten times my own length without standing still to rest me. Yet, by the mercy of God, and some simple medicines, I was restored in about two months to my former health and strength. All the time I was at Dunbar I spent in living to, and for the glory of, God. I was continually exhorting all I met with to turn to the Lord; and telling them what God had done for my soul.

The first time I saw the society here my soul cleaved to them as the soul of David did to Jonathan. They rejoiced over me, and I over them. I was not ashamed of them, nor of the gospel of Christ. I was enabled to pray in their meetings, and we took sweet counsel together how to make our calling and election sure. While I was at Dunbar I conversed with several who were esteemed extremely religious, but I found they had only a name to live, and were dead to the power of godliness. Some of these I freely told how happy I was in the love of Christ. They replied, 'Take care you are not deceived! Beware you are not in a delusion!' Hence I was fully convinced that the devil does not care how far we go in our profession, if we rest short of being made new creatures.

Being now well recovered, I returned to Leith, where I spent a few months and my soul prospered. But the conviction I had felt about giving myself up to the work of God began to die away. And I was induced, by the advice of some of my friends, to go to South Carolina. I took with me goods belonging to several merchants, and to one of my relations, with my own. We had a rough passage of eleven weeks. When we arrived at Charles Town,⁷ I soon found what danger I was in from company. No business could be done without going into taverns, which was extremely disagreeable to me, as well as dangerous to my peace. I was brought into great heaviness, and longed for the time of the ship's departure; and when it came, praised God that I was going to Great Britain once more.

I was horribly shocked at the wickedness I saw and heard while I was at Charles Town. Pride, luxury, and all their attendants rolled along with a full tide. Glad I was when we set sail, and left that den of riot and uncleanness behind. I was much distressed on the voyage, having lost a great deal of the happiness I enjoyed before I went to Carolina. I promised to God again and again that if he would restore that joy and love to my soul, I would give myself wholly to him and his service forever. The Lord made the world, and the desire of riches, as bitter as wormwood to me. We arrived safe at Leith, and soon after I heard Mr. Whitefield, evening and morning, for some time; when it pleased God to restore all I had lost, and that with increase. I now thought upon nothing but of giving myself wholly up to the service of God, in the most unreserved manner. Then the thoughts of preaching returned upon me, with a stronger conviction than ever. I returned to Dunbar, to my relations, and gave myself entirely up to reading and prayer.

After spending some months in this manner, I had a great desire to see my Christian friends in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I accordingly set off, and had much pleasure in the journey, and found much of the divine presence among the people. It was in this journey I first began to speak in public. But it was with great fear and trembling. After a few weeks I returned to Dunbar, and spent a little more time with my relations. My soul, meantime, grew in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I laid myself out in public and private, to promote the glory of God.

Soon after this I went to Sunderland, where I spent several years. This was in the year 1759. Here my conviction that I ought to preach deepened on my mind. I had spoke in public diverse times before;

⁶Gen. 32:29.

⁷I.e., Charleston, SC.

but it was in great fear, lest I should run before God had sent me. I frequently thought [that] all who preached should have a clear call. This made me cry mightily to God, that I might not deceive my own soul.

I was at this time much athirst for all the mind of Christ, and earnestly longed to be all devoted to God. One night, in meeting my class, I was seized in an uncommon manner with keen distress of soul. Being at first extremely happy in the love of God, all at once the Sun of righteousness withdrew his light, and clouds of horror and distress rested upon my soul. I continued in this dreadful situation for five nights and days. On the morning of the sixth day I awoke very early, and found my heart drawn out after God. I quickly arose, and kneeled down to prayers. All the clouds fled away, and divine light and love shone with such brightness upon my soul as I had not found in that degree since my conversion to God. I cried out with amazement, 'O Lord, what dost thou intend concerning thy servant?' I walked about the room with streaming eyes and an heart burning with love, and then kneeled down to prayer again. While I was upon my knees, I beheld the fallen race of mankind in such misery and ruin that I almost fainted away. Soon after, these words were applied with mighty power, 'Whom shall I send! whom shall I send!' I cried out, 'Lord, here am I; send me if it will bring any glory to thy name.'⁸ Then these words were applied, 'Depart ye, depart ye. Go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing, go ye out of the midst of her. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord! For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight. For the Lord shall go before you, and the God of Israel will be your reward.'⁹ And soon after these words. 'They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever!'¹⁰

At the application of these words I was so overwhelmed with the divine presence that my soul seemed to be lost in the inexpressible enjoyment of God. Upon my knees I cried out, "Lord, what am I, or my father's house, that thou shouldest employ such an ignorant and worthless creature in thy service?"¹¹ After some time, these words came with power, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight!'¹² I had now a clear conviction of the will of God concerning me, that I should preach the gospel. And the word of God was opened to my understanding, and the plan of salvation made plain and clear. I felt such love for the souls of my fellow creatures that I could have burned at the stake to rescue them from eternal misery. In short, I felt such a change through all my powers that when I was brought from nature to grace it was not more conspicuous. I continued all this day in deep fellowship with God. Towards evening I wrote an account of these dealings of God with my soul, and next day read it to one of our local preachers. He desired me to show it to the first travelling preacher that came to Sunderland, which I accordingly did. The preacher told me nothing could be determined without a trial being made, which he advised me to do the next Sunday. I followed his advice and went to preach at a place a few miles from Sunderland. On the way my soul was filled with the divine presence, and I expected great things to be done. I thought, as my call was so clear, that God would own the word, to the conviction and conversion of sinners directly. But I was mistaken, for although the people seemed pleased, yet I saw no particular work among them. I had scarce done preaching before the devil tempted me that my call was all a delusion. And in the evening, while I was upon my knees, I heard as if some person was walking behind me, which made my hair stand on end. I continued, however, on my knees, and wrestled with God till I felt such divine power that I defied all the devils in hell.

I come now to the third part of my account, from the time I was called to preach to this day.

⁸Cf. Isa. 6:8.

⁹Isa. 52:11–12.

¹⁰Dan. 12:3.

¹¹Cf. 2 Sam. 7:18.

¹²Luke 10:21.

At this time, I was deeply convinced of inbred sin, and felt the absolute necessity of being renewed in the image of God; and was, at times, so affected in body and mind that I expected I should have died under the pressure.

In June 1761 you, sir, was returning from Scotland. I rode to Newcastle, in order to meet you. There I was informed you was to preach at Morpeth at one o'clock. Dr. Watson¹³ and I rode on to Morpeth, to hear you. Although I had been for some years in connection with the people called Methodists, yet I had never seen you. I had read most of your writings, and my soul was thoroughly united to you. When we came to Morpeth we went directly to the marketplace, but found we were too late for the sermon; yet not too late for a blessing. When we came within the sound of your voice, you was giving out these lines:

Now, ev'n now the Saviour stands;
All day long he spreads his hands.¹⁴

I was so struck with the power of God that, if I had not held fast by Dr. Watson's arm, I should have fallen to the ground. With much ado I walked to the skirts of the congregation. After you concluded, we walked to the house where you dined. This was an hour never to be erased from my memory. We had the pleasure of hearing you at Placey at five o'clock, and then rode on with you to Newcastle.

When you came to Sunderland, I heard you preach evening and morning, and then God laid the ax to the root of the tree. I saw my heart in such colours as entirely frightened me. This was increased by your reading some letters, giving an account of the amazing work God was carrying on in many souls in London. I felt inbred sin so that I was well-nigh casting away my shield. I wanted to open my mind to you, but Satan shut my mouth; and what was more, tempted me exceedingly against you. The Lord only knows what I then felt. And for some months after I saw myself so polluted and abominable that I resolved to preach no more till I was delivered. But this determination only increased my misery, till I began to preach again.

One day, as I was in company with some Christian friends, all our conversation turned upon purity of heart. Afterwards we spent some time in singing and prayer. While I was in prayer, and repeating these words: 'Are we not the purchase of thy dear Son's blood? Then Lord, let us be redeemed from all iniquity!' all at once I was overpowered with the love of God. My mouth was stopped. I could pray no more. O, what a heaven of sweetness did I feel in my soul! After we had concluded our meeting one of our brethren (who had experienced purity of heart) asked me if I thought God had given me that blessing. I replied, 'I cannot tell what God hath done for me. But I never felt such close fellowship with God the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, since first I knew redeeming love.' I found my heart entirely free, and my spirit was lightened of its load. Several of my friends discerned a remarkable alteration in my countenance, and asked me what the Lord had wrought in my soul. I was afraid to say that God had purified my heart, but I told them I experienced such communion with the Father of spirits, as I never imagined was to be found on this side of eternity. I did, with Enoch, 'walk with God'!¹⁵ My 'conversation was' indeed 'in heaven';¹⁶ and 'I sat with Christ Jesus in heavenly places'!¹⁷ My 'life was hid with Christ in God';¹⁸ and my 'affections' were wholly 'set on things above'.¹⁹ I felt such deep

¹³Possibly Patrick Watson (d. 1827), a surgeon in Newcastle upon Tyne who would later offer to sell ground in North Shields for building a new preaching-house.

¹⁴CW, Hymn 15, st. 15, *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1742), 46.

¹⁵Gen. 5:14.

¹⁶Cf. Phil. 3:20.

¹⁷Cf. Eph. 2:6.

¹⁸Cf. Col. 3:3.

¹⁹Cf. Col. 3:2.

communion with Jesus that I was swallowed up in him. I saw God in all things. I enjoyed God in all things. The flame of divine love ascended every moment from the altar of my heart, pure as the streams of paradise!

Not long after, I came up to London and had an opportunity of conversing with you. You urged me to give myself up to the work, which at last, with great reluctance, I consented to. You desired me to go down to the Sussex round, where I spent the time till July 1762, and then went down to the Conference at Leeds. I had not been long in the round till God broke into my soul with such power as totally removed all my doubts and fears of my call to the work I was engaged in, and made the word a blessing to many souls. Indeed, for several months, wherever I went the word of God was like a flame of fire, and I found a restoration of that close communion with God that I had experienced some months before.

In the midst of this prosperity from within and from without some persons in the round began to cavil at the doctrine of Christian holiness. At first I was grieved for the souls that were hurt, and then was tempted to oppose them who were opposing the work of God. What through grief and temptation, my mind was hurt, and something bordering on resentment took place. And although I did not lose a sense of the presence of God, yet I lost that constant witness of Christ being all in all to me.

At Bristol Conference, 1764, I was appointed for the Cornish round. This was a year of great labours and great blessings. Many were awakened, and many hundreds brought to know God, and many enabled to love him with all their hearts. At times this year I found a return of the abiding witness of God's Spirit, and that pure flame of holy love. But it did not abide with me. Yet I laid myself out for the glory of God, far beyond my bodily strength—the consequence of which was that at the Conference held in Manchester, 1765, I was seized with a violent fever. Before I was entirely laid up I was violently tempted of the devil. But I was no sooner confined to my room than my heart was filled with the presence of God. I never lost a sense of this; no, not for a moment. I must confess I wished to die and to be with Christ, which was far better. I had a fear, lest I should live and be less faithful and useful. The Lord was pleased to raise me up, and I recovered my health.

At Leeds, 1772, I was appointed for York circuit. I spent from August till the beginning of March in a most comfortable and happy manner among that people, and the work of God revived among them. In March I came to London, and then to Bristol, where I embarked for America, in company with Mr. [Thomas] and Mrs. [Grace] Webb, and Messrs. [George] Shadford and Yerbury.²⁰

We arrived safe at Philadelphia in the beginning of June 1773, where an open door was made for the gospel. From the time I had been at Charles Town in South Carolina, in the year 1757, I never could erase the thoughts that I must spend some time in preaching the gospel in America before I died. The time was now come, and a series of providences confirmed me that my way was of God.

For some time after I landed at Philadelphia I was mostly in New York. I was amazed to see the luxury and pride that abounded among the inhabitants of that city. When I compared the accounts I had read in Mr. Whitefield's journal to what mine eyes daily beheld, I could not help crying out, 'How are the mighty fallen!' What by the poor prospect of religion, and the violent temptations of the devil, I was sorely beset with reasoning whether I had done the will of God or not, in leaving England.

I was not long in America before I told some of my friends that if God had any love for the people in this country, he would punish them by some vast affliction, for their great pride and luxury.

In the beginning of October I set off to visit the societies in the province of Maryland. They were just beginning to be gathered. The earnestness and simplicity that I saw among this people was a great means, next to the power of God, in removing the temptations I had long laboured under. I praised God from the ground of my heart for this journey. I spent the winter partly in Philadelphia and partly in New York, and in the spring set off again for Maryland. My method was to spend the winter partly in Philadelphia and partly in New York, and from the middle of March to the beginning of December in travelling on horseback through the New Jerseys, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina;

²⁰On Feb. 12, 1773 Capt. Webb had married Grace Gilbert (c. 1737–1820), the sister of Nathaniel Gilbert. Joseph Yerbury, a local preacher from Bradford-on-Avon, was recruited to accompany them by Capt. Webb. He soon withdrew from circuit preaching and returned to Britain.

in which journeys I rode, in about eight months, between two and three thousand miles, frequently preaching twice a day, and sometimes oftener. Wherever we went the work of God prospered, but in a particular manner in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina.

At our first little Conference in Philadelphia, July 1773, we had about a thousand in the different societies, and six or seven preachers; and in May 1777, we had forty preachers in the different circuits, and about seven thousand members in the societies, besides many hundreds of negroes, who were convinced of sin, and many of them happy in the love of God. Had it not been for the unhappy times [i.e., the war with Britain], I have reason to believe the work of God would have flourished in a more abundant manner, as both rich and poor gladly embraced the truths of the gospel and received the preachers with open arms.

The British troops being in possession of Philadelphia, I left Maryland in September and through diverse dangers got safe into that city in the month of November. I spent the winter there, and the providence of God making clear my way, I, with several of my friends, left the Cape of Delaware on the 17th of March 1778, and arrived safe at the Cove of Cork on the 15th of April. Thence we sailed for London, where we arrived safe in the beginning of June. Thus, after an absence of five years and two months, I once more set my feet on English ground. The happiness I felt for several months after I landed was more than a recompense for all my past sufferings. Such sensations of gratitude I never experienced for no temporal favour in all my life before. 'Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!'²¹

At the Conference in August, at Leeds, I was appointed for London, where I now labour. And I earnestly pray that my time and talents may be spent to the glory of God, who has done so much for me.

Thus, sir, I have given you some account of my life, from my childhood to the present, which is my fortieth year.

I cannot help concluding this account by taking notice of the mercy of God in preserving me from turning aside, either to the right hand or to the left, by false opinions or ungodly practices. Although I have great reason to be ashamed of my unfaithfulness to the grace of God, and because I have done no more for his glory. But, 'hitherto the Lord hath helped me';²² *and having thus obtained help of God, I continue to this day.*

I am, dear sir, with esteem,

Your affectionate son,

Thomas Rankin

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 182–98.²³

²¹Cf. Ps. 103:1.

²²Cf. 1 Sam. 7:12.

²³An updated and more extended version of this account was included in Jackson, *EMP*, 5:135–217.

From Miss E. A.

[London]

November 17, 1778

Honoured Sir,

I am truly thankful that our Lord has again brought you to London in peace, to speak in the house which he has provided.¹ And blessed by God that I ever heard you; but above all, that my heart ever felt the precious truths you have delivered.

But alas! With shame I confess that it is not now with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shone bright upon me. I hope, sir, you will remember me before the throne of grace, and pray that God may return in mercy and lift up my head once more.

For near three years I enjoyed deep communion with God. But through unwatchfulness I found him to withdraw the light of his countenance. On this my joy was turned into pain, and my day into night. The remembrance of which often makes me truly wretched. But lately my soul seems again to break out in strong desire, and sometimes I hope that he will again return and take up all the room in my heart.

Sunday morning [Nov. 15], while you were preaching, the word came with such power that my soul was deeply humbled. At the same time it thirsted for God as the hart thirsteth for the water-brook.² But I fear that unbelief prevented my receiving what God was willing to bestow.

I certainly long to be a Christian indeed, and hope that I shall soon be so. To this end I again request an interest in your prayers, which will greatly oblige

Your unworthy servant,

E. A.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 50–51.

¹The newly-opened chapel on City Road.

²See Ps. 42:1.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
November 25, 1778

Reverend Sir,

Your last letter was stored with such seasonable counsel that it administered much instruction and comfort to my mind.¹ I never remember to have acquainted you with those particulars which so frequently exercise and pain me in my present situation. But you judged exactly right, for many times have I wept as I rode over that *dirty* heath, and have been *ready* to think how much more advantageous would it be to my soul to enjoy a quiet life, in which I could read, write, and think more abundantly. But I bless God I have not been suffered thus to *conclude*, must less to murmur at my lot, though strongly tempted so to do.

I daily see the hand of God over me for good, and can bless him for the rod that deeps my soul near to him. I believe my heart is in a greater degree weaned from the world and all transitory enjoyments than in times past. Yet I still feel the need of continual supplies of grace, to keep me pressing forward in the narrow path. O that I may live more *by* faith, and more *in* love!

The Lord is pleased often to afford me comfort and strength, by causing me to awake in the morning with a text of scripture, or a line of a hymn in my heart and mouth. This morning I was favoured with these words, 'O how plentiful is thy goodness which thou hast in store (or laid up) for those that trust in thee before the sons of men!'² It was indeed a word in season.

I must not omit once more to return you my hearty thanks for your seasonable advice, and to beg the continuance thereof, together with your prayers for my growth in grace through many close trials. In the mean time I remain

Your obliged servant in the gospel,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 51–52.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Ps. 31:19.

From Mrs. Sarah Crosby

Burlington Quay
November 27, 1778

Reverend Sir,

I hardly know how to write to you, having had so little concerns with you for so long a time. However I may tell you that my heart still loves you, that I pray to the Lord to bless you with every blessing he has purchased for you.

I often think of you sir, and rejoice in your prosperity, and pray that the thread of life may be greatly lengthened, and that the power and strength of our Jesus may be abundantly shown in the weakness of your nature. O that your eye may not wax dim, nor your natural strength be abated, till our Redeemer's kingdom spreads far and wide!

I pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and enjoy a constant, perfect peace, above all human conception. At the same time the love of my dear Lord Jesus melts and meekens all my soul and often reminds me of Mrs. Rowe's words,

Lost in the high enjoyments of thy love,
What glorious mortal can my passions move!¹

Indeed sir, my soul seems all feeling. I think I often feel the whole creation's groan so exquisitely that, if it was not sweetened with much love, I should not be able to support under it. But oh amazing goodness, to the most unworthy! The divine consolations abound.

I have much cause to praise God also that he has put an end to all the jars and disputes that have been with the predestinarians here. How they go on, I know not. But blessed be God, our people go on better than ever they did in this place. To love seems to be all their wish, and the circulating flame I trust is spreading among them. A few precious, lively souls there are who are full of love, who adorn the gospel much. And many others are much revived, while we have a prospect of a greater revival still.

Please to tell me sir if I am where you wish me to be, and what you would have me do. For I hope ever to prize your advice and instructions next to his who bought me with his blood. May the God of peace and love be ever with you, and prosper your abundant labours! And that generations to come may praise God below, while you are praising him above, is, reverend sir, the prayer of

Your unworthy, but affectionate servant,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 52–53.

¹Cf. Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Devout Exercises of the Heart, in Meditation, Soliloquy, Prayer, and Praise* (London: R. Hett, 1738), 112.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Europe]
December 1778

Dear Brethren and Father,¹

I send a line to thank you for all favours, spiritual and temporal. I hope to let you see (please God) next spring that I am so far better than when I left England. In the meantime I send you a letter I write to a friend, where you may see what sore eyes hinder me to write now. Old age and infirmities push us on all sides. We are about to fall; a great deal depends upon the last works. May yours crown the first [works], and may I begin to work on the brink of the grave! I hope you go on doing the business of peacemakers, and if the sons of Zeruiah make you experience the last beatitude,² rejoice.

I beg to be remembered in grateful love to Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell,³ to all my other benefactors, to the Foundery family, to Mrs. Wesley, my goddaughter and her brothers.⁴ Requesting an interest in your prayers, I remain

Your affectionate servant and son in the gospel,

J. Fletcher

Address: 'The Revd. Mess / J. and C. Wesley'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Fletcher / Dec 1778'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/57.⁵

¹While Fletcher addresses both Wesley brothers as 'brethren', CW is the one he consistently addresses as well as 'father in the gospel'.

²See 2 Sam. 2, 16:10, and 19:22.

³Ebenezer Blackwell and Mary (Eden) Blackwell, his second wife.

⁴Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley, Sarah Jr., Charles Jr., and Samuel.

⁵A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 346.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Park Gate
December 5, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

When I look at the date of your last kind favour,¹ I am almost afraid lest you should think me wanting in either the duty or love I owe you. But he who searches the heart knows it is not so. The chief reason of my silence has been nothing material occurred, and I thought it not right to take up your precious time which is so fully employed. But fearing I should appear ungrateful, once more let me assure you, my dear sir, my heart is truly sensible of the obligation I owe you for the constant care you show for my welfare. O that all your prayers may be fully answered upon me, then shall I be found among the many who will be your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

In regard to the full assurance of faith, blessed be my dear Lord, I constantly enjoy it. I feel the merit of my saviour's death. His spirit testifies in my inmost soul that God is love. And glory be to him that sits on the throne, my peace is uninterrupted. As to the full assurance of hope, more than once I have not found the spirit of agonizing prayer for it, and my soul seems so to rest in the will of my heavenly Father that I, in the general, can only say 'Give or withhold as seems thee best'. If my Lord vouchsafes to give it, it is well; if not, his will be done. Glory be unto my God, he is still gracious unto me, and though at times my enemies have pursued hard after me, yet my soul proves Jesus a saviour to the uttermost. He gives me power to use that faith that brings constant victory. My soul dwells beneath the shadow of his wing and is kept alive in Jesus' name. In his service is all my delight, and all his dispensations towards me manifest 'Love without end, and without measure grace'.² He gives me to experience, 'As a father pities his own children, even so does the Lord pity them that fear him'.³ Indeed, his goodness towards me is beyond all praise. I am less than the least of all saints, yet my gracious Lord condescends to give me such tokens of his love as fills my heart with holy gratitude and makes me often lost in wonder and with astonishment enquire:

What am I, O thou glorious God!
Or what my father's house to thee!
That thou such blessings has bestowed
On me, the vilest reptile me!
I take the blessings from above,
And wonder at thy boundless love!⁴

My saviour paid the price of all I do or can enjoy. And such infinite satisfaction divine justice found when he bled on the tree that I see my soul has but yet had a foretaste of what the triune God waits to give. I long for the Spirit's fullest baptism, and so see and feel also the promises of God, yea and amen, that my soul rejoices in hope of that glory which shall be revealed to the believing heart. I see an open door, Lord help me:

Onward to haste
To the heavenly feast,
Which that is the fullness, but this is the taste.⁵

¹Apparently JW to Elizabeth Ritchie, Oct. 6 1778.

²Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bk. III, ln. 142.

³Ps. 103:13.

⁴CW, 'Hymns for Believers, #1', st. 1, *HSP* (1749), 1:197.

⁵Cf. CW, 'Hymns for Believers, #16', st. 5, *HSP* (1749), 1:220.

Blessed be God, the good work in some measures goes forward among us. Mr. Allen and Hudson are both well liked, and truly useful to them that hear them.⁶ Four or five have lately been justified among us, and three have found full deliverance. It seems as if my soul feels fresh life when any are added to the faith. Glory, glory be unto God for the good that is done upon the face of the earth. May Zion more than ever prosper.

I trust you see much of the travel⁷ of your redeemer's soul, and may you see it much more abundantly. May you, my dear sir, ever be satisfied with the favour and filled with the blessing of the Lord, and abound in all the blessings my heart continually prays you may partake of.

I am, my dear sir,

Your unworthy, thought truly affectionate, child,

E. R.

Address: 'The Revd. Mr. Wesley'.

Annotation: another hand, '23rd'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁶John Allen was reappointed to the Keighley circuit at the Aug. 1778 Conference, joined this time by George Hudson.

⁷She may have meant 'travail'.

From John Francis Valton

Corston
December 19, 1778

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I designed writing to you before now, but delayed because I did not know but I should be obliged to desire you to remove me to some other circuit. But blessed be my God, he has enabled me to endure to this present moment, and to go forwards in the venture of faith. I dare not look beyond today. If I do, I am ready to retire from the world and shrink from the work.

Blessed be my God, I find favour with him and with man. I have witnesses of justification and sanctification, through my weak instrumentality; and the Lord has made use of me in that glorious revival at Paulton. I have been now near fifteen years a pilgrim upon earth, but never saw such a morning as on yesterday at Paulton. I preached, as it is called, to a roomful of people. Soon after we begun the power of the Lord was revealed. I could not preach, nor the people sing. Our mouths were not filled with laughter, but the fountains of the deep were broke up, and the unutterable joy ran over at our eyes. All were in tears, and felt a solemn sense of God. Old and young, and even children, wept much. I could not help crying out, 'How dreadful is this place!' ¹ All the poor condemned criminals (penitents) forgot their bonds, and felt the overwhelming power of Jesu's grace. We were as happy as angels, and yet as solemn as if just risen from the grave—and standing before the tribunal of God. We asked for the salvation of all present, and we have the answer in faith. We went home, but I believe several, like me, could not work. After the meeting was over we felt 'that silent awe which dares not move'. ² If this inward ecstasy continues, the dead must bury the dead, for we cannot. O dear sir, I cannot unfold the inexplicable mystery of that memorable morning. Since I have been writing, I have felt the same power of God, and today seems almost as yesterday. If you do but open your mouth for God at that place, the heavens drop fatness. As soon as you enter the room, you feel the incumbent God. They can have no private meetings, because the people that are not in society will break over our fence, and every Saul is among the prophets. ³ I can write no more. I am fit for nothing as yet. Such a sense of God's love and majesty rests upon my soul, that silence must muse his praise.

Farewell, dear sir, you will soon be in heaven, but I hope not before you have buried
Your loving, but unworthy son,

John Valton

Source: published transcription; *Methodist Magazine* 22 (1799): 204–05.

¹Gen. 28:17.

²Cf. CW, 'The Invitation', st. 10, *Festival Hymns* (1746), 46.

³See 1 Sam. 10:11–12.

From Joseph Pilmore

Norwich
December 28, 1778

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I preached the funeral sermon of Mrs. Mary Howard, of this city. As her life and death were happy, I think it a duty I owe to God, to you, and to the Methodists, to give a brief account of her.

By the instrumentality of the Methodist preachers she was fully convinced of the important truths of Christianity, and admitted into our society in May 1769. After she had met some time in class, and humbly waited for salvation, it pleased God to set her soul at liberty. At that time she had such a manifestation of the love of God in Christ Jesus as fully satisfied her that all her sins were forgiven, through faith in the blood of the Lamb. In consequence of this she was filled with joy and peace in believing, and had a most amazing discovery of divine things.

From that time she continued a faithful follower of the adorable Jesus, ever striving to imitate his example. She discharged all the duties of her station as became a professor of Christianity, and steadily supported an unblemished character. For a long time she bore the most excruciating pains of a devouring cancer with unshaken fortitude; even when the disorder increased upon her, she still supported her usual cheerfulness and serenity of mind.

Some days before her death she delivered such a testimony in favour of inward religion, and in defence of the Methodists, as deeply affected all that were present. Some of her words were, 'I wish people would not make game of religion—nor laugh at the Methodists; for I have reason to bless God that ever I heard them.' And looking steadfastly on her husband, she said, 'I have reason to bless God for you, who were the happy instrument of leading me to hear them.' Being repeatedly asked whether she was afraid to die, she answered, 'I am no more afraid to die than to fall asleep; for I am happy, and wish others were so too.'

Two things she requested of us—viz., that we would sing her to the grave, and preach a funeral sermon on Isaiah 41:10, 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee. Yea, I will help thee. Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.' She then said, 'These are the two last favours I shall ask of the Methodists.'

Mr. K— gives me an account of his last visit to her in the following words, 'I found her patient in suffering; her chief conversation was concerning the joys of heaven, and the happiness of the saints in light. She was very lively in her soul, while her countenance was clothed with smiles. Thus I left her, and can truly say, I never saw Christian fortitude, patience, and resignation, more conspicuous than in her.'

Just before she died a particular friend came to visit her as usual, at the sight of whom she was greatly rejoiced, and after some discourse she said, 'May God bless you! May he bless you all! May he bless and comfort my dear husband!' and then went away, without a sigh or a groan, to those mansions of everlasting glory prepared for all who live and die in the Lord.

I am, reverend and dear sir, sincerely yours,

Joseph Pilmore¹

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 182–84.

¹Orig., 'Pilmoor'.

From Thomas Olivers (autobiography)

c. January 1779

I was born at a village called Tregynon,¹ in Montgomeryshire, in 1725. My father died in December 1729. My mother was so afflicted on account of his death that she died of a broken heart in March following, leaving me and another son, not two years old, behind her. My mother's father, Mr. Richard Humphries, took care of my brother; and, when he died, left him to the care of his eldest son.

My father's uncle, a man of property, took care of me while he lived; and when he died, left me a small fortune, ordering in his will that the interest of it should be employed in bringing me up, and that I should receive the principal when I came of age.

The person to whose care he left me was Mrs. Elizabeth Tudor, eldest daughter to his son-in-law, Mr. Thomas Tudor, an eminent farmer, in the parish of Fordon, in the same county. And as she was unmarried, she committed me to her father's care, in whose house I was boarded till I was eighteen years of age.

As soon as I was capable I was sent to school, where I received such learning as was thought necessary. And as to religion, I was taught to say my prayers morning and evening, to repeat my catechism, to sing psalms, and to go to church in general twice every Sabbath-day.

But my carnal mind soon discovered itself, by prompting me not only to a great variety of childish follies but also to a multitude of heinous sins—particularly lying and taking the name of God in vain. In these I was confirmed by the examples of all about me for, with grief I mention it, I know not so much as a single person (except an old man or two, whom we all supposed to be crazy) who made any scruple of these or of various other acts of wickedness. There was one man in the parish who exceeded all the rest in cursing, swearing, and horrid blasphemies. This hellish art he studied with all his might. His custom was to compound twenty or thirty different expressions, to make one long and horrid oath! I never heard of any telling him he did wrong; but many laughed at him, and admired his cleverness, and some even strove to imitate him. Among the rest, I was one. And so apt a scholar was I in these diabolical practices that, before I was fifteen years of age, I vied with my infernal instructor. So that on this, and on various other accounts, I was generally reckoned the worst boy who had been in those parts for the last twenty or thirty years.

At eighteen years of age I was bound apprentice. But by this time I was become so idle that I did not half learn my business. Dancing and keeping company engrossed my whole soul, and was it not for some small restraints they would have employed my whole time. Accordingly, the very first day I was at full liberty I gave scope to my inclination to such a degree that, out of sixteen nights and days, I was fifteen of them without ever being in bed.

For four or five years I was greatly entangled with a farmer's daughter, whose sister was married to Sir J[ohn] P[ryce] of Newtown, in that county. What 'strange reverse of human fates!' ² for one sister was wooed by and married to a baronet, who was esteemed one of the finest men in the country. When she died, ³ Sir J[ohn] was almost distracted. Presently after her funeral, he published an elegy on her of a thousand verses! For some time he daily visited her in her vault, and at last took her up, and kept her in his bedchamber for several years.

On the other hand, her sister, who was but little inferior in person, fell into the hands of a most insignificant young man, who was a means of driving her almost to an untimely end. I cannot omit giving some intimation of this particular, seeing it is that which lay heaviest on my mind, both before and after my conversion; and which, to this day, I remember with peculiar shame and sorrow. However God, who often brings good out of evil, made it a means (though a remote one) of my conversion.

¹Orig., 'Tregonan'.

²Cf. John Dryden, Act 3, *Aurenge-Zebe: or, the Great Mogul* (London: J. Tonson, 1704), 37.

³Mary (Morris) Pryce (b. 1715) died Aug. 3, 1739.

For such was the clamour of the people, and the uneasiness of my own mind, that I determined to leave the country. Accordingly I set off for Shrewsbury. Here I continued for some time. And among various things which I have much reason to be ashamed of, I went one night to the Methodist meeting and, out of mere wantonness, made use of some very indecent language as I came out. From Shrewsbury I went into a country village, about three miles from the town. Here I was greatly reduced in my circumstances. My conscience also stared me dreadfully in the face, as it had frequently done on many former occasions. I thought, I live a most wretched life! If I do not repent and forsake my sins, I shall certainly be damned. I wish I could repent and forsake them. If I could but *hate* them as well as I *love* them, I should *then* be able to lay them aside. But till then I despair of doing it. For I have always gone to church. I have frequently prayed and resolved against my evil practices, and yet I cannot leave them. I then thought, I will receive the sacrament, and try what that will do. Accordingly, I borrowed a *Week's Preparation*,⁴ and went through it regularly, reading on my knees the meditations and prayers for each day. On Sunday I went to the Lord's table, and spent the following week in going over the second part of the book,⁵ in the same manner I had done the first. For this fortnight I kept tolerably clear of sin. But when it was over, I returned the book with many thanks and then returned to my former practices.

From hence I went to Wrexham. I had not been here long before I was taken ill of a violent fever, of which most people expected me to die. As it was known that I had little or no money, a Methodist (Mr. John Memis, now Dr. Memis of Aberdeen, who was then a journeyman to an apothecary in the town) visited me without fee or reward; and I believe, under God, saved my life.

When I was got out of danger, I found great thankfulness to God for sparing me. And as soon as I was able I went to church twice every day, and read books of devotion at home, and frequently wept bitterly over what I read or heard. For I saw very clearly that if I had died at that time I should certainly have gone to hell. I therefore again resolved to forsake my sins, and to become a new man.

But before I was fully recovered my resolutions vanished away, and I returned to my former practices. Accordingly, being one day at the house of one Mr. Jones, who was then a Methodist, I swore by my Maker! Mr. J[ones] said, 'Young man, what pity is it that you, who are so lately brought back from the borders of the grave, should already curse and swear!' I bowed, and thanked him for his seasonable reproof, and esteemed him ever after. Several times I followed him to and from church, listening with great attention to what passed about religion between him and others. At last I got him by himself and asked him many questions concerning the way to heaven. When we came near his house, I asked, 'How do you intend to spend the remainder of this Sabbath?' He answered, 'In reading, meditation, prayer, and singing of hymns and psalms'. When he was gone a little way from me, I turned about to look at him and thought, This is an odd man indeed! However, I wish I was like him. But at present I cannot spend my Sabbaths without mirth and pleasure. I therefore gave up my acquaintance with him, and soon became as wicked as ever.

Not long after, a young man and I, after committing an act of arch-villainy, agreed to leave the country together. Accordingly we set off about 1:00 in the morning; he leaving his apprenticeship, and I several debts, behind us. About one o'clock the next day we got to Shrewsbury. While we were in the public house my companion began to curse and swear at a Welsh Methodist, who sat quietly in the chimney-corner. On this I cursed my companion, and said, 'What is that to you, suppose he be a Methodist? The poor man is quiet, and does not affront us; therefore you are a scoundrel for affronting him.'

The next day we got to Bridgenorth and put up at a public house, the landlady of which was a Methodist, which we soon discovered by her conversation. We winked at each other, put on very grave looks, and asked if there were any more Methodists in that town? She answered, 'I thank God there are a few.' We continued our affected gravity all that evening and the next morning, while we were in her

⁴Anonymous, *A Weeks Preparation towards a Worthy Receiving of the Lords Supper* (London: Samuel Keble, 1679).

⁵Anonymous, *The Second Part of the Weeks Preparation for the Sacrament: consisting of soliloquies, prayers, hymns, ejaculations, ...* (London: Thomas Malthus, 1684).

house. But when we were got a little way out of town we laughed, and held our sides, and cursed and swore till we were quite weary because she thanked God that there were such wretches in the town!

After some days we got to Bristol. I had not been long in that city before I went to lodge with one who had been a Methodist but was now, at times, a slave to drunkenness. His wife too had once been a religious woman, but was now eaten up with the cares of the world. There was also a lukewarm Moravian in the house. With these I had various disputes, particularly about election, which I could never believe. One day the Moravian and I quarrelled so highly that he struck me, and as he was a tall, lusty man I knew I should have no chance in fighting him. However for a whole hour I cursed and swore in such a manner as I never heard before or since. Indeed, such a habit of horrid swearing had I acquired that though I saw it was dreadfully wrong, and at times wished and laboured to break it off, yet on the smallest occasion I was carried away, as by a mighty torrent. Yea, I daily and hourly did it without any provocation at all, and frequently not knowing what I did. The poor, drunken apostate was often so shocked that one time he said, 'I wish you were out of my house; for you are such a horrid swearer, I cannot bear you.'

As I was going along one night, I met a multitude of people and asked one of them where they had been. She answered, 'To hear Mr. [George] Whitefield.' She also told me he was to preach the next night. I thought, I have often heard of Mr. Whitefield, and have sung songs about him. I will go and hear what he has to say. Accordingly I went the next evening, but was too late. The following evening I was determined to be in time. Accordingly I went near three hours before the time. When the service began, I did little but look about me. But on seeing the tears trickle down the cheeks of some who stood near me, I became more attentive.

The text was, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?'⁶ When this sermon began I was certainly a dreadful enemy to God and to all that is good, and one of the most profligate and abandoned young men living. But by the time it was ended I was become *a new creature*. For in the first place I was *deeply convinced* of the great goodness of God towards me all my life; particularly, in that he had given his Son to die for me. I had also a far clearer view of all my sins, particularly my base ingratitude towards him. These discoveries quite *broke my heart*, and caused showers of tears to trickle down my cheeks. I was likewise filled with an utter *abhorrence* of my evil ways, and was much *ashamed* that ever I had walked in them. And as my heart was thus turned *from* all evil, so it was powerfully *inclined to* all that is good. It is not easy to express what strong *desires* I had for God and his service, and what *resolutions* I had to seek and serve him in future. In consequence of which I *broke off all* my evil practices, and *forsook all* my wicked and foolish companions without delay, and *gave myself up to God and his service with my whole heart*. O, what reason have I to say, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?'⁷

When I returned to my lodgings the people saw that something had befallen me, but could not imagine what it was. They were greatly astonished the following days, on seeing me weep almost incessantly. They first judged that I had lost some near relation. But when I told them I had not, they judged it to be some disappointment in love. At last they found it was a concern for religion which so deeply affected me. When they put it to me, I frankly told them the whole matter; and though the best of them was but half-hearted in religion, yet they all rejoiced at the mighty change they saw in me.

The first Sunday after I was awakened I went to the cathedral at 6:00 in the morning. When the Te Deum was read, I felt as if I had done with earth, and was praising God before his throne! No words can set forth the joy, the rapture, the awe and reverence I felt. At 8:00 I went to hear Mr. Whitefield. At 10:00 I went to Christchurch. When the invitation to the Lord's supper, which was to be administered the next Sunday, was read, it pierced my very heart and caused me to weep bitterly. At the same time I determined, at all events, to partake of it. I went to church again at 2:00 in the afternoon. At 5:00 I again heard Mr. Whitefield, and concluded the public worship of that day at an Anabaptist meeting. Thus, though I had spent the whole Friday before in the works of the devil; now, partly by hearing the word, and partly by reading, meditation, and abundance of private prayer, I spent the whole of this day in acts of most fervent devotion.

⁶Zech. 3:2.

⁷Ibid.

The next day I bought a *Week's Preparation*, which for a long time I read on my knees, both by day and by night. This and the Bible were far more precious to me than rubies. And God only knows how often I bedewed them with my tears, especially those parts of them which spake of the love or sufferings of Christ.

As to secret prayer, I was for some time almost continually on my knees. By this means I soon grew lame on one knee, and went about limping. In a short time my other knee failed, so that it was with difficulty I walked at all. And so earnest was I that I used, by the hour together, to wrestle with all the might of my body and soul, till I almost expected to die on the spot. What, with bitter cries (unheard by any but God and myself), together with torrents of tears which were almost continually trickling down my cheeks, my throat was often dried up, as David says,⁸ and my eyes literally failed, while I waited for God.

As I had just before been so notoriously abandoned, none of my carnal acquaintance had much objection to my reformation, only some of them thought I carried matters too far. One said, 'You may repent of your sins without so much weeping, and without walking the streets with your hat slouched about your ears.' The young man who came with me from Wrexham lay near my heart. Whenever he came in my way, I used to reason with him about the necessity of repentance. I would entreat him with all the love and tenderness my soul was capable of. And while I was doing it, I sometimes seemed as if I could weep my life away over him. But though he took it in good part, I could not prevail on him to leave his sins and to walk with me in the way to heaven.

The love I had for Mr. Whitefield was inexpressible. I used to follow him as he walked the streets, and could scarce refrain from kissing the very prints of his feet. And as to the people of God, I dearly loved to be with them, and wished to be a member of their society, but knew not how to accomplish it. At last I ventured to mention it to one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers, but he discouraged me and therefore I was obliged to give it up.

After three or four months I left Bristol and went to Bradford in Wiltshire. As I went, I fell in company with some who were going thither and asked if there were any Methodists in Bradford. And on their telling me there were, I rejoiced exceedingly. When I had got to Bradford, I soon found out the place of preaching, and embraced the first opportunity of hearing the word. And so constant was I therein that for two years, I believe, I did not omit a single sermon, either late or early. I also heard with deep attention, and in general with many tears. And this I did wherever I heard the word preached, whether at church or elsewhere.

As to the people of God in this place, I loved them as dearly as I did those I had left in Bristol, and longed to be united with them in Christian fellowship but knew not how. When the public preaching was over on a Sunday evening and I, along with the multitude, was shut out from the society, I used to go into the field at the back of the preaching house and listen while they sang the praises of God. I would then weep bitterly at the thought that God's people were there, praising his name together, while I, a poor and wretched fugitive, was not permitted to be among them. I would then look upon the house and think, under that blessed roof the servants of God are now assembled. But I alas, a foolish virgin, am shut out! And then I would weep again, as if my very heart would burst within me. When they came out, I have often followed at a small distance those of them I thought most in earnest, particularly the preacher and his company, that I might hear something further concerning the ways of God. I often followed them near two miles, and then returned praising God and meditating on what I had heard.

After some time I was taken notice of by some of the principal members of the society, who desired some young men to inquire who I was. They did so, and also asked me if I desired to join the society? My heart leaped for joy on hearing that, and I told them I should be exceeding glad to do it. They then took me to the preacher, who gave me a note of admittance, which I received with great thankfulness. As I returned home, just as I came to the bottom of the hill at the entrance of the town, a ray of light, resembling the shining of a star, descended through a small opening in the heavens and instantaneously shone upon me. In that instant my burden fell off, and I was so elevated that I felt as if I could literally fly away to heaven. This was the more surprising to me, as I had always been (what I still

⁸See Ps. 69:3.

am) so prejudiced in favour of rational religion as not to regard visions or revelations perhaps so much as I ought to do. But this light was so clear, and the sweetness and other effects attending it were so great, that though it happened about twenty-seven years ago, the several circumstances thereof are as fresh on my remembrance, as if they had happened but yesterday.

I now thought myself happy, as I had got among the people of God, and had received such a token of his favour. But these things were so far from making me secure or careless that they stirred me up to greater diligence in all the works of God. For now, partly by the public preaching, partly by the various exhortations I received in the society, and partly by conversing with the people in private, I received more light and my conscience grew more abundantly tender. Therefore in my actions I could not do an act of injustice, no, not to the value of a pin! Or in any instance do to another what I would not he should do unto me. In my words, I could not mention the name of God but when it was necessary, nor even then but with deep awe and reverence. And as to jesting and foolish talking, mentioning the faults of an absent person, talking of worldly things on the Lord's day, these I abstained from with all my might. As to my thoughts, intentions, and desires, my constant inquiry was: Is this thought, intention, or desire to the glory of God? If I found it was not, I durst not indulge it. In eating and drinking, I took care to do it to the glory of God; to this end I received my daily food, nearly in the same manner as I did the body and blood of Christ. As to mental prayer, I used it daily and hourly; and for one while my rule was to employ five minutes out of every quarter of an hour therein. I also made it matter of conscience to examine myself daily, and to humble myself before God for everything I saw or feared had been amiss. Upon the whole, I truly lived by faith. I saw God in everything. The heavens, the earth, and all therein showed me something of him; yea, even from a drop of water, a blade of grass, or a grain of sand I often received instruction.

As a member of the society, I was careful not only to receive strength from them, but also to stir them up to greater diligence. Among other things, I used to run over a great part of the town, to call them up to the morning preaching. If I found any of them guilty of evil-speaking, or of mentioning news or worldly business on the Sabbath, or of useless conversation, I always gave them a very serious and loving reproof; at the same time advising them to be more watchful for the time to come. If I heard the people of the world swear, or take the name of God in vain, I always made it matter of conscience to reprove them lovingly and earnestly, and in the most unexceptionable language I could use.

But notwithstanding all that God had done for me on the one hand, and all that I had done on the other, I was still liable to doubt of the favour of God. Early one morning, as I read in the *Pilgrim's Progress* concerning the happy death of Christian,⁹ I wept bitterly, for fear my latter-end would not be like his. I continued weeping for six or seven hours. At last my doubt turned into despair. I imagined that there was no mercy for me! That Christ died for all but me. I then wept bitterly, and wished, O that I had been anybody else! Then there would have been mercy for me. At last I began to murmur against God. And I was tempted to speak and think blasphemously of him, and to resolve to pray no more. But going into my chamber, and seeing a New Testament lie in the window, I thought, I will open it and perhaps I shall see something that will do me good. I took it up, but instantly threw it down again, for fear of meeting with something, that would aggravate rather than remove my despair. However, I at last ventured to take it up, and on opening it cast my eyes on those words of St. Paul, 'Who will have *all* men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator ... who gave himself a ransom for *all*, to be testified in due time.'¹⁰ This struck me exceedingly. On which I reasoned thus: Will God have all men to be saved? Then I am not excluded. Did Christ give himself for *all*? Then he gave himself for *me*. And is he to be testified in due time? Then I believe that in due time he *will* again reveal himself to me. But what struck me most of all were those words in the following verse: 'I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.'¹¹ These words

⁹'Christian' is the name of the main character in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

¹⁰Cf. 1 Tim. 2:4–6.

¹¹Cf. 1 Tim. 2:8.

tore up by the roots my temptation to pray no more, to be wrathful against God, and to doubt of his mercy. I therefore fell on my knees before him and prayed and wept in earnest, and rose up much ashamed of my unbelief, and greatly encouraged to hope in his mercy. Some time after, when I was got again into doubts and fears, I opened my Testament on these words: 'Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace which is to be brought in unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.'¹² I laid fast hold on those words—'the grace which *is* to be brought in'. From this time I fully believed that all the grace I wanted would be brought in unto me. It was not long after this that I heard Mr. William Roberts preach, when he strongly exhorted us to believe and to venture on the mercy of God. In that instant I did lay hold. I did venture to believe more fully than ever I had done before, and fear and sorrow fled away.

From my first awakening I had a great desire to tell the world what God had done for my soul. And as I grew more experienced this desire grew stronger and stronger. At last I thought I was called to preach. This I communicated to the young men that met in band with me. They proposed a day of solemn fasting on the occasion, which we accordingly kept. They then advised me to make a trial. I did so, and many approved of my gifts; but others thought I ought to be more established. Indeed, it was often said that I was too earnest to hold it long, and instances were produced of some who had been exceeding earnest for a season but afterwards fell away. At the time I began to preach my custom was to get all my worldly business done, myself cleaned, and all my Sunday's apparel put out on Saturday night; which sometimes I could not accomplish before twelve o'clock. After this I frequently sat up till 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning, reading, praying, and examining myself; and have often rose at 4:00, but never later than five o'clock, and gone two miles into the country, through all weathers, to meet a few poor people from 6:00 to 7:00. By 8:00 I returned to hear the preaching. I have then gone seven miles, on foot, to preach at 1:00. Then three or four miles further to preach at 5:00. And after all, have had five or six miles more to walk before I got home. And, as in everything I did I put forth all my strength, I have been often so wearied that I could scarce get over a stile; or, when I got home, go up into my chamber to ask a blessing on the labours of the day. Indeed, before I began to preach, I was so earnest in all acts of public and private worship that on a Sunday night I was commonly more wearied than on any other night in the week.

For some time after I began to preach I had frequent doubts concerning my call. One time as I was going to preach at Coleford I was tempted to believe that I was running before I was sent. As I went on, the temptation grew stronger and stronger. At last I resolved to turn back. I had not gone back above thirty or forty yards before I began to think, This may be a temptation of the devil. On that I took out my Testament and, on opening it, the words I cast my eyes on were, 'He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven.'¹³ I could not help looking on this as the voice of God to me. Therefore, I took courage to turn about, and pursue my journey to Coleford.

When I had been a local preacher about twelve months, the smallpox made dreadful havoc in and about Bradford. So universal was the infection that in all that populous town, and the neighbouring villages, scarce a single person escaped who had not had it before. It was also so mortal that six or seven were buried in a night in Bradford only. As I had never had it, it was often suggested to me to leave those parts. But I thought, I am in the hands of a wise and gracious God, and also in the place where his providence has fixed me, and therefore, whether I live or die, I will continue where I am and commit myself to his wise disposal.

About a week after Michaelmas I was taken ill, and in the beginning was very comfortable in my soul. It was soon discovered that I should have a vast quantity, occasioned, as it was supposed, by the ill-management of an ignorant old woman who gave me heating things. I had not been ill above a day or two before that pattern of practical Christianity, Mr. Richard Pearce, came to see me. Among other things, he asked me what money I had. I said, 'But little.' he then encouraged me not to fear, telling me that as I was far from my own country he would take care I had all things necessary. Accordingly he turned away

¹²Cf. 1 Pet. 1:13.

¹³Cf. Luke 9:62.

the old woman and sent me one of the best nurses in town. He next sent the chief apothecary the place afforded; and lastly Dr. Clark, who was the most experienced physician in all that country.¹⁴ But notwithstanding all these helps, I was soon one of the most deplorable objects ever seen. I was stone-blind for five weeks. My head was swelled to such an enormous size that many thought it would drop from my shoulders. My whole body was covered with one scab, a great part of an inch thick. And though the room I lay in was large and airy, the stench was so great that though the town was full of this disorder neither the doctor nor apothecary could come near me for a few moments without stopping their mouths and noses as close as they were able. Many others who came to see me ran downstairs vomiting, and some declared they never smelt a carrion in a ditch which was so offensive. Mrs. Antill, at whose house I lodged, told me and my family a day or two ago that though she came only occasionally into my room, yet when she went out into the town on an errand the smell of her clothes was so offensive that the people could scarce bear to meet her; and that when she returned, such a stream of noxious effluvia met her in the front door that she was scarce able to enter her house. It is therefore no wonder that all who saw or heard of me judged that I was, by many degrees, the most afflicted of any who lived or died, either in town or country. Dr. Clark declared, 'Though I have been fifty years in practice, I never saw anyone so ill of this disorder.'

The first time I was got up to have my bed made was on New Year's Day. But I was not near recovered at Lady Day.¹⁵ Yet all this time, though I was so extremely afflicted, I was never known to give *one groan*, and but once (Mrs. Antill says not once) to say I was ill, from first to last. My constant answer to all who asked me how I did was, 'I am indifferent.' This made a great noise both in town and country; for the doctor, apothecary, and others often mentioned this circumstance when others complained. Yea, Mrs. Antill told us a few days ago that long after I was recovered, and had left the country, Dr. Clark often mentioned with astonishment how quiet I lay, and what answers I constantly gave, though I was so dreadfully afflicted.

From this account we learn, first, that none ought to give or take anything heating in the beginning of this disorder. Secondly, that while there is life, none ought to despair of recovering, however ill they are. And thirdly, that no degree of affliction is too great for the grace of God to enable us to bear, with resignation, meekness, and quietness.

Before my conversion I had contracted a great number of debts, and by means of this illness they were greatly multiplied. This was a cause of great uneasiness to me. As soon therefore as I was able, I set out for my own country, to receive my fortune, which had lain so long in Mr. [Thomas] Tudor's hands. As I passed through the country, I preached in most of the societies which lay in my way, and I believe it was not altogether in vain.

When I got home, my old acquaintance got about me. But when they saw such an alteration in me they were astonished, and the more so as they had never seen the like before. As soon as I had received my money, I bought a horse and rode far and near, paying all I owed in my own country. This made a great noise, and confirmed the people in their opinion that the change they saw in me was of God. My uncle Tudor, indeed, attributed it to another cause. He said, 'Thou hast been so wicked that thou hast seen the devil, and that has occasioned so great a change in thee.' At last my aunt [Elizabeth] Tudor and others desired me to preach the next Sabbath-day, to which I consented. On Saturday I fell in company with Lord H[e]re[fo]rd,¹⁶ who had heard that I was turned Methodist and was going to preach in the parish. He damned me, and swore if there was a pool of water near he would throw me in. I was going to reply but he would not suffer me. As we were going the same way, I followed at a distance, and every now and then he turned about, swearing that he would put me in the stocks and send me to prison. When we came near a pinfold, where there was a pair of stocks, I turned over a stile to a neighbour's house. On this my

¹⁴William Clark, M.D. (1698–1780), of Bradford-on-Avon.

¹⁵I.e., Mar. 25.

¹⁶Edward Devereux, 11th Viscount Hereford (c. 1710–60), born in Nantcribba, Montgomeryshire

lord swore that if they took me in, he would drive the country of them. I therefore judged it prudent to turn another way.

The next day I went with my uncle Tudor to church and sacrament. I went with him also to evening prayers. Just as the minister was concluding, his lordship came to church. As soon as the people were got out, my lord said, 'Mr. Tudor, why do you harbour that fellow about your house?' My uncle answered, 'Where should he be, my lord, but at home?' He then desired my uncle to send me out of the parish. But my uncle said, 'He is in his own parish, my lord, and about his own business.' On this I stepped forward. When my lord saw me, he said, 'Wh—wh—wh—wh—why dost thou dress like a parson?' (for I was dressed in blue). I said, 'What I wear, my lord, is my own and not your lordship's.' He said, 'If thou dost not leave the country, I will send thee to the stocks.' I answered, 'I regard not the stocks, my lord. Your lordship may send me to Montgomery, if you please. But before I go, I must tell your lordship that I was shocked exceedingly yesterday on hearing a person of your rank, who is also a magistrate, curse and swear as your lordship did when you saw me on the common.' As this conversation passed in the presence of almost the whole parish, many were well-pleased to hear my lord so plainly dealt with. But my lord himself was enraged exceedingly, and called for one and another to come and take me to the stocks. But several of those he called, ran away. At last he said to his footman, 'Go you, and take him away'; and then called one of his tenants, 'John Parry! John Parry! I say, John Parry, come you and take him to the stocks.' I smiled, and said, 'My lord, you need not call these lusty men. For if you send a child it will do as well, seeing I shall make no resistance.' When we were gone a little way, the footman swore he had much rather carry his master to the devil than me to the stocks, and Mr. Parry swore the same. I said, 'Pray do not curse and swear, or you will be as bad as my lord. But though, such a multitude of young and old were present, so universally was my lord's conduct disapproved of that not one of them went with us but my aunt Tudor. Nor did any one come after us but another uncle.'

When we came to the stocks, my aunt said, 'What do you now intend to do?' Mr. Parry said, 'We must put him in or ruin the country.' She said, 'You and I have lived in friendship for many years, and I shall be sorry now to hurt you. Go you, therefore, and ask my lord if he will indemnify you. For if he is put in, somebody shall pay for it.' Mr. Parry went and found my lord had taken the parson and my uncle Tudor into the public house, where the parson, who had administered the sacrament that day, tarried drinking with my lord from 4:00 in the afternoon till 11:00 at night; and my uncle, who had received it, till 7:00 the next morning. This I mention as a sad specimen of the religion of my native country. When Mr. Parry came to my lord, he asked, 'Have you put him in?' Mr. Parry answered, 'No my lord, for I am threatened.' On this my lord jumped up and drew his sword, and away ran the farmer, and my lord after him, both cursing and swearing like devils. When Mr. Parry returned, my aunt asked, 'Well, what are you to do?' He cursed my lord, and said, 'Do? We must put him in!' The footman swore, 'I will never put him in', and the farmer did the same. And as I was quite passive and cheerful, my aunt said, 'Thou shalt not put thyself in.' I answered, 'This is very hard! I am to go into the stocks, and you both swear you will not put me in; and my aunt says I shall not put myself in. Well then, I will tell you how it shall be. One of you shall hold up the stocks, and the other shall take hold of my leg, and by so doing you shall both put me in.' After scratching their heads, they consented. Accordingly one of them lifted up the stocks, and the other put his hand under the calf of my leg and just put it in, and then bid me take it out again. However, we stood near the stocks the whole time, which was two hours, talking about religion. Among other things Mr. Parry said, 'It is pity you did not tell the people you would preach in the stocks.' I said, 'It is very true, and I am sorry I did not think of it.'

The next morning, through my aunt's persuasion, I rode to Montgomery, to an attorney. But he not being at home, my uncle advised me to let the matter drop; and indeed I was easily persuaded to this, as I found so little of the spirit of resentment.

A few years ago Mrs. G[lyn]n[e], of Shrewsbury¹⁷ told me that Lord H[ereford] told her the affair and added, 'that if any more of them came into his parish, he would serve them in the same manner.' She

¹⁷Bridget (Lloyd) Glynne (1708–99), widow of Edward Glynne of Glynne, Monmouthshire. A relative of Lord Hereford, she now lived in Shrewsbury and was a supporter of Methodism.

said, 'My lord, you judge of this people according to the idle reports you hear of them. But I know them to be the servants of the living God. Therefore, my lord, beware what you do to them or God will punish you one day or other.' He paused awhile, and then said, 'Cousin G[lynne], if I had known this before, I would not have done what I did. But for the time to come I will have nothing to do with them.'

After I had paid what I owed in my own country, I went to Shrewsbury to do the same. But many in that place had quite forgot me, as well as what I owed them. Those I had defrauded by any unlucky trick, I told them of it, paid the full value, and offered them interest, if it was only for a few shillings. One instance of this was [that] a companion of mine had defrauded a Quaker of a shilling, and because I was concerned in laying the scheme, I thought I ought to pay him. When I went to inquire for him, I found him in jail and told him the whole affair. He then asked me, 'Art thou the young man who preached in the Methodist meeting, concerning whom there is so much noise?' I said, 'I am.' He said, 'Wilt thou come next First-day [i.e., Sunday] and preach to the prisoners?' I said, 'I will.' Accordingly, I went and preached in the prison chapel, and many were glad to hear what God had done for my soul. Indeed, I found that going to a place, and paying everyone what I owed him, was frequently a means of great good—especially as I was always careful, when people thanked me, to commend the grace of God; telling them, 'You ought to thank God, for if he had not converted me, I never should have thought of paying you.'

From Shrewsbury I went to Whitchurch, on purpose to pay sixpence. I then went to Wrexham, and satisfied everyone there. Next I rode to Chester and Liverpool, and preached often in both places. In the first of them several persons were turned from the evil of their way. I then went to Manchester, and from thence to Birmingham, and so on to Bristol. When I had paid all I owed in this city, I returned to Bradford. I went to Mr. Pearce immediately and told him all I had done. I then asked him for his account, but he bid me go and satisfy every other creditor. I did so. But when I came again, he told me he had no account against me. I saw the hand of God in this, for I had already paid about seventy debts, which I could not accomplish till I had sold my horse, bridle, and saddle. However, I was at last clear of the world, and by that means was delivered from a burden which had cost me many prayers and tears.

With the small remains of my money, and with a little credit, I set up in my business. But before I was half settled in it, Mr. Wesley desired I would give it up and go immediately into Cornwall. I was glad of the opportunity, as believing it to be the will of God concerning me. I therefore disposed of my effects, and paid the few debts I had again contracted. But I was not able to buy another horse, and therefore with my boots on my legs, my great coat on my back, and my saddlebags with my books and linen across my shoulder, I set out in October 1753.

From Bradford I went to Coleford, and from thence to Tiverton. I had not been many weeks there, before Mr. Bidgood asked me why I had not a horse?¹⁸ I told him frankly the truth of the matter. He then desired me to buy one, and he would pay for him. I begged to be excused from accepting such an offer, but he still urged me. I then told him I would consult a friend. I did so, and was advised to accept the offer. A few days after, I went with a farmer into his field. In a few minutes a colt, about two years and a half old, came to me and put his nose upon my shoulder. I stroked him, and asked the farmer what he would take for him. He said, 'Five pounds.' We struck a bargain at once, and in a few days I mounted my horse, and have kept him to this day—which is about twenty-five years. On him I have travelled, comfortably, not less than an hundred thousand miles in preaching the gospel. In this also I see the hand of God: for I parted with one horse, rather than bring a reproach on the gospel; and as a reward he provided me such another as, in many respects, none of my brethren could ever boast of.

While I was at dinner one day at Cullompton I was dreadfully tempted to believe that I was not called to preach. I then thought, This food does not belong to me, and therefore I am a thief and a robber in eating it. I then burst into tears and could eat no more. As I was to preach at one o'clock, I went to the preaching house weeping all the way. I also went weeping into the pulpit, and wept sore while I gave out the hymn, when I was at prayer, and when I preached. The congregation was soon as deeply affected as I

¹⁸Thomas Bidgood, a serge-maker, was a supporter of the Methodist work in Tiverton.

was myself, and many of them roared aloud for the disquietness of their souls. So that I have reason to believe God brought much good out of that temptation.

From Devonshire I went into Cornwall, where I laboured hard. And though I cannot boast of abundant success, yet some were both convinced and converted.

While I was in this circuit, I dreamed one night that Christ was come in the clouds to judge the world, and also that he looked exceeding black at me. When I awoke I was much alarmed. I therefore humbled myself exceedingly, with fastings and prayer, and I was determined never to give over till my evidence of the love of Christ was made quite clear. One day as I was at prayer in my room, with my eyes shut, the Lord as it were appeared to the eye of my mind as standing just before me, while ten thousand small streams of blood seemed to issue from every part of his body. This sight was so unexpected, and at the same time so seasonable, that for once I wept aloud; yea, and almost fainted away. I now more fully believed his love to *me*, and that if he was then to come to judgment he would not frown, but rather smile on me. Therefore I loved and praised him with all my heart.

From Cornwall I was sent to Norwich. While I was here, I went one Sabbath-day to Yarmouth. As I went along, my companion every now and then cried out, 'I shall be murdered and go to hell this day, for I know not the Lord!' (For the people of Yarmouth had often said that if any Methodist came there, he should never return alive.) When we got to town we went to church. I then went in the marketplace and gave out a hymn. While I sung and prayed the multitude was tolerably quiet, but as soon as I had taken my text they began to be very rude. In a short time a friend pulled me down. After staying another while at a friend's house, I sent for my horse. The mob followed him, and filled the alley where he was brought. As soon as I was mounted, he drove the mob before him. But the women stood in their doors, some with both hands full of dirt, and others with bowls of water, which they threw at me as I passed by. When we got into the open street we had such a shower of stones, sticks, apples, turnips, potatoes, etc. as I never saw before or since. My fellow traveller galloped out of town as fast as he was able. But I watched the motions of the sticks and stones which were like to hit me, so as to preserve a regular retreat. When I overtook my companion we were thankful that we escaped with our lives, as were our friends in Norwich on seeing us return.

My next remove was to London, where I continued till August. What service I was of here I cannot tell. Only I remember that under a sermon I preached in the Foundry that good man, and useful preacher, Mr. Joseph Guilford was awakened.

At our Conference in 1756 I was appointed for Ireland. I spent the year in and about Limerick, Waterford, and Cork. In the first of these places God was pleased to own my labours much. Many of the soldiers, as well as others, were converted to God.

At the next Conference I was again stationed for London. In my way thither I stopped at Whitehaven. Here I was greatly tried from a particular quarter, but I was more than conqueror through him who had loved me, and was frequently refreshed in my soul and, in some measure, blessed in my labours.

From Whitehaven I went to Leeds, where the people detained me about six weeks. All that time I was very much followed. Yet I cannot say that the word was more, if so much blest, as it had been in many other places. At last I reached London, but my Leeds friends wrote to Mr. Wesley to send me back. When he proposed it to me, I consented. But as I was appointed to do several things which were very disagreeable to some in power, this lost me many of my kindest friends, and was a source of great uneasiness to me for many years.

From my first awakening I was almost singular in my notions of marriage. I thought that young people did not consult *reason, and the will of God*, so much as their own foolish inclinations. When I mentioned these things to my young acquaintances, they thought my notions were romantic and chimerical. However I determined, if ever I married, to act according to the rules I had so, so often laid down for others. My first inquiry, therefore, was: Am I called to marry at this time? Here I weighed the reasons on both sides, and then concluded in the affirmative. I then inquired: What sort of a person ought I to marry? To this I answered in general, to such a one as Christ would choose for me, suppose he was on earth and was to undertake that business. I then asked: But what sort of a person have I reason to believe

he would choose for me? Here I fixed on the following properties, and ranged them in the following order. The first was *grace*. I was quite certain that no preacher of God's word ought, on any consideration, to marry one who is not eminently gracious. Secondly, she ought to have tolerable good *common sense*. A Methodist preacher in particular, who travels into all parts and sees such a variety of company, ought not to take a fool with him. Thirdly, as I knew the natural warmth of my own temper, I concluded that a wise and gracious God would not choose a companion for *me* who would throw oil, but rather water, upon the fire. Fourthly, I judged that, as I was connected with a poor people, the will of God was that whoever I married should have a small competency, to prevent her being chargeable to any.

Having proceeded thus far, my next inquiry was: But who is the person in whom these properties are thus found? I immediately turned my eyes on Miss Green, a person of a good family and noted for her extraordinary piety. I therefore opened my mind to her, and after consulting Mr. Wesley we were married.¹⁹ As in this affair I consulted reason and the will of God so impartially, I have had abundant reason to be thankful ever since.

As soon as I was married I went into Lancashire, where I laboured about a year. The greatest outward trial I had here was the decay of my health. Though I have not much to say concerning my usefulness this year, yet some were awakened and brought to God who stand to this day.

From hence I went into the York circuit in 1760. At that time I was thought to be near the last stage of a consumption. And as I had about three hundred miles to ride every six weeks, and about sixty societies to take care of, few thought I should be able to go once round. But I said, 'I am determined to go as far as I can; and when I can go no further, I will turn back.' Accordingly I entered upon my work, which was enough to try the strongest constitution. By the time I had got about half way round I found that violent labour got me a little appetite, yea and caused me to sleep better—so that I began to gather flesh before I got to the end of my circuit. But my recovery was exceeding gradual. For as I had been declining from the time I had the smallpox, which was about eight years, so I was about twelve more before I was quite recovered.

My next remove was to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Here I had many mercies and comforts, and a few trials. In one place I was obliged to put thirty-five members out of the society; and if I had not laboured hard, and exercised great patience, we should have lost about two hundred in that one place. But though I had the express order of Mr. Wesley for what I did, and acted with great integrity on the one hand, and tenderness on the other, I lost many of my dearest friends, who from that time became my bitterest enemies. But I must say (in honour of the grace of God) that friends and enemies have always been alike to me, when I thought the glory of God was concerned.

From Newcastle I went home to Leeds, where I laboured a whole year. But as several persons still retained their old prejudices against me, my labour here was now rather uncomfortable. However, though I cannot say I was of any great service this year, yet I had some fruit in several places.

The year following I was stationed in Bristol. I believe I was never so likely to do good, as at this time, but I was removed and spent the remainder of the year in Leeds. In 1760 I buried my first child here; and this year I buried the other. The next year I spent in London and Colchester.

At the Manchester Conference I was appointed for Scotland. The two years I tarried here I spent in and about Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee. While I was in Edinburgh, I was remarkably earnest in private prayer one night. The next morning I awoke about four o'clock and said to myself, I will lie here no longer, but rise and call upon God. In an instant I was filled with such sweetness as I had not tasted for a long time. I hastened to put on my clothes, and fell on my knees before God, and with tears of gratitude thanked him with my whole heart. The effect of this visitation lasted a considerable time, and was of great use to me, both in preaching and living. Some time after, as I was preaching on the barren fig tree, a few words proceeded from me in such a manner as I can scarce describe. The congregation seemed as if they had been electrified. One who had long been bowed down cried out amain, and said afterwards that under those words she felt as if she was just dropping into hell! I have since thought that if the word was always

¹⁹Thomas Olivers and Eleanor Green were married Sept. 2, 1758, in Leeds, Yorkshire.

attended with such power, very few would stand before it. While I was in this circuit, I spent two or three nights in Glasgow, and one person, at least, was converted to God in that time.

From Scotland I went over to Dublin. Here the Lord began to bless my labours almost as soon as I arrived. In a very few weeks a considerable number were awakened, and others received a sense of the favour of God. But my fellow labourer and I were grieved to see so much levity among many of our friends, and determined to oppose it.²⁰ Accordingly, we preached against it with all our might. We determined also to show, by our example, how Christians ought to be serious and to take up their cross daily. But J[ames] M[organ] opposed us, by softening the awful truth we delivered. This was very agreeable to the delicate part of our hearers. At last I spoke my mind very freely. The consequence was, he and his friends rose up against me and quite bore me down.

The next year I came over to Chester, where I was stationed for a year. From hence I went to pay a visit to my own country, and preached in Montgomery, Newtown, Llanidloes, and many other places. In Tregynon,²¹ where I was born, I preached once, and had most of the village to hear me. But when Mr. B[lay]n[e]y,²² who owned most of the parish, heard of it, he told my uncle (who with my grandfather had lived in that house near an 100 years) that if he encouraged me to preach in the village he would turn him out immediately. He also sent a servant to a cousin of mine, who lived in another parish, and told her the same.

Soon after I returned to Chester my wife was taken ill of a fever. For eight weeks the physician told me every day that there was no hope of her recovery; and she thought herself, for many weeks, that every day would be her last. But this was so far from being matter of sorrow to her that she rejoiced at the prospect of being so soon at her Father's house, and told me frequently that she had much rather die than live. And though, from beginning to end, she was ill fifteen weeks, in all that time I never heard her once complain about the state of her soul.

The next year I went to Liverpool. Here I enjoyed many mercies and comforts, but I cannot say much of my usefulness. From Liverpool I went to the London Conference, and was appointed for the Derby circuit. But before I left London I fell into great dejection of spirit, and was for many weeks on the brink of despair. But I cried unto God night and day, and in due time he showed me the light of his countenance once more, for which I hope to praise him to all eternity. I have also great occasion to be thankful to his people, who sympathized with me and encouraged me on every side. When my soul was again revived, I went into my circuit and was kindly received. Here I continued for two years, among a loving, happy people; and I have some reason to believe that my labours here were not altogether in vain.

From hence I came once more to London, where I continued two years. In the first of these, Mr. [Augustus] Toplady paid me a visit at the Foundry, and stayed about three hours. We soon entered on a debate about our different sentiments, which we carried on, from first to last, without one unkind or uncivil expression. I told him several reasons why I could not be a predestinarian. And as I am still of the same mind, I shall here repeat the substance of them, as some of my present objections to that hypothesis.

The first principle of predestination, I said, is that God's sovereignty is, in every sense, absolute and unlimited. Now I undertake to demonstrate the contrary. For instance, it is undeniable that his sovereignty is so limited by his wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and love that he cannot possibly be either an unwise, unholy, unjust, untrue, or an unloving sovereign—which would absolutely be the case if, by his sovereignty, he decreed sin, reprobation, etc.

The next fundamental of predestination is that God, as a mere and an unlimited sovereign, has decreed whatsoever comes to pass. Now the Bible, which we all believe to be the word of God, forbids a great number of these things. For instance: idolatry, Sabbath-breaking, murder, and adultery all come to pass. Now it is certain that these are all forbidden in the word of God; and therefore if he has decreed them, he has both decreed and forbid the same things. Now before I can receive the hypothesis which

²⁰John Helton had been stationed in Dublin with Olivers by the 1767 Conference.

²¹Orig., 'Tregonan'.

²²Arthur Blayney (1716–95), who resided in Gregynog Hall.

supposes this, I must fairly and clearly see how it is consistent with the wisdom, holiness, justice, and truth of God.

Thirdly, because the absolute sovereignty of God has thus decreed everything, predestination represents all mankind as not having any of their actions or volitions in their own power, but as being acted upon like mere machines. But God, by giving them instructions, commands, promises, and threatenings treats them as if they were free and voluntary agents. Now before I can be a predestinarian, I must see how it agrees with the aforesaid attributes of God for his sovereignty to decree that men should be created involuntary beings, and then to deal with them as if they were free.

As Mr. Toplady did not offer any solid answer to these reasonings, I told him that, as an honest man, I could not be of his opinion till these difficulties were fully removed. We then parted, as good friends at least as we met, and I was told after that he spoke well of me in several places. But in his next publication I was almost all that is bad!²³

The next year I went with Mr. Wesley to visit my friends in Wiltshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall. This was a very agreeable journey, and I hope it was a profitable one to many of my old acquaintance, whom I had not seen for many years. After this I spent a year in visiting my friends in various parts of the kingdom, and I believe this labour of love was not in vain. The Conference following, I undertook the care of Mr. Wesley's printing. From that time I have been in London, and between preaching and writing and the care of the press, I never laboured harder in all my life. But I find it good both for body and soul, and therefore I hope to be fully employed as long as I live.

Upon the whole, when I consider how the providence of God provided for me in my infancy, brought me up to the state of man, preserved me from those evils which brought others to an untimely end, directed my wandering steps to the means of my conversion, cast my lot among his people, called me to preach his word, owned my preaching, to the conversion of others, stood by me in many trials, brought me back so often from the brink of the grave, healed my manifold backslidings, provided me a suitable companion, and put me in possession of all the necessities of life—when I consider these things, I must say: 'Surely, goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life; and I hope to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.'²⁴

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 77–89, 129–46.²⁵

²³See the attacks upon Olivers in Augustus Toplady, *More Work for Mr. John Wesley*, ... (London: James Mathews, 1772), 12, 24.

²⁴Cf. Ps. 23:6.

²⁵This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 2:48–106; along with discussion of Olivers's death and his publishing work, including his elegy on John Wesley's death.

From Captain Richard Williams

[Carharrack, Cornwall]

January 10, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Please to publish the following in the *Arminian Magazine*.¹

The humble petition of widows' woes! Orphans' tears! And butchered fathers' blood! Imploring acts of grace, the relieving of ruined families, restraining hostile cruelties, restoring heaven-born peace.

The cursed war called duelling – where men of honour combat for a crown of air or earth – should be expelled [from] the rational creation with *serpent*-execrations! Deeds more *irrational* are these than realms infernal boast, although their prince begat the 'god of war', who wastes more worlds than one. 'War was in heaven',² a *needful* war, to cast down the rebel host who polluted that holy place. War is on earth (and oh that it was only against sin and Satan's kingdom!). We hear, see, feel, smell, taste its woes! The western world its wounds! War in the torrid regions of the damned was never yet recorded. Legions of fallen furies *harmonize* in hell! Mark 3:26. While Adam's sons, with creature-comforts crowned, Cain-like their better brethren kill—for malice, mirth, or money.

The wars that wreck terrestrial thrones and kingdoms are mostly money matters. The heathens hurled their fellow-men to beasts, to sport their worse than savage eyes and ears! The duellist, filled with satanic spite, inwardly says, 'I'll have the villain's life, or lose my own – rather than soil mine *honour*.' Heroes in *pride* risk health, hope, heaven! To win: revenge, remorse, remediless reflections reddened with 'blood-guiltiness'! Reducing the survivor's life, if *wise* at last, to penitence severe! Destroying every consolation wealth, fame, [or] friends afford, till heaven-born peace returns! Or ruining eternally! The *tearless* ruiner of man, who was the lord of God's creation! 'A little lower than the angels made',³ to reign in paradise probation's day, and then ascend *at once* above the skies.

Your wrecking weather ushering in this year occasioned my sending a few lines to Mr. [Peter] Jaco:

When nature's tempests rise small measure higher!
While warring nations scoop infernal fire!
The King of worlds, winds, waves, and wasting flame!
Thro' atheist earth proclaims his heav'nly name!

The learned and popular Dr. _____, weary of the burdens of life, last Friday night, in order to get rid of them, plunged one of his instruments into his breast! Providentially some obstacle prevented instant death! His wound bled abundantly, but they have some hopes today of longer life. O rare Arianism! Good Lord, deliver us from 'damnable heresies'!⁴ Oh pray for us, dear father, that your very many sons may be saved from pernicious opinions and poisonous practices swarming around us! Remember daily more particularly,

Your *most needy*, and most unworthy servant in the gospel of Christ,

Richard Williams

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 146–48.

¹Williams had earlier sent some verse for possible inclusion in *AM*, which JW politely declined in his letter of Dec. 30, 1778. In this case, JW did publish Williams's submission in *AM* 4 (1781), 658–60; a combination prose and verse essay 'On War'.

²Cf. Rev. 12:7.

³Ps. 8:5; Heb. 2:7.

⁴2 Pet. 2:1.

From Elizabeth Mary Morgan

Bristol
January 13, 1779

Reverend Sir,

One of the first favours I received on my return from Wales was your letter,¹ which drew a prayer from my heart. I feel that next to the loss of eternity is the loss of time—I mean, that next to the coming short of living *with* God hereafter is the misery of not living *to* him here.

My stay in Wales was providentially prolonged much beyond my first intention. In the minister at whose house I was, and whom I have known some years, I had the privilege of having the Christian, the friend, and the instructor sweetly blended together; for at the same time that my mind was informed and entertained, I was led upwards, and directed to view (through inferior objects) the primary one.

I think you will herein discern traces of divine conduct and indulgence. And if I have another opportunity of seeing and conversing with you, I shall consider it as a farther instance of the same paternal goodness. In the meantime I hope you will favour me with such cautions, reproofs, and instructions as you shall see my ignorance, weakness, and manifold infirmities require. And if you will add an interest in your prayers, to all the other favours conferred upon me, you will greatly oblige, reverend sir,

Your very affectionate, and truly obedient servant,

E. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 104.

¹Apparently JW's letter of c. Nov. 10, 1778.

From William Hey, Esq.¹

Leeds
January 15, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I think myself obliged to any of my friends who will be so kind as to point out what they see or think amiss in me, and hope I shall always endeavour to pay a proper attention to their reproofs. As far as I know, it is my desire to walk agreeable to the Scripture-rule in all things.

With regard to dress, the Scriptures seem to recommend a decent conformity to the customs of the country in which we live, avoiding what is foppish and extravagant. I endeavour so to dress as neither to engage my own attention nor that of others; but to pass unheeded, without anything singular or gaudy. My wife [Alice] observes the same rule. But whether we are so happy as to find out the medium we aim at, others can perhaps judge better we ourselves.

I certainly never did advise my wife to conform to the world in dress, according to my notions of the sinful conformity.² And it would seem by the event that we have not yet conformed to it, for our polite and fashionable relations avoid our acquaintance as people of another fashion. And our Lord has laid it down as a criterion that if we were of the world, the world would love its own.³

As to my religious sentiments, they are those in which Christians generally agree, and concerning which we should see little difference, did not mischievous contentious alienate our affections from one another. I consider the Bible as a practical book—not designed to gratify my curiosity, but to teach me what to *do*. And if I learn this effectually, I shall not be condemned for my ignorance in some critical matters, which are not necessary to sanctify my heart or direct my conduct.

I hope I shall have a continued remembrance in your prayers, and remain, reverend sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant for Christ's sake,

W. H.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 106–07.

¹William Hey (1736–1819) was a surgeon at Leeds General Infirmary and an active Methodist. He married Alice Banks (1737–1820) in 1761.

²Hey appears to be replying to a letter of JW raising concern in this regard (which is not known to survive).

³Cf. John 15:19.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
January 15, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Your last favour was to me another proof of the Lord's love to his most unworthy servant.¹ How is my soul humbled before the great I Am when I view the many unmerited favours I receive from his bounty.

At present my heart is filled with thankfulness, and prays that God may reward you for the kindness you have shown to one of the meanest of your friends.

Of late God hath called me to new exercises of faith and patience. But my will at present is so lost in his that I can truly say,

To do, or not to do, to have,
Or not to have, I leave to thee:
To be, or not to be I leave,
Thy only will be done in me.²

The first Sunday in the new year, while I was at the Lord's Supper, I was so penetrated with a sense of my fellowship with the Father and the Son, through the Spirit, as words would fail to describe.

Our dear sister [Sarah] C[rosby] goes on very well. She sends her kind love to you, and bids me tell you that her love increases to our divine Master and all his members. While we were at prayer, the blessed God condescended to be so present that I cried out, 'This is a foretaste of heaven! This is a glimpse of glory!' O sir, what is all worldly enjoyment compared to this? That we may all be more abundant partakers thereof is, reverend sir, the constant prayer of

Your unworthy friend and servant,

E. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 105.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²CW, 'The Last Wish', *HSP* (1749), 2:24.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Cross Hall
January 30, 1779

I know not where to begin to tell my ever dear and honoured father how good the Lord is. My heart is filled with thankfulness and my mouth with praise. Since I last wrote a holy flame, which seemed then kindling, has broke out among us, and several at Otley have entered into that rest¹ which remains for the people of God. Four—who then were afar off—have since that time been brought nigh by the blood of the covenant and now praise a pardoning God. The spirit of prayer and of supplication rests on many and we seem with one heart and mind to believe our Jesus will go on from conquering unto conquer.² O that every heart may feel his power, and all our souls sweetly join in his blessed service.

We had Mr. Collins about a fortnight ago and he was made a general blessing.³ Indeed, he is a lively good young man, and in most places where he has been God has given him seals to his ministry. He speaks much of the work of the Holy Spirit within us, and so lives beneath its divine influences as to be truly taught of God. He preached at Yeadon a little while ago, and it pleased the Lord to speak by him to some very hardened and profligate sinners, who since then have brought forth fruits meet for righteousness. And we are not without hope that even at that place the Lord will be glorified in the salvation of many.

I suppose by this time you will have heard Mr. [Cornelius] Caley is at London, as it is now some weeks since he left Yorkshire. He came to take his leave of us before he left Leeds, and would have spoke in the preaching house had it not been judged better not. He seemed in a good spirit. But in many things he suites the Calvinists better than us, though he denies reprobation to be any part of his creed. They have opened him many doors lately and he has spoken amongst them; and will, I believe, wherever the way is open, preach what he thinks to be the gospel. I still think him a good man, but [am] sure he is not in many things consistent, and perhaps never will be. I have heard nothing particular of or from Mr. ____⁴ since I last saw you. My dear Lord keeps me in a blessed freedom from all things here below, my affections are wholly fixed on him who is 'The altogether lovely and the fairest among ten thousand; and as the apple tree is among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons of men'.⁵ And I esteem it no small privilege to have such a blessed opportunity of disengagement from many things lawful in themselves, that my time may be employed in his work whose service is my delight.

You ask if I am fully employed for a good master.⁶ When I would attempt to answer, my spirit sinks into sweet confusion at the feet of my adorable Lord, conscious how little I am capable of doing for him who has done, and is still doing so much for me. Thus far through grace, however, I can say, 'In all I do his only glory is my aim'. And so graciously does my dear Lord deal with me that when I am called by his providence to serve with Martha's hands, I feel a Mary's heart.⁷ And when engaged more immediately in his blessed service, it is my delight. O such love have I of late felt in my heart to the inhabitants of Otley that, if I could have thought it would have answered any good end, I could have freely gone from house to house and on my bended knees prayed them to be reconciled to God. The divine consolations

¹In *AM* this is changed to 'into a greater degree of that rest'.

²See Rev. 6:2.

³Rev. Brian Bury Collins, who received his BA from Cambridge in 1776. He was currently serving a curacy in Hull. His first known letter to JW came later this year.

⁴Apparently an interested suitor.

⁵Cf. Song of Songs, 5:10–16, and 2:3.

⁶In a letter not known to survive.

⁷See Luke 10:38–42.

my soul has felt at these seasons are inexpressible. But the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,⁸ as you my dear, dear sir know by blessed experience.

In the general my dreams are of spiritual nature, and I am sleeping such a one to my own apprehension as I wish to be waking. Sometimes I am permitted to feel myself in great difficulties and I do not remember ever to wake without clear deliverance. But often I have no remembrance of what I dream. But when I do, it is in the general something that leaves a divine impression on my mind, and this I wholly attribute to the faithfulness of my dear Lord, who keeps what he enables me to commit unto him. It is as common for me now to throw myself by faith into the arms of my Lord when I lie down to rest as to lay my body on the bed. His good providence provides, and all glory be to him alone. I can truly say, 'He keeps me night and day and continually waters me with dew from on high'.

I could wish to know what you think of Baron Swedenborg's visions of heaven and hell?⁹ It has lately been recommended to me as something very spiritual, and aught that will make me more conversant with realities I should wish to read. May the everlasting arms be around and beneath you. My soul is united to you in the bonds of divine love, and daily feels with you the true communion of saints. O that we may deeper drink into the Spirit of our God and higher rise into all the life of love. And then our Jesus shall say, 'Come up hither'. At that day, my dear sir, may I be found at your feet. I am¹⁰

Your truly affectionate, though unworthy, child,

E. Ritchie

I bless God, my health is greatly restored. When I have much exercise of any kind I think my strength is not equal to what it was formerly. And Mr. [William] Hey tells me he thinks it would be better for me to eat animal food once a day, as the want of strength may in a great measure proceed from my diet.

Address: 'The Revd. Mr. Wesley / London'.

Annotation: another hand, '24th'.

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* 12 (1789): 215–17.

⁸See Ps. 25:14.

⁹I.e., Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), *A Treatise Concerning Heaven and Hell, containing a relation of many wonderful things therein, as heard and seen by the author* (London: James Phillips, 1778).

¹⁰JW omitted the discussion of dreams and Swedenborg from his published transcription in *AM*, and rendered the closing much less personal as 'your real well-wisher'.

From Charles Delamotte

Barrow, near Barton, Lincolnshire
February 2, 1779

My Dear Brother John Wesley,

I am happy to see your name at full length in the papers of January 4.¹ My eyes overflow with tears of gladness to find you still hold your integrity, and that you warn your Master's sheep of any danger that may attack them.

If I *could* hate any man upon earth it would be Voltaire—not for his own sake, but for his atheistical works which he has published. Go on then my dear brother and prosper. I do not know any man (not even by name) who has laboured more assiduously in the vineyard of our Lord than yourself. But notwithstanding, when we meet in heaven (which I hope will soon come to pass) we shall both find that it is the merits and grace of our Saviour alone that brought us thither.

I am going fast on the sixty-five, and you are much older. But may we not both say with Jacob, 'Few and evil have been the days of the years of our pilgrimage'?² Yet when I reflect on those I spent with you it affords me great comfort, for I can most assuredly say that by your means I came to the knowledge of the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.

I care not if one says, 'I am of Paul', and another, 'I of Apollos';³ or in other words, 'I am one of *The Brethren* and you a Methodist'. For this I know, that by our works our faith must be proved. And as we have a merciful saviour and judge, with great humility I say I am not afraid, but rather rejoice in thinking my time is at hand when I shall see him as he is.

I am sorry to say that there is a forsaking the assembling of ourselves together in this place. Nevertheless there are many souls here that know the Lord Jesus who constantly use the means of grace. I salute all that are with you in love, and hope ever to be

Your loving brother,

Charles Delamotte

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 217–18.

¹Delamotte had seen JW's letter 'To the Printer', in the *General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer*, Jan. 4, 1779 (*Works*, 29:464–65), which criticized Voltaire.

²Cf. Gen. 47:9.

³See 1 Cor. 1:12.

From 'Orthodox'

February 4, 1779

Sir,

I beg leave, through the channel of your useful paper, to thank Mr. Wesley for his anecdote of Voltaire.¹ I always suspected that this much-admired atheist died, as he lived, like a *coward*. But sir, how great was my surprise to find Mr. Wesley condemned in a daily paper for favouring the public with this curious story!² As if it was a crime to expose the pusillanimity of a wretch, who lived for no other purpose than to sneer at religion and to eradicate from the human mind all kind of distinction between virtue and vice. I agree perfectly with Mr. Wesley that a King's chaplain might be better employed than in circulating atheism through the world;³ especially through a part of it already tinctured with infidelity, and too unhappily addicted to vice and profaneness,

I am, yours, etc.,

Orthodox

Titled: 'To the Editor of the *General Evening Post*'.

Source: published transcription; *General Evening Post* (Feb. 4–6, 1779), p. 4.

¹See JW's letter of Jan. 4, 1779 in the *General Advertiser*.

²This was likely an earlier publication of the attack by 'Justice' printed on Feb. 9, in the *Morning Chronicle* (see below).

³Thomas Francklin, a chaplain to George III, was one of the primary editors.

From John Francis Valton

Bristol
February 4, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Since I wrote last to you I have been twice at Paulton, and have had a blessed time with that people. On the 6th of January, while I preached, the power of God was amazingly present. Several cried aloud, and 'the desire of nations'¹ was in the midst of us. After preaching, many of them followed me home. I gave notes of admission to a man and his wife, and a young lad about eleven years of age. I then kneeled down in the midst of them to pray. The power of God fell upon us, and the Lord poured out the spirit of prayer and supplication both upon his servants and upon his handmaids. The lad above mentioned prayed twice. Such praying, crying, and singing I never heard before. One whose name is Bull (and who is a *bull* by nature!) is now deeply awakened, and is earnestly seeking for redemption.

The next morning, while I preached, the power of the Lord came down in the midst of us and great grace rested upon the congregation, for cries and tears proclaimed his presence.

After sermon I came into an adjoining room, where many followed me. I gave out a verse of a hymn, and then one desired leave to go to prayer. We fell upon our knees and he prayed so fervently that all the room was in tears. Men, women, and children prayed, cried, and groaned. We continued singing, praying, and weeping upon our knees for some time, and were abundantly refreshed.

At two o'clock I preached at Littleton, about a mile off, and found the work very much reviving there. The people are ready to give me their eyes at this place. Here and at Bath one morning, while I was expounding the great promises in Luke 1:18 and following verses, the glorious Lord was unto us as a place of broad rivers.

Some of the backsliders at Paulton have been healed, though the new members have not as yet found a clear sense of pardon.

I should not omit to inform you that the people in the town that are not willing to be converted dare not come near the door of the preaching-house, for they are afraid to be caught. The whole town is civilized, and such a sober Christmas was never known in Paulton before.

We are waiting with pleasing expectations to see and hear you soon. May the Lord Jesus bless you, and make your feet beautiful wherever you go! So much of my time is taken up in visiting the sick in Bristol that I am afraid my own soul is harmed much for want of private intercourse with God in prayer, reading, and meditation. I can hardly spare the time of writing this. So that you must excuse me if I hastily subscribe myself, dear sir,

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

John Valton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 218–20.

¹Haggai 2:7.

From Hannah Frances Owen¹

Publow
February 5, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I should have acknowledged your kind favour long before this,² had the subject required less prayer and deliberation. You injure me if you suppose your advice does not bear the utmost weight with me. Indeed sir it does, and I believe always will while gratitude and memory remain.

I know sir, 'The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.'³ Yet surely some situations are more advantageous to holiness, and the interests of a better world, than others. If I found my present sphere of action what you suppose it to be, I should firmly resolve on keeping in it. But I find it far otherwise. The improvement of children makes some amends for the tediousness of teaching them. Yet this pleasure never comes till we have gone through the vexations inseparable from becoming a child again with children, and repeating the same thing a hundred times over before we are understood. This must be not only one hour but, if we do our duty to them, every hour and almost every day in the year. For there is no forming children to any purpose without knowing them, and here what patience and fortitude are⁴ necessary! And probably when we have just discovered any who have minds capable of being formed, they will be taken away. Or their friends will draw out of them complaints and grievous charges, and although they have not the least foundation, yet they will be believed, and we are obliged to bear with all they choose to say. This, with the constant care of keeping them out of danger, mending their clothes, receiving visits from their friends, together with providing servants, and the weight of so large a family, exposes the mind to such a succession of 'chance-exercises from men and devils'⁵ as I am persuaded interrupts my attention to 'the one thing needful'.⁶

Great and constant employment is not for my spiritual advantage. Solitude seems the soil for my disposition. I can hardly live in a crowd. And if I am to be useful to the multitude, I must live in the mount. Of this I have been long persuaded. Yet as it evidently appeared my present path, I have cultivated a spirit of cheerful resignation—believing if anything was better for me, my heavenly Father would not withhold it; while by faith and prayer I cast myself upon his wise and gracious disposal, lying as clay in the hand of the potter. As far as I know, every inclination of my soul prefers the will of God, and cries out, 'Divine, or none henceforth my joy for ever'.⁷

If this even is to take place, I believe it will evidently appear for my advantage by the openings of providence. If not, my God will not suffer one who trusts in him to be confounded. Therefore I resign myself to his infinite wisdom. I would hear no voice but his, nor take a step where I am not following him. As it stands at present, as a matter of consideration, I entreat you reverend sir, to commend me to him who can never want methods to direct those who confide in him.

As to the person proposed, I believe with you 'he is a good man'. And I also believe his heart and his purse are open to the people to whom I boast of being partial. But of this, and every other particular of his character, I must be well assured before anything conclusive passes:

¹See the identification of author in her letter of Nov. 23, 1772.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i.254–55.

⁴Orig., 'is'; corrected by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

⁵This may be, as clearly in one later case, a quotation from JW's letter.

⁶Luke 10:42.

⁷Cf. Young, *Night Thoughts*, 'Night Five', l. 648.

Time is Truth's surest judge – and judges late,
Nothing but Truth can claim a lasting date.⁸

My dear father seems declining very fast. I fear he cannot live long.⁹ O that I could inform you of some alteration in his mind!

The young folks have heard I am addressing you, dear sir, and with one voice beg to present their duty. They are counting the time when some of them hope to see you in Bristol—which pleasure is earnestly expected by, reverend sir,

Your grateful and dutiful friend and servant,

F. O.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 271–73.

⁸Cf. Walter Harte, *The Amaranth; or, Religious Poems* (London, 1767), 'The Meditation of Thomas A Kempis', st. 12 (p. 39).

⁹John Owen apparently died later that year or early in 1780.

‘Justice’ to the Printer of the *Morning Chronicle*

February 9, 1779

Sir,

The public are now in possession of a panegyric upon Voltaire, said to have been written by his Prussian Majesty.¹ If it be true that Frederick stopped in his full career to blood and desolation, in order to pay this tribute to genius, it almost makes amends for the partition of Poland. Nor must the Reverend John Wesley's solemn challenge on this subject pass unnoticed. It appeared at the beginning of the present year in one of our public prints, addressed to the editor. Fanaticism is not confined to monks and friars.

Sir,

In September last a gentleman, near Bristol, showed me a letter which he had received from the Reverend Mr. Fletcher, at Paris. I desired him to give a transcript of one part of it, which he immediately did. It was as follows:

Mr. Voltaire sent for Mons. Tronchin, first physician to the Duke of Orleans (one of his converts to infidelity), and said to him, ‘Sir, I desire you will save my life. I will give you half my fortune, if you will lengthen out my days only six months; if not, I shall go to the devil, and carry you with me.’

This is the man to whom even a crowned head pays such a violent compliment! Nay, this is the man whose works are now published by a divine of our own church; yea, a chaplain to his [Majesty]! Pity but the king should know it!

I am, sir, your humble servant,

John Wesley
January 4, 1779

P.S. I set my name at length on purpose, and if the publisher of that poor wretch's works writes a panegyric upon him or them, I shall think it my duty to go a little farther, and show the real value of those sinful writings.²

With such a religious knight-errant as this I profess myself unable to contend. It is possible that not a few of Voltaire's writings deserve the epithet of ‘sinful’; some, probably an harder word; many, perhaps merited flames as fierce as those as which Mr. Wesley's Protestant charity would condemn their author. But is it a crime to have repented? The few words which we are told he said to Tronchin will effectually counter-work any bad effects his writings might have had on mankind, and in a manner exculpate him, if his intentions were such as Mr. Wesley seems to suppose. The conviction of one dying man preaches louder to survivors than all the irreligious writings of all the men whoever lived. And yet, therefore Mr. Wesley tells us what a pity it is but the king should know that one of his chaplains was, many years ago, the translator of Voltaire's works. Would Mr. Wesley have imputed it as a crime to [the Earl of] Rochester that, on his deathbed, he desired his poems might be burned? And would the reverend divine have immediately set to work to prove that poems which their author had already condemned were not sermons? That Mr. Wesley is only displeased with Voltaire's dying words is manifest, from his not stepping forth in his lifetime.

¹Frederick II, King of Prussia, *The Panegyric of Voltaire ... read at an extraordinary meeting of the Academy of Sciences and Belles Letters of Berlin* (London: J. Murray, 1779); first advertised in *General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer* (Jan. 7, 1779), 4.

²*General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer* (Jan. 18, 1778), p. 4.

It had been charity surely to have proved to the teeth of Voltaire ‘the real value of his sinful writings’, to have saved the ‘poor wretch’ in more worlds than one—to have converted Voltaire to Methodism! The circumstance of Mr. Wesley’s ‘setting his name’ (especially as he sets it ‘at length’, and more especially as he sets it ‘on purpose’, not by mistake) is truly noble. But by mistake, not on purpose, this noble step is taken when Voltaire is dead, who might be expected to understand and to be able to explain the writings of Voltaire nearly as well as ‘a divine of our own church; yea, a chaplain to his [Majesty]!’ ... ‘Yet, should this publisher of that poor wretch’s works write a panegyric upon him or them’, there lies the holy gauntlet of defiance. Let him tremble at the wrath of Wesley! Useless challenge! The panegyric on Voltaire and his writings is already penned and published. Despise the puny combat with translators! Behold a worthy foe! Let the truly learned and religious of Europe (they are not so numerous) form the lists. Now sound the charge! Set on! Religion and royalty! The Reverend John Wesley and the King of Prussia.

But let the combatant for faith without works remember that the names of LaBarre, of Sirven, and of Calas weigh as heavy in the scale of him whose knight he has defied as deviating from the established religion of his country,³ as seducing cobblers, women, and carpenters into fanaticism, perhaps into frenzy, perhaps into despair and suicide, can possibly weigh in his own scale.

The playhouse, by certain Puritans, is always termed ‘the devil’s house’. Come forward John Wesley. One thing more remains to complete thy character; Garrick too is dead.⁴ Come forward—prove to thy country that Garrick was the devil’s agent.

I remain, Mr. Woodfall, with a *proper* respect both for Voltaire and Wesley,
Yours, etc.,

Justice

Source: published transcription; *Morning Chronicle* (Feb. 09, 1779), p. 1.

³Referring to Voltaire’s defence of toleration in *The Ignorant Philosopher: with an address to the public upon the parricides imputed to the families of Calas and Sirven* (London: Bladon, 1767); and *Rélation de la mort du chevalier de la Barre* (Amsterdam, 1768).

⁴David Garrick (1717–1779), the actor and theatre owner, had just died. In 1760 he staged at his theatre Samuel Foote’s play *The Minor*, which satirized George Whitefield, leading Martin Madan to publish *A Letter to David Garrick* in protest. JW did not publicly join the attack, and in later years spoke positively of Garrick; see JW, *Journal*, Dec. 28, 1789, *Works*, 24:163.

From James Ireland¹

Brislington
February 10, 1779

Reverend Sir,

As you have ere now heard of Mrs. Norman's death, you will expect from me an account of it.² I intended to have written to you immediately, but illness and various other matters prevented me. As I know you will give me full credit I shall say no more by way of apology.

Your old friend was born in the year 1695, and passed the early part of her life amidst the crowd of her station. She was the daughter of a Mr. Oxford, a citizen of note and good reputation, who brought her up in the fear of God. Having the advantage of a fine person, she was soon much admired and flattered. About the age of twenty-one she was married to Mr. Norman, with whom she lived till the year 1744. The advantage of person, the vanity of the mind, and the pride of the human heart (and perhaps the too great encouragement of a fond husband in prosperity) led her into an extreme in dress. But the scene was soon changed: losses by sea, the bankruptcy of a brother, and the expenses of a family soon put a period to Mr. Norman's days. But before this took place, God had in great mercy shown her her state, when she found all earthly things insufficient to make her happy. The axe being laid to the root of the tree, her superfluities in dress were laid aside. Her rich lace, etc., were sold and the money given to the poor. Her house and heart were open to you and Mr. [George] Whitefield, and you preached in a plat of land belonging to Mr. Norman, immediately after you were refused the churches.

In the year 1745 her faith was to be tried. Her trustee, an imperious lawyer, who hated her because she belonged to Jesus and because she reproved him for his wickedness, turned her out of her house and left her to live on a mere trifle. And when she told him she had meat to eat which he knew nothing of, he was in a rage, and said, 'What, do you expect a maintenance from the clouds?' On this she was obliged to retire, with her only child, into the country, and there lived for years on her little stipend, and brought up her child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She also did all the good she could to the souls and bodies of her fellow mortals, for if they would not receive the word, she nevertheless persevered in doing all temporal good. And this method she pursued to the day of her death.

I lived thirty years with her,³ and I never knew but one person who came up to her in a steady and unchangeable walk. She had a deep conviction of the truths of God, and never once swerved from the point. In the most severe trials she preserved a firmness that was astonishing. As she had a well-informed conscience, she followed its dictates. Nothing could move her from the truth, whether of a religious or of a moral nature. No attachment to friends, however near, could stop her a moment from bearing her testimony against what was blameworthy. No rank or degree weighed with her, if she had a convenient occasion to *speak* (as she called it) for her Master. Let one instance suffice.

A lady of the world was addressed to me to drink the waters at Bristol Wells. She was accompanied by another lady and two sisters: all people of the first rank. I got them lodgings, etc. My second visit convinced me that the sick lady would soon be gone. I endeavoured to speak a little to her, but soon found it was to no purpose. Chagrined and concerned to see them deluding their dying sister, I resolved to take my good old parent in my hand to see her. She went and boldly and pertinently preached Christ to the dying person, who heard her with a kind of anxious attention, at the same time the others were in a rage within. However Mrs. Norman went on as if she had been talking to persons perfectly at

¹James Ireland (1724–1814), a prosperous sugar merchant in Bristol, became one of the most prominent supporters of the Methodist society in Bristol. In October 1749 he married Constant Norman (d. 1769), daughter of John and Mary (Oxford) Norman.

²Mary (Oxford) Norman (1695–1779), the widow of John Norman (d. 1744), who owned a brickyard on St. Philip's Plain in Bristol, where JW preached his first sermon in the open air on Apr. 2, 1739.

³Ireland was her son-in-law, and brought Mary into his home after marrying Constant.

ease; and when she had delivered her message, we left them. But they expressly desired to see her no more, and indeed there was no need of it, for I think the next day the lady died.

She was of such a just turn of mind, accompanied with a perpetual application to the throne of grace, that it was a great privilege to be known to her. As soon as she heard of anything wrong in any minister or friend, she instantly spread it before God, but never exposed the persons.

She was of no sect or party. All that feared God were her friends. All that loved him, she loved. And if ever she was insulted or used ill, she never railed, but carried the matter before God. And I may add that, although I have frequently seen her much tried and disturbed, yet she was always preserved from open anger, and would, if possible, immediately retire to prayer.

She was of an active, industrious spirit, and could not bear idleness or uncleanness. In this she persevered to her last day, doing everything for herself, and never gave way to the least indulgence. She was even the servant of all, and never failed to be the friend of the poor, and nothing could give her greater delight than to visit them. And when she could not go out to visit them, she embraced every opportunity of exhorting the beggars who came to the door.

Her stated times of prayer were four: in the morning before she came down, at twelve o'clock, again about four or five, and at night. But when sickness, or any public calamity occurred, every breath (if I may be allowed thus to speak) was prayer, for she always lived in the spirit of prayer.

She was a lover of the king, often lamented the public affairs, and saw very clearly the error of his opposers and the great delusion of those who name the name of Christ and yet oppose a peaceful government. As she seldom read anything but the Scriptures (and those some hours most days) or some very few things of a practical nature, all her judgment of men and things was drawn from the word of God. Therefore she appealed on all occasions to the law and to the testimony.

About the 9th of January our children were taken ill of a fever. The youngest, after suffering eight days was left for dead. Neither physician or friend had the smallest hope that it could recover. But this dear soul never gave it up, and I suppose had received a promise for it from her Master, as the child recovered according to her hope. No sooner was it out of danger than dear Mrs. Norman was seized with the same disorder, and so violently that she had not strength to dislodge the phlegm. She immediately said she was going home. 'Now', said she, 'I shall soon see him whom my soul loveth, and I have nothing to do but to die, and his holy will be done!' As we could not give her up, we hoped she would be restored again. But she begged we would not keep her back by our prayers, and exhorted us to go on and we should soon meet to part no more. She spoke with great assurance of her future happiness, and of what the Lord had done for her. 'Therefore', said she, 'let none despair, seeing he found out me, the vilest of sinners.'

In short, she had been for many years in [John] Bunyan's land of Beulah, where the singing of birds is ever heard; or in other words, where the peace of God flows as a river, and assurance never fails. Her faith was always strong, and if Satan did assault her, she flew to her stronghold and her foe was always foiled.

She would have no window curtains to her chamber, the shutters were sufficient. 'For', said she, 'I like to look out of my window every night, to see my Saviour's works in the heavens; to contemplate, anticipate, and wish for the time of my dear Saviour's coming in the clouds. O how should I rejoice to see him this very hour!'

She spoke much in her sickness as she did in health, and the substance of her words were the same, encouraging saints to press forward and sinners to turn to God. She did not suffer much in her dissolution, but always said, 'The will of the Lord be done! I desire to lie as clay in his hands. He knows what is best for me. I leave the whole matter to him.'

As she thus trusted in the Lord, he was indeed gracious to her. She never kept her bed, and was able to help herself till the last day. She never ceased to exalt her Saviour, but ever testified his goodness to all who came near her, and often spake for her dear Lord till she was quite spent.

She said many precious things to those who came to visit her. We begged her departing prayers and blessing, which she gave with such a heavenly look that it overwhelmed me. Seeing me affected, she lovingly reprov'd me and said, 'Let me go home to my Master! I long to be gone! O he is a precious

Saviour! I find him so! He does not leave me in an hour of distress! I cannot express what I feel! Follow on and never grow weary, and you shall reap in due time!’

On Friday morning the 29th of January we were called about three o’clock, having left her about twelve quite composed; but she was then dying. I said to her, ‘You are going to him whom your soul loveth; give me your parting blessing.’ On this she lifted up her eyes and smiled, and then fell asleep in Jesus.

I am, with great respect, most affectionately yours,

J. Ireland

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 240–45.

From the Rev. Peter Lièvre

[Deptford]
February 13, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I am entirely laid up an invalid. I can scarce move even in my bed. My legs are much inflamed and swollen. My hands likewise are in such agonies that they prevent me sleeping by night. Yet still I can say, 'My Lord has made my bed in my sickness. In pain I can bless him, and in anguish I can triumph in his love.'¹

The blessed Jesus loves me *severely*, and I find my heart bound to him by ten thousand ties. I would not be without this dispensation, nor have the least wish to be eased from pain, because I am well persuaded my heavenly Father chastises in love, and that his loving correction will not last one hour longer than *his* glory and *my* good are concerned. Would he call me into the valley of the shadow of death, how would my raptured soul triumph to follow the Captain of my salvation—yea, even through hell itself, should he but lead the way! My soul loves him, and wishes to spend and be spent in his pleasant service.

If you could conveniently, I should be exceeding happy to see you, whom I have been always taught to look upon as my father and friend. But whether I do or not, I hope to remain, reverend sir,

Your affectionate nephew,

Peter Lievre

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 274.

¹Cf. Ps. 41:1–3.

From the Rev. John Kennedy¹

Everton, [near²] Biggleswade
February 20, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As I shall not return to town till you have left it, duty and affection unitedly urge this token of respect.

Pursuant to your kind direction, in the favour addressed to me at Bradley,³ I have aimed in my present sphere of action to do all the good I can at and near Everton, and believe I have not laboured in vain. I have found a very simple people in many places, both in this and the neighbouring counties. And I see grounds for hoping that a day is coming when love and union will be restored, the deep things of God prevail, and as you expressed it, 'a new period commence in the Christian world'.⁴

Every day convinces me more fully that misconception and misapprehension have greatly hindered the work of God; and that there has been a zeal without discretion, which instead of removing the obstacles, has only tended to block up the way. My own observation, in my present circuit, affords me many convincing proofs that in the present state of things it is not controversial arguments but fundamental truths, plainly and simply proposed, and affectionately urged in a scriptural manner, which most powerfully conquers prejudice and most effectually dispels the clouds of ignorance. Having laid the sure foundation on the plan of the gospel, the holiness which it proposes has in itself such an intrinsic excellence, is so worthy of God, and so suited to the desires and wants of the *truly simple*, that it is received everywhere *by them* with eagerness.

I make allowances for pre-conceived prejudices. I suffer their oddities of expression to pass unnoticed. I am careful never to raise a ferment in the mind, by disputation or the appearance of controversy. I see it is our part to bear, to suffer, and to forgive, and that this will have the force of ten thousand arguments. I never, in public or in private, open my lips against any man or any body of men who differ from me. I rail at no systems or opinions; but propose, as I am able, what I conceive to be essential truths, in their own native purity. I never *hackney* the name of Jesus, yet never fail to teach him as the sole meritorious cause of a sinner's acceptance and justification, and upon this foundation aim to build the grand superstructure with gold, silver, and precious stones.

I am not without opposition. The bigot, the zealot, the worldly-minded are far from saying 'Rabbi'. I hear from them a variety of objections. But among the simple-hearted I find the divine message is cordially embraced, and raises a fervency of desire after divine experience.

I am informed that Rowland Hill says of me, 'Another is escaped out of the snare.' I pray God all were escaped out of that snare which the devil has but too successfully spread. Then would bitterness, wrath, clamour, and evil-speaking cease, with all malice. But as to religious principles, I think I can assure you, sir, I am in no danger of a change. I have as much Calvinism now as I had a year ago, and that is not one millionth part of a scruple. I hope to live and die in connexion with the Methodists, whose system of doctrine and discipline I embraced upon the fullest and maturest deliberation, as persuaded it was truly scriptural. But I have observed some hindrances that have prevented our being so united and thriving a people as might be expected from the privileges we enjoy.

I have sometimes thought, sir, of pointing them out to you; but often have feared I might be judged assuming, impertinent, and self-sufficient. And yet perhaps a person of inferior note or rank has sometimes the best opportunity of observing things as they are. People are not so industriously in earnest to put on their best appearances before us, as they consider our approbation or disapprobation of very

¹Rev. John Kennedy (1698–1782), rector of All Saints, Bradley, near Ashbourne, Derbyshire, was currently engaged in evangelistic outreach in the Everton-Biggleswade area.

²Inserted by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴Apparently citing JW's letter.

little consequence, and we see causes and effects that are carefully and studiously concealed from others. And as some rules and order, etc. are adapted for things as they appear,⁵ and not as they really are, what are designed for helps prove the reverse.

Should God spare our lives, it is most probable sir I shall not see you till the Conference. But I hope and believe it will ever be a part of my happiness to live in filial and obedient love. And your instructions and directions will, I trust, on all occasions be received and followed with particular and dutiful attention by, dear sir,

Your son and servant in the gospel,

John Kennedy

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 274–77.

⁵Orig., ‘appear, and that in truth be’; shortened by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

From Alexander M'Nab (autobiography)

London
March 1, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Though there is not anything out of the common line in my life, yet according to your desire I send you an account of the most material circumstances of it. If it prove any way serviceable to the followers of Jesus, I shall be indifferent to the opinion which others may form of it.

I was born in the parish of Killin, in the shire of Perth, North Britain, in the year 1745. My parents, who were much respected in the country, removed to the city of Edinburgh when I was but four years old. Here they kept me at school till I was about fourteen, and gave me as good an education as their circumstances would admit of. At this time an uncle of mine, who was a seafaring man, being to go abroad, I resolved to go with him. This grieved my parents, especially my mother, who being very tender of me was deeply distressed upon the account of it. They offered me my choice of any trade in the city, rather than I should leave them. But as I was resolved to *see the world*, their kind entreaties could not alter my purpose. For this act of self-will I feel myself ashamed, and have reason to ask pardon both of God and man.

Being between three and four years at sea, most of which time I spent in the Mediterranean, under the care of my uncle, who had a respectable station in the ship, I enjoyed singular advantages. He paid great attention to my morals, and thereby preserved me from many sins into which I otherwise might have run. He likewise took much pains to improve my education, especially in those branches which relate to the sea. Indeed, he behaved to me in every respect as a father, in all which I see the kind hand of providence.

Before this period I had many deep impressions of religion. One day coming from school, when I was not more than seven years old, I was thinking, 'What is God?' Suddenly an awful impression of *his immensity* rested upon my mind. I thought I saw and felt God in everything about me; yet it did not fill me with dread, but rather with a pleasing solemnity. A year or two after this, when I was separate from my companions after play, I was deeply convinced of my being a very great sinner. I did not think there was such another upon earth. I wished to be in the state of any person, rather than in my own. Yet in a few days I shook off this conviction.

During the time I was at sea I often felt myself under the displeasure of God. My sins at those seasons were my greatest burden. My life was quite miserable on their account. If the whole world had been at my disposal, I would have given it all for an opportunity of opening my mind to a pious person, but such an one I could not find. At these seasons I cried earnestly to God for mercy, but my ignorance of Christ, and the repetition of sin, soon banished every religious impression from my heart.

In the year 1763 my uncle and I returned to Edinburgh, where I continued those studies which relate to the sea, fully intending to continue in that way of life. At that time my convictions were renewed. One Lord's Day, while in the midst of my companions, I was in a moment convinced of the sinfulness of profaning the Sabbath by absenting myself from the house of God in the afternoon. I found myself filled with shame and fear, and resolved never to omit public worship on that day again. That summer I spent some months with my relations in the Highlands. At a sacramental occasion which occurred at a neighbouring parish I found my heart drawn out in desire after God. Religion appeared amiable in my eye. Religious character became more agreeable to me than they had ever been. I now loved to read the Bible, and to pray to God, according to the faint light I had. These good impressions were much deepened upon my return to Edinburgh by reading some books of piety, which were providentially put in my way. About October I was invited to hear the Methodists, and as both the name and the account I received of them were entirely *new* to me, I resolved from motives of curiosity to visit their assembly. The easy manner in which the preacher (Mr. [James] Kershaw) explained the Scripture, the singing of hymns by the congregation, and the spirit of devotion which ran through all I saw and heard pleased me much. I therefore went again next morning and evening; became a constant hearer from that day; and finding myself much profited, soon became a member of the society.

I now began to feel such trials as I never experienced before. I was inwardly tempted to question the being of a God, and the authenticity of the Scriptures. My mind was greatly perplexed by doubts concerning the divinity of Jesus Christ. But what puzzled me most of all was a fear that I had committed the unpardonable sin. These temptations had nearly torn up by the roots all my religious desires and designs. But it was not long before a merciful God delivered me, partly by reading, meditation, and prayer; but chiefly by hearing his word. One night I well remember, I went in great heaviness of mind to hear Mr. [Robert] Roberts preach. The representation he gave us of the goodness of God broke down my heart in penitential sorrow, entirely released me from the temptations I had long grappled with, and produced in my soul such a fervency of love to God as I never had any conception of before. I found such delight in God as I was unable to express, which continued with me several days. And I believe that, in after-seasons of deadness, I must have renounced religion entirely had it not been for the strong recollection of the reality and pleasure of it in this instance.

Upon my joining the society, I likewise met with some outward trials. The person who formerly recommended the Methodists so strongly to me, now attempted to dissuade me from any further connection with them. And some of my relations, especially my uncle, were exceedingly grieved, and frequently told me that if I continued to follow *these men* I must certainly be ruined. My friends had no objection to my being *moderately* religious, but they were altogether unwilling that I should be a Methodist. But none of these things moved me. The pain I had felt in the want of religion, and the comfort I had lately found in the enjoyment of it, determined me at all events to devote myself heartily to the service of God!

Under all my trials, inward and outward, I was much strengthened by the company of a young man, a cousin of mine, who had been at sea with me under the care of my uncle. He was prevailed upon by me to hear our preachers; was convinced of sin under Mr. [Christopher] Hopper, the first sermon he heard; and immediately resolved upon a religious life. He being now my constant companion, a peculiar friendship subsisting between us, and our religious experience agreeing in almost every particular, we were very serviceable to each other in all our trials. And I have the comfort to find that, having tasted the Lord is gracious, he continues to walk with Jesus to this day.

In the beginning of summer 1764 I found a deadness to the things of God gradually stealing on me, till I seemed to lose all sensibility of them. I had power over all outward sin, and continued to use all the means of grace as diligently as ever. But I found no spirit in them! At last I became quite dissatisfied with myself. And I believe that at this time I would have renounced religion entirely, had it not been for the lively remembrance I had of its reality and comfort in the impressions it had formerly made on my heart, and that I had a faint hope that a good God would yet cause the dry bones to live.¹

The winter following the Lord began to revive his work in my soul—not indeed as before, in comfort; but with terror. My conscience rose up against me as an armed man. The corruptions of my heart operated more strongly than ever. I found my nature full of enmity against God, his being, his law, his gospel, and his providence. I was a terror to myself, and often upon the verge of despair. I had no doubt but that God, for the sake of Jesus, could pardon my past sins. But I could not conceive how I could be delivered from my wicked heart, under which I groaned continually. I frequently repeated,

Nor can my wretched heart conceive,
How God himself so far can save!

I believe that for months together I was hardly an hour awake, in which I was not employed either in reasoning against myself or crying to God for mercy. Had it not been for some gleams of comfort which he was pleased occasionally to dart into my mind, I must unavoidably have either sunk into despondency or plunged again into the world. The painful exercises of my mind were so great as

¹Cf. Ezek. 37:1–14.

considerably to affect my body. 'My soul *seemed* to draw nigh unto the grave, and my life unto the destroyers.'²

In this state I was, when I heard Dr. Erskine describe the way of salvation by Jesus Christ more clearly than I had ever seen it before.³ I was amazed at the light which shone upon my mind, by which I saw the excellency of the Redeemer in a far higher point of view than had been usual to me; and I found my heart closing in with him as my Saviour! This left a sweet savour of religion upon my mind, removed the hard thoughts I had of God, and afforded me greater freedom at the throne of grace. Yet it was not long before, through evil reasonings and unbelief, I fell into deep distress of mind again. I did not find my heart so changed as I expected, and therefore was tempted to think that the Lord had forgotten to be gracious to me.

In this state of perplexity I continued till June 1765, when, like a mariner in a storm brought to his wit's end, I knew not what to think. Just then, I awoke one morning with these words in my mind, 'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon them!'⁴ They were attended with such light and power as hardly left a doubt of their coming from God. By means of them God appeared more amiable and glorious than before. My mind became easier in itself, and stronger to resist Satan's temptations. And I found much delight in the ways of religion. But still I could not believe I was in the favour of God, because I did not find my heart renewed in holiness. This paved the way for unbelief. The promises of gospel I could not apply to myself, and therefore I soon found myself in as much distress of mind as ever. Being now stripped of all, I was willing to be saved *when* and *how* God pleased. My soul sunk down, and cried, 'Save, Lord, or I perish!'⁵

In this state I was when, hearing Mr. Kershaw, I found an uncommon change in my mind. A heavenly peace and sweetness rested upon my spirit. All my guilty fears were gone, and I had a confidence in God as *my* Father. and in Jesus as *my* Saviour! I had not much joy, but my soul rested in peace. This sacred influence, attended with increasing light, continued in my mind for three weeks, when I clearly perceived the work of sanctification begun in my soul. I could therefore now believe I was in the favour of God, and found the peace of God in my conscience, the love of God in my heart, and my spirit ardently breathing for the whole image of Jesus. I could daily call 'Jesus Lord by the Holy Ghost',⁶ and the frequent application of the promises to my mind greatly strengthened my faith. All the works of nature now bespoke the presence and goodness of God to me. The ordinances of his house were my delight. His law, as well as his gospel, I esteemed inestimably precious. And my heart was filled with pity towards my fellow creatures who knew not Jesus!

Since that time, dear sir, my experience has been mixed with pleasure and pain. The dispensations of God's providence and grace have had a tendency to show me my need of wisdom, strength, and holiness. The interpositions of his power, wisdom, and goodness have often appeared in my behalf, and his light and peace I have ever found to be my greatest joy.

It was not long after the Lord had delivered my soul from death that Mr. Kershaw appointed me to meet a class. And though I was but a babe, both in knowledge and grace, yet the Lord was pleased to make me serviceable to those who met with me.

In June 1766 I was called to a larger sphere of action, by being unexpectedly appointed to speak in public. A congregation had been appointed to meet at a small village three miles from the city. The preacher who was to have gone thither was unavoidably hindered, and there was not any other to supply his place. I therefore was called upon, and pressed not to suffer the congregation to be disappointed. And

²Cf. Ps. 88:3.

³Rev. Dr. John Erskine (1721–1803), an evangelical Calvinist of the Church of Scotland, was pastor of the Old Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh.

⁴Cf. Isa. 60:1.

⁵Cf. Matt. 8:25.

⁶Cf. 1 Cor. 12:3.

though I had a desire to speak in the name of Jesus, yet the fear lest my abilities were not equal to the task gave me much uneasiness. However, as I thought it might be a call from God, with fear and trembling I made the attempt, and found more liberty and comfort than I expected. After the service was over my soul was blessed with an uncommon degree of peace and love. The name of Christ left a sweetness upon my spirit. My ideas of the kingdom of Jesus were larger, and my desire for the propagation of it among men became stronger than I had ever known them before. As soon as I had thus begun I received frequent invitations to different places, so that I soon had employment enough upon my hands; and I believe that my labour in this way was not altogether in vain.

In August the Conference was at Leeds, when Mr. [Thomas] Taylor sent you, sir, an account of me, recommending me to be put on trial for a travelling preacher. This he did without my knowledge, and therefore I was greatly surprised when he informed me you had appointed me to the Newcastle circuit. As I thought this also might be a call from God, I got to the place of my appointment as soon as I conveniently could. Here I continued two months, and was useful in the conversion of some and in the comfort of others. I then, sir, by your desire removed to London. And from thence you took me with you into Bedfordshire, where an additional preacher was wanted, and where I continued till August. Here I was strongly tempted to desert the work, and at times was almost fixed in my resolution of writing to you to send another preacher in my place. I was, however, encouraged to continue from one time to another by the Lord's condescending to bless my weak labours to the conviction and conversion of some souls, and by the people's behaving in a Christian and friendly manner to me.

At the London Conference 1767 I was examined and received into full connexion as a travelling preacher. That year I was sent into the Canterbury circuit, where I had reason to rejoice in my labour.

Having made an excursion into Sussex, I was seized with a malignant fever at the Rev. Mr. [Vincent] Perronet's. I have reason to praise God for having cast my lot in that blessed family. No pains or expense were spared to recover me. I was every way treated as if I had been one of their own family. The pious examples which were there set before me were, I hope, as serviceable to my soul as their care was beneficial to my body.

The next year I went to Norwich, where God was pleased to set his seal to my labours, and greatly comforted my own soul. The summer following I was removed to Aberdeen, in Scotland, where I spent the year, as I did the following in Glasgow. In these two years I was called to preach at new places, and have reason to believe I was made useful to some souls.

At the Conference 1771 I was stationed in the Tandragee circuit, in the North of Ireland. Though the people here are naturally of a friendly disposition, and were kind to me to the utmost of their power, yet in this circuit I suffered greater hardships than my constitution could bear; and, from various causes, I had many painful exercises of mind. The former part of the year was, therefore, spent very uncomfortably. But the latter made amends for all my former trials, for I saw some fruit of my labours. My own soul was blessed with an uncommon degree of peace and love. Through grace, I obtained a deeper acquaintance with religion, and enjoyed more of the presence of God, than I had ever experienced before—though my body was so weak that I could but just get to the Edinburgh circuit, where I spent the next year in comfort.

In August 1773 I was ordered to Londonderry, where God was pleased to bless me in increasing and, I hope, strengthening that society.

The two following years I spent in Dublin, where I have reason to believe I was blest to many souls; and am persuaded would have been more abundantly so, had it not been for some discontented men in the society. These, under the influence of prejudice, strove to do me all the hurt they could. And they too far succeeded in restraining my usefulness, as they had done of that of many of my brethren before me.

The next two years I spent in Edinburgh. Here God has been pleased to give me favour in the eyes of my countrymen, and to bless my labours to many out of the society, as well as in it. In this place I was called to bear a burden the like of which I never felt before. Our chapel, which had been built but twelve years, was found to be in a ruinous condition. Things also were so circumstanced that I was obliged to become bound for the expense of the repairs, or our interest in that city must have been ruined.

I soon found myself debtor for five hundred pounds. But as I had taken that burden upon me purely for the sake of religion, I was persuaded the God of providence would deliver me from it. I was also confident, that you, sir, together with my brethren at the Conference, and our people at large, would give me every possible assistance. In this I have not been disappointed. For, through the blessing of God and the liberality of our people, I have been entirely released from that obligation. And I have the comfort to find that we have now a better prospect of doing good in that city than ever we had before.

At the Leeds Conference 1778 I was desired to visit the southern societies in England, as I had those in the north before, and to request the assistance of our brethren there also for the chapel in Edinburgh. Though this task, in some respects, was far from being agreeable to me, yet in others I found it very serviceable. Among other things, the liberality of our brethren has given me a more favourable opinion of them. By seeing the societies, from one end of the kingdom to the other, I have been convinced of the reality and preciousness of the religion of Jesus! I could not help seeing that it is calculated to make the ignorant, wise; the sinful, holy; and the miserable, happy! This has had a tendency to confirm my faith, and to persuade me more firmly than ever that the cause I am engaged in, is the cause of God!

It is my earnest desire that the truth as it is in Jesus may more abundantly prevail in my own heart, and that it may abound in the world, till the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

That you may long continue your former usefulness; yea, and abound therein more and more, is the earnest desire, reverend sir, of

Your affectionate son in the gospel of Christ,

Alexander M'Nab

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 240–49.

From the Rev. J. B.

[Great Yarmouth]

March 6, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I earnestly wish to add one to your numerous correspondents. But as we had little opportunity for conversation on subjects of a private nature when I had the pleasure of seeing you at my house in Yarmouth,¹ it may be necessary in the first place to give you some account of myself.

I was born in Scotland. My father died when I was about two years and a half old. My mother was a pious and lively Christian; and though a Calvinist, she was very liberal in her sentiments. By her my infant tongue was early taught to speak my great Redeemer's praise.

I was early admitted to be a communicant in the Church of Scotland. But afterwards, when I began seriously to consider the nature of the gospel, I was shocked at the idea of a *partial redemption*, and joined at the age of seventeen in communion with the Church of England.

This change of sentiments was occasioned by reading some of your books, and frequently conversing on the subject of predestination with my good friend, the Rev. Mr. Sievwright, minister of the chapel in Brechin.² In London I was still more fully established in Arminian principles by reading Mr. [John] Fletcher's works, and frequently hearing and conversing with my worthy friend Mr. Harrison,³ who often preached against that uncharitable doctrine of predestination, then so zealously maintained by Mr. [Augustus] Toplady and others.

I have frequently implored Almighty God, who giveth wisdom to all that ask him, to grant me the discerning eye and the understanding heart, that I might know the mind of the Spirit. And I know no person with whom I more exactly correspond in religious sentiments than with you, who have done so much good in your day and generation. God grant I may be animated by your example!

The religious principles in which I was educated, have hitherto, by divine grace, preserved me from falling into any gross acts of sin; so that I generally have been esteemed by others as a pious, well-disposed young man. But I am too deeply conscious of my innate depravity to think highly of myself. But by divine grace I hope to know the full salvation of Jesus, and to devote my time and talents to his glory. I cannot, however, but lament that natural enmity of the world to religion, which frequently throws cold water on the divine flame when it begins to kindle in my breast. I have not been so zealous for the Lord of hosts as I ought. In short, my present situation is such that I do not grow in grace, which frequently creates uneasiness in my mind. I am much concerned for the neglect of religion amongst my brethren. And sorry I am to say it, I see very little religion in England, except amongst the Methodists. And even amongst the Calvinistical part of them, the fruits of the Spirit appear to be wanting. I would therefore beg your patronage and friendship, together with an interest in your prayers, and hope you will pray that he who hath begun a good work in me will carry it on and finish it, that I may not be wanting in the day of Christ. In so doing, you will greatly oblige, reverend and very dear sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant in the Lord,

J. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 329–30.

¹JW had preached in Great Yarmouth on Feb. 17, 1779; see *Journal, Works*, 23:117.

²Rev. Norman Sievwright (1727–90) served as minister of the English chapel at Brechin in Scotland for over forty years.

³Likely Rev. Richard Harrison (c. 1736–93), who had been a preacher at St. Martin-in-the-fields since 1765 and a lecturer at Magdalen Hospital. When he was named rector of St. John's Clerkenwell in 1787 he invited JW to preach a charity sermon there; see JW, *Journal*, Dec. 16, 1787, *Works*, 24:68.

From Mr. A. B.

Darlaston
March 20, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Not knowing of the *Arminian Magazine* till within these few weeks, I have only had the opportunity of reading the first number. When I came to the letters, as I was reading that of your mother's concerning the fire in your father's house, those words of his which she has mentioned—viz., 'Come neighbours, let us kneel down! Let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children, ...',¹ I found them to be better bread to me (though it had long lain on the water) than a thousand old predestinarian-decrees. 'All my eight children' – this ran so in my mind, that I could not refrain from reasoning thus: Is man so loving to *his* offspring that he can by no means consent that one, out of all he has, should be lost or hurt? Could not the good man (your father) praise God, and call his neighbours to help him, till his *last* child was out of danger! From whence had he this universal principle of paternal tenderness? Undoubtedly from him who is loving to *every man*, and whose tender mercies are over *all his works*. And this principle is *so universal* that neither good men nor bad men can consent that any of their offspring should be wretched, much less be destroyed. But on the other hand, when *any one of them* is in trouble or danger, they are sure to find compassion in the bosom of their father. And as a father pitieth his children, *even so* doth the Lord pity them that fear him—and I may add, every soul that he has made. Hence he swears by his own life that he has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. And hence Christ deplores the case of those who were devoted to destruction, saying 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered thee – but thou wouldst not.'²

Go on then, dear sir, and assert, as hitherto you have done, that the Father of the spirits of all flesh *is good to all his children*. That he is not *willing* that any (one) of them should perish, but would much rather that all would come to repentance. In strenuously asserting this unbounded mercy, this universal grace, this divine benevolence, you will be a worker together with God, and be a welcome messenger to thousands and millions. And to none more so than to

Your affectionate friend and servant in the universal gospel of Christ,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 331–32.

¹See *AM* 1 (1778): 31–33.

²Matt. 23:37.

From John Furz

Plymouth Dock
March 26, 1779

Reverend Sir,

This day coming here, I was informed of one J. H. who was afflicted with a very uncommon disorder, which had puzzled several physicians, and every other person who saw her, to account for it. At last a French doctor came to see her, who said, 'No medicines will be of any use to her. It must be a minister, but not such ministers as you have commonly in this place. It must be one that hath something here' pointing to his breast. Some who saw her imagined it to be St. Vitus' dance;¹ but others supposed she was possessed by an evil spirit.

The manner in which she was afflicted was as follows: her right hand was strongly agitated, with which she violently beat her breast and her head. The agitation she was in one night at brother Walters' house was such that she shook a strong wooden chair to pieces.²

Hearing that I was expected in town, she came to Mr. Thomas's where I lodged, labouring and striking herself with her right hand all the time she was there. The motion was such that I think few persons could imitate it.

Looking upon her, and beholding her with the utmost pity, I asked if she had been made a partaker of the grace of God? She said she had known her sins forgiven [for] five years, and had constantly assembled with the people of God. And I was informed by others also that she has been a sincere follower of Christ ever since she knew him, walking in all his ordinances and commandments blameless, and embracing every opportunity of doing good to her fellow-creatures.

As I believed God would hear us on her behalf, I prayed for her in the house, and did the same in the congregation before preaching, while she was present beating herself very violently. But while I was describing the great salvation that God wrought out for the children of Israel, and was repeating those words of Moses, 'Behold, God is our salvation',³ she believed that he would help her. And according to her faith, so it was. For she was delivered from her plague in that moment! Under which she had laboured many weeks.

It is now four days since she was healed and [she] remains perfectly well, to the astonishment of all who know her. The day after her deliverance she told me that she had then as clear a sense of the favour of God as she had when she was first justified.

I am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

John Furz

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 332–33.⁴

¹A disorder characterized by rapid, uncoordinated jerking movements primarily affecting the face, hands, and feet.

²Robert Walters (fl. 1780s), a hatter, lived on Queen Street in Plymouth Dock.

³E.g., Exod. 15:2.

⁴JW added the editorial comment: 'N.B. How mysterious are the providential dealings of God with mankind? Even their bodily disorders, how many of these are absolutely past finding out! But be they what they will; be they natural or preternatural, explicable or inexplicable; they shall all work together for good to them that love God.'

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Good Friday [April 2,] 1779

I have served the [City Road] chapel morning and evening, and met the society every other week since you left us. I think myself bound so to do as long as I can, both by my duty as a clergyman, and by our agreement when the chapel was first opened. We agreed to fill the pulpit there as often as we could, especially at the beginning, till the congregation was settled. Many of the subscribers you know were not of our society, yet of the Church [of England]. Out of good-will to them and to the Church, not out of ill-will to the preachers, I wished the Church service continued there.¹

I am sorry you yielded to the preachers.² They do not love the Church of England. What must be the consequence when we are gone? A separation is inevitable. Do you not wish to keep as many good people in the Church as you can? By what means? What can be done now? Something might be done to save the remainder if you had resolution, and would stand by me as firmly as I will by you. Consider what you are bound to as a clergyman; and what you do, do quickly. You did not expect complaints of me for preaching too often! I cannot long stand in the way of any.

Source: published excerpt; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:372.

¹See the complaints raised about CW monopolizing Sunday services at City Road Chapel in CW to JW, June 16, 1779.

²CW's reticence about City Road chapel sprang from it being the first Methodist chapel used for the full range of worship (including the Eucharist) which had never been sanctioned for such use by the Church of England (like the former Huguenot chapel at West Street, etc.). He was objecting here to JW allowing his (non-ordained) itinerant preachers stationed in London to lead "prayerbook" services at City Road (though none at this time including Eucharist) whenever JW was absent. The frequency of such services by lay-preachers had recently increased with the death of JW's ordained London "curate" John Baynes in 1777, and the failure of Rev. John Abraham to be accepted as a successor in this role.

From Thomas Payne¹

Athlone
April 3, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I preached in seven new places as I came round the circuit in twenty-eight days, and am invited to three more on my return. In Dean Digby's parish² I preached at fourteen places, and afterwards held a love feast.

After we had sung and prayed, and I had begun to speak of the goodness of God, he broke in upon us with his enlightening, drawing, softening, melting, reviving, comforting, pardoning, renewing, and sanctifying influences. On this the mountains became a plain, the rough places became smooth, and the crooked things were made straight!

There was an universal shaking, and in less than two hours eight seekers were born of God. The Day of Eternity enlightened us! The Sun³ of Righteousness sent his fires to warm us! The air of heaven fanned us! The loud voice of the law, from Mount Sinai, prepared us for the small still voice, from Mount Zion! The burden of our sins made us go to Christ for rest! The stains of sin made us run to the fountain of a Saviour's blood for holiness! The master of the feast brought us into his banqueting-house, and his banner over us was love! We were watered with living streams from Lebanon, and drank freely of the springs of eternal life!

The next morning, as I was speaking to a mourner in Sion, God gave her beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.⁴ The same day a young woman (Miss G.), who had left us on account of the scandal of the cross, came weeping and lamenting for her past conduct.

The day following I went to Ballycumber, to Captain Armstrong's,⁵ where I lodged and spent the evening in company with his brother, his brother's wife and daughter, and an attorney (after preaching to three hundred persons in the captain's malt-house). The next morning I preached again at six o'clock, when the counsellor's and captain's families attended. Upon the whole, here is a great prospect of much good, and a general desire that the preaching may be continued.

My wife has been six weeks down in the small-pox, of which my eldest child is dead.⁶ And though the youngest has survived, yet it is very sickly. But in all, blessed be God, I have not found one anxious thought; being fully persuaded that God does all things well. My wife, who has gained much good by this affliction, joins in love and thankfulness to you; particularly for the five guineas you sent us, which were a means of saving her life. On which, and other accounts, I remain,

Yours affectionately,

T. Payne

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 385–86.

¹Thomas Payne (1741–83), a native of Gloucestershire, converted after some years in business, was admitted on trial as an travelling preacher in 1772 (*Works*, 10:406) and served faithfully until his death in 1783 (see 10:431; and the account of his death to JW by Charles Boone, Mar. 13, 1783). He sent JW autobiographical reflections in a letter dated Mar. 16, 1781 (in this collection); which also appear in Jackson, *EMP* 2:277–94.

²Orig., 'Dean-digby'; corrected by JW in his personal copy of *AM*. The reference is likely to Geashill, Co. Offaly, where Essex Digby (d. 1683) was rector, before becoming Dean of Cashel.

³Orig., 'Son'; corrected by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

⁴See Isa. 61:3.

⁵Apparently George Armstrong (1734–80).

⁶Payne married a woman named Margaret while stationed as a soldier on the island of St. Helena.

From Benjamin Rhodes (autobiography)

April 20, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I was born at Kexbrough, a little town in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in the year 1743. My father, who taught a school in the town, had the external parts of religion before he heard the Methodists. He used family and private prayer, read the Scriptures and other books of devotion in his family daily, and frequently instructed, exhorted, and catechized his children. By this discipline we were restrained from many evils, taught the fear of the Lord, and, in some measure, to seek that which is good.

Before I was eleven years of age, I went with my father to Birstall, to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield. I found my soul deeply affected under the word. At first I had a kind of terror, but before the sermon was ended my heart was melted into tenderness and sweetly drawn after God. Yet a few months after this a propensity to foolish pleasures sprung up in my breast, and drew me into childish vanities.

At about twelve years of age I took a walk one evening into a large, thick wood, not far from the town. I left the path and wandered in the thickest part of it, till I was entirely lost. Night began to close in upon me, and I did not know which way to turn my face towards home. It soon became quite dark. I then gave over rambling, and intended to have remained there till the morning, when I hoped to find my way out. In this situation I found my former impressions begin to return with much sweetness. My soul was drawn out in prayer. I was deeply sensible of the presence of God. My heart overflowed with penitential tenderness. And, under a deep sense of my own unworthiness, and of his goodness, mercy, and love, I sang and prayed with much fervour. Yea, I was so thankful that the Lord had found me, while lost in a wood, that I would not for all the world have missed such an opportunity. My parents, being alarmed at my not returning at the usual time, made great search for me. At last my father came to the woodside, and called aloud. I soon heard him and, following the sound, got out about midnight, without receiving any hurt. The impressions I received this night lasted for some time; but youthful pleasures again prevailed, and drew me into such follies as grieved the Spirit of God and greatly damped the fervour of my own spirits.

I was chiefly at home with my father till I was sixteen years of age, and mostly attended the school. I had great opportunities of improvement, both in learning and religion. But my volatile spirits did not love study and confinement. The love of pleasure prevailed over my judgment; and, though my vain enjoyments were rendered very painful, from my father's displeasure and the terrors of my conscience, yet my attachments to them made me careless about things profitable and prevented such an improvement as might have been made.

About this time my father put me out to learn some branches in the wool and worsted business. His chief motive in placing me where he did was that I might be under the means of grace. And though I attended the preaching constantly, heartily believed the doctrine, and often felt the power of the word, yet I was so much taken up with pleasure, and those companions who led me from seriousness and religion, that at last, as with a flood, I was carried away—not indeed into gross sins (for I do not remember that I ever swore one oath, or took God's name into my mouth upon a light occasion) but into foolish company, gaiety, and youthful vanities. But in my foolish career I was like the troubled sea. The more I sought to please myself in vanity, the further I was from it. And sometimes my conscience terrified me almost to distraction, so that I have been afraid to sleep, lest I should awake in endless misery. All this time my understanding was clearly informed respecting the nature and the necessity of religion, and I felt great reverence for it. None can tell the struggles I had in my breast, between my conscience and my inclinations. Sometimes one and sometimes the other was obeyed. I knew I could not be truly religious without parting with all that is contrary to seriousness, and without having the bent of my mind turned from vanity to God. Neither did I make any pretensions to it, as I had not a fixed determination to forsake all and follow Christ.

When I was about nineteen I thought myself most miserable. I was quite sick of vanity, and so burdened with a sense of it on my conscience that I could not find rest day or night. I then began to think on the mercy and goodness of God which had been so abundantly made manifest to me in times past. But

my follies so reproached me that I was ashamed to look up. I then found a willingness to be saved in God's way and, groaning in my bondage, prayed, 'Turn thou me, O Lord, and I shall be turned.'¹ The Lord heard, and turned the whole desire of my heart from everything earthly unto himself. It was then I found such relentings of soul as I had not done before. Nothing affected me more than a sense of God's long-suffering, mercy, and goodness; that, after I had so often refused his calls, quenched his Spirit, and abused his blessings, yet I no sooner cried to him than he heard and delivered me from the servitude of sin, and encouraged me to hope in his mercy. My whole heart was then given up to him. Prayer was now my chief business, and I often sung very feelingly,

Wealth and honour I disdain,
Earthly comforts all are vain,
These can never satisfy,
Give me Christ or else I die.²

In this state I continued several months, desiring and seeking God alone, without much interruption or temptation. About this time I was invited to a private meeting among the Calvinists. The minister spoke much of the power of imagination, and what a deluded people the Methodists were, and warned his flock not to come near them. I was greatly bewildered and terrified at this. I began to suspect that my call to religion, and the change in my mind, were only delusion. I also was tempted to think that all who professed religion were like myself. I was carried so far as to doubt of Christianity, and of the being of a God! I thought: the greatest part of the world consisted of heathens, Mahometans, and Jews; the popish religion is almost as idolatrous as the pagan; there are but few Protestant Christians; and but very few of these who act consistent with the doctrines of Christianity. These thoughts increased my infidelity, till I was almost distracted. Darkness and horror sat brooding upon my mind, together with a gloomy fear of falling into nothing, or worse than nothing, at death. I hated life; and though tempted, yet afraid to venture on death. I had no power to pray. I only wished for a dark retreat, where I might converse with darkness and misery alone.

In this 'horrible pit'³ I groaned for deliverance, yet was not sensible of a Deliverer near. At last I found power to look up. My heart began to melt, and the spirit of prayer returned. I cried, and the Lord heard. The darkness began to disperse. Hope again visited my soul. Yea, it increased, attended with a degree of confidence in God, till the 'Sun of righteousness arose, with healing in his wings'.⁴ I beheld 'the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world';⁵ and had such a sense of the sufficiency of his atonement as I had not had before, with a conviction that I was interested therein. All my fears and doubts disappeared. I found the peace of God. His love was manifested to me, which caused me to love him again. Joy and gratitude now so possessed my heart that my cup was ready to run over. And my soul, being freed from all its bondage, said, 'God is become my salvation.'⁶ Now my infidel fears were gone, and the truths of Christianity appeared to me in the clearest light. Not only my understanding *saw*, but all my powers *felt* the truth thereof. I had a deep sense of a present God, whom I approached, in the name of Jesus, with reverential awe, confidence, gratitude, and love, and could call him, 'my God and my all'.

¹Cf. Jer. 31:18.

²[William Hammond?], 'Hymn on Canticles 2:5', st. 3, in Charles Bradbury, *A Collection of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs* (London: M. Lewis, 1757), 118.

³Cf. Ps. 40:2.

⁴Cf. Mal. 4:2.

⁵Cf. John 1:29.

⁶Cf. Exod. 15:2.

In this happy season my joy frequently prevented my sleep, while my soul was taken up with him who is 'altogether lovely'.⁷ And in ecstasies of joy, in the stillness of the night I often sung my great Deliverer's praise. All things earthly appeared so empty that I thought nothing here below worth a thought, only as it tended to promote my eternal interest. I only desired grace and glory. I then began to conclude that my adversaries were quite overthrown, and that I had only to march forward and take possession of the 'land of promise'.⁸ I therefore pressed forward rejoicing for some months. At length, through unwatchfulness, and giving way to levity, my comforts gradually diminished; till, imperceptibly, I was again drawn into a wilderness state. And though I was diligent in the outward means, yet I had lost the pleasing sensations which I formerly had found therein.

About this time I was strongly beset with some Calvinists, who used all the arguments in their power to draw me into the belief of their doctrines. I was almost persuaded to believe 'final perseverance', only I did not see how I could separate it from reprobation. I wished to do it, but could not. I thought, if these must necessarily be saved on whom God begins a good work, then the rest must as necessarily be damned on whom he does not begin it. When I considered 'final perseverance' as it related to myself only, it appeared so pleasant that I hardly could resist it. But when I considered it as a branch of the doctrines of unconditional election and reprobation, it gave me pain and inclined me to renounce it. Reprobation appeared to me quite contrary to the whole purport of Scripture—the nature of a holy, just, and merciful God—the state of man as an accountable creature—and to a future judgment, where rewards and punishments will be dispensed to every man 'according to his works'.⁹ However, my lot being cast among those who held the decrees, I frequently heard the chief arguments that are used in support thereof. Sometimes their arguments appeared so plausible that I began to stagger in my mind, and to be much distressed. I then made it the subject of prayer. And one night, after I had been wrestling with God, that he would lead me into all truth, I dreamed of reading a passage of Scripture which gave me entire satisfaction. I could not remember the passage in the morning, but on opening my Bible the first words I cast my eyes upon were, 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance.' 2 Peter 3:9. Such light and conviction attended the words as removed every doubt of God's loving all mankind. And from that day to this my mind has been established in the comfortable doctrines of universal redemption.

But though I was fixed as to doctrines, yet I did not find, as formerly, such a sweet intercourse with heaven. And foolish desires began to arise again, which formerly seemed to be dead. I had also very powerful temptations, and earthly attachments prevailed too far upon my affections. Yet the hand of the Lord was over me for good, and preserved me from the dangers to which I was exposed.

When I was about the age of twenty-one I heard Mr. [Peter] Jaco preach on Hebrews 12:1. He insisted on the necessity of laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, in order to our running the Christian race. I saw the necessity of it, and was again stirred up. And the Lord once more set me at liberty from every entanglement. In a short time my former comforts returned with more solidity, and my understanding was abundantly matured in the knowledge of the Christian warfare.

About this time I was desired to lead several classes. I found those meetings were both solemn and profitable to myself and others. The first quarter several found a sense of forgiveness, and others were greatly stirred up. I was also desired to speak a word of exhortation. This also I complied with. I now soon found work enough, as many came to hear what I had got to say. Indeed, I have often stood up to speak to a large congregation when I would rather have undergone almost any punishment. However, the Lord gave me strength according to my day. For when I have begun to speak my fear and trembling were quite taken away, and I frequently found much freedom in speaking. And I have reason to believe that the

⁷Cf. Song of Sol. 5:16.

⁸Cf. Heb. 11:9.

⁹Cf. Matt. 16:27.

Lord rendered my weak labours useful, for some were turned from their wickedness to God, some converted, and many stirred up to press forward.

On a Sunday I usually preached at several neighbouring towns, and sometimes visited them on the weekdays.

As the Conference drew near, Mr. Jaco asked me if I was willing to travel, suppose there should be a want of preachers. I found much reluctancy to this, arising from a sense of my insufficiency. And I had such a love to the people where I was that the thought of leaving them gave me great pain. Yet I desired not to be governed by my own inclination, but by the providence of God.

At the Conference held at Leeds, 1766, I was desired to take a circuit, to which I consented. I set out in the twenty-third year of my age, and went into the Norwich circuit, where I stayed two years. The Lord was pleased to own my poor labours here in the conviction and conversion of several souls.

At the Conference in London, 1767, I was taken into full connexion. My second circuit was in Oxfordshire, where I stayed two years. In that time the work of the Lord was enlarged abundantly.

My next remove was to Canterbury, where I stayed one year. While I was here, my father died: since then I have been much in the north, to be near my mother and sisters.

My next remove was into Lincolnshire, where I stayed two years among a poor people, who received the word gladly. We got into some new places, and in other respects God gave me some fruit of my labours! From hence I went to Hull and Scarborough, where I stayed three years. Here we raised several new societies, and in several parts of the circuit the work prospered.

I next went to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I stayed only one year. Here I had many profitable opportunities, and had also the pleasure of seeing some fruits of my labours. From hence I went to Alnwick and Dunbar, where I laboured one year. I had much riding here; but being amongst a people whom I loved, and with whom I laboured comfortably, I thought little of fatigues.

I am now in Sussex and Kent. Since I came into these parts I have lost a sister and mother, who I believe are both gone after my father into Abraham's bosom. But I am left behind, almost the only person out of a large family. But how long or how short my day may be, I leave to unerring Wisdom. One only concern ought to possess me—to employ it as I ought. Then, at the close of it, I also shall sleep in peace and, after a short absence, be with my dear departed friends!

... Thrice happy meeting!
Nor time, nor death, shall ever part us more.¹⁰

I am thankful to God that he ever called me to this blessed work, as by this means I have gained more strength to my own soul, have been of some use to my fellow creatures, have had an opportunity of knowing a little of the world, and of the state of religion amongst the Methodists and others—all which I judge to be more than a reward for what I have done and suffered.

At present there is nothing so precious to me as religion and the cause of God. And my principal desire is to fill up my little sphere, that when I am called to give an account I may do it with joy, and not with sorrow. I am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate son in the gospel,

Benjamin Rhodes

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 358–66.¹¹

¹⁰Cf. Robert Blair, *The Grave*, ll. 760–61.

¹¹This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 6:223–33; along with the biographical comments included in the *Minutes* at the time of Rhodes's death.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

London
April 23, 1779

Dear Brother,

By this time I presume you have read mine to you in Halifax.¹ If it has not reached you, I can send you a copy of it.

I still love T[homas] M[axfield]. I see some advantages to us, as well as him, from his return to us, *provided* he is first convinced. Receive him *unconvinced*, and you will have him to put away again when perhaps it will scarce be in your power.² One more trial if you please we will make upon him, in a conference between us three. Possibly we may gain our brother.

Mr. John Russell³ tells me some of the bitterest Calvinists are reconciled to you for the tract on popery.⁴ It should be spread immediately through the three kingdoms.

I shall be happy to hear you have saved poor William Shent.⁵ [Christopher] Hopper and others will I know draw in their horns while you are talking with them, and be perhaps convinced for a short time. Give them back their first love, and their first poverty, and they will not even wish to reign without us. Peter Jaco, John Atlay and John Pawson might, I hope, be set right by a friendly conference with us. They then would strengthen their brethren, or recover them.

I am clear without a doubt that my sons' concert is after the will and order of providence.⁶ It has established them as musicians, and in a safe and honourable way. The bishop has since sent us word that he has never heard any music he liked so well, and promises Charles five scholars next winter.⁷

Here is a musical child from Norwich whom Sam[uel] cherishes and recommends. He has sent him many customers, so that his mother gets ten pounds a day by them. He has played before their Majesties. We neither envy his gains or his honours. We do not repent that we did not make a show or advantage of our swans. They may still make their fortunes if I would venture them into the world, but I never wish them rich. You also agree with me in this. Our good old father neglected every opportunity of selling our souls to the devil.

Your defect of mistrust needs my excess to guard it. You cannot be taken by storm, but may by surprise. We seem designed for each other. If we could and would be more together it might be better for both.

¹JW was in Halifax Apr. 15–17. It is possible CW means the letter of Apr. 2, of which an extract survives (above). More likely it was a subsequent letter, not known to survive, but similar to CW's letter of April 20 to Rev. Vincent Perronet.

²It had been suggested (perhaps by Vincent Perronet) that Rev. Thomas Maxfield, who had earlier served as an ordained 'curate' for the Methodist chapels in London—until he split from the Wesley brothers over the perfectionist controversy in the 1760s—should be restored to that role (in place of or alongside the independent chapel he was pastoring in London). Perronet shared CW's desire for ordained leadership of worship at City Road and the other chapels; and he was aware that Rev. John Abraham had not proved an acceptable 'curate' to take over after John Baynes's death in 1777.

³John Russell (1711–1804), a printer and mayor of Guildford, was a friend of CW.

⁴JW's *Popery Calmly Considered* had just been published; see *Works*, 14:212–38.

⁵Shent was in significant debt, and JW was leading an appeal for support among the Methodists. See JW to Leeds Society, Jan. 11, 1779, *Works*, 29:465–66.

⁶JW added a note in *AM*: 'I am *clear* of another mind.'

⁷Referring to Robert Lowth (1710–87), who had been installed as Bishop of London in 1777.

Last Sunday Mr. [Martin] Madan preached at the [chapel at] Lock [Hospital] on sudden death. Most of his hearers were in tears while he described the case of poor Miss R[ay].⁸ Some of his words were, 'You who send her to hell for being murdered coming out of a playhouse,⁹ look to yourselves, judge yourselves and think charitably of her. How are you sure that betwixt the cocking of the pistol and its going off she did not find mercy.'

What a pity it is you and he should not again be one!¹⁰ I should rejoice to be the instrument of the reconciliation. It would help me to depart in peace.

That I shall go first, I cannot doubt. The extraordinary strength continued to you is a promise of your longer continuance. My strength and my work are very near their end.

C. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 386–88.

⁸Martha Ray, mistress of John Montagu 1718–92), 4th Earl of Sandwich, who was murdered on Apr. 7, 1779 near the Royal Opera House in London.

⁹JW added a footnote in *AM*: 'Whoever thought of sending her to hell "for being murdered"? Had not Mr. M[adan] been then a polygamist, he would have seen something worse in Miss R[ay] than being murdered—and even coming out of a playhouse.' That which was 'worse' was clearly being a mistress.

¹⁰JW added a footnote in *AM*: 'Perhaps the author of this letter did not know at the time of writing it Mr. M[adan]'s polygamical opinions.' Madan's *Thelyphthora* was not published until 1780.

From John Francis Valton

Bristol
April 27, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure to acquaint you that the work of God is still in a prosperous state at Paulton. We have now got a hundred members in that society, and the prospect of more. We have had but three or four justified since you were here, but most of the new members are deeply convinced of sin and are earnestly and conscientiously walking in all the ordinances and commandments of God. Many of them are painfully athirst for God, and are constrained under the means to cry aloud to him who is able to save. The fig-tree has put forth a few branches, by which I gather that the summer is near, and I daily expect that they will be brought to God in great abundance.

We have great cause to be thankful that the new members continue steadfast. Not one has left us, nor has anyone brought the least reproach upon the gospel. You would be amazed, sir, to hear the admirable wisdom that the Lord has blest them with, considering the short time that they have been in his school. I am in great hopes and ere long we shall be able to give you an account of many happy deliverances, for I may venture to say that the children are come to the birth.

We have great reason to be thankful on behalf of the circuit in general, for there seems to be a great prospect of good all over it. I believe if Bristol was a little purged we should see good days there. The Lord give us wisdom to separate between the precious and the vile, and make us as useful to the people as we desire to be!

I hope, dear sir, you will be pleased to remember at Conference to appoint me a short round. I really think Leeds or Birstall, or some of those Yorkshire circuits, would be the most proper for me. I am desirous to travel as long as I can, and perhaps I may hold out a little longer if you please to give me an easy circuit as to the rides. I have the pleasure to inform you that there is the greatest harmony between the preachers, the family and the leaders; and we all seem to aim at promoting the glory of God and the felicity of souls. Blessed be the Lord, my own fleece is not left dry; for he mercifully moistens my soul with his precious love, and feeds me with the hopes of gaining at last that peaceful shore. The Lord Almighty lengthen out and prosper your days! I wish you all the success that your heart can desire. Do not fail to remember us all at the throne of grace. Pray for us in particular who preach the word, that we may be able to build up the saints in their most holy faith, and to give unto every man his own portion in due season. In so doing, reverend sir, you will in particular oblige

Your dutiful and affectionate son and servant in the gospel,

John Valton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 388–89.

From Samuel Johnson

May 3, 1779

Sir,

Mr. Boswell,¹ a gentleman who has been long known to me, is desirous of being known to you and has asked this recommendation, which I give him with great willingness because I think it very much to be wished that worthy and religious men should be acquainted with each other.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

Sam. Johnson

Source: published transcription; James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (London: Charles Dilly, 1791), 2:294.²

¹James Boswell (1740–95), 9th Laird of Auchinleck, was a Scottish biographer, diarist, and lawyer best known for his *Life of Samuel Johnson*.

²Boswell adds: 'Mr. Wesley being in the course of his ministry at Edinburgh, I presented the letter to him, and was very politely received.'

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
[May 2–4, 1779]

[...¹ was] there ever at one time so many living Christians in this land—or even in the island of saints [i.e., Ireland]! Yet what are these to the multitudes that are coming? As the first fruits to the full harvest. In this belief I shall shortly die; and you not many years after me. Let it be said of each:

[...] *servetur ad imum*
*qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.*²

That omission in your tract must be supplied in the next edition.³

‘William Shent is set above want.’⁴ But is he set above sin? I have heard he is a drunkard. You must have heard it too, and have doubtless seen to that also.

Why are not Charles and Sam like the Norwich boy?⁵ They might have been worse had we made a show of them for gain, or sent them a begging to their masters.

‘Mr. Th.’s whole story’ is not the whole. You will hear it too soon. Lord Sandwich [[would have gladly married her, but that his wife has been confined in a mad house these thirty years; and is still there.]]⁶

‘We ought to be more together.’ Agreed, although I know your wish: ‘*antiquo me includere ludo. Non eadem est aetas.*’⁷ Yet as my mind is the same, I might be of *some* use to the people and to you. You want Ignatius’s friend.⁸ He would save you much trouble. And I think you may be sure of me, *ad aras usque.*⁹ The very name of our being together and being one would be a terror to evil-doers, flatterers, and pickpockets. But I am talking as if I had another year to live. Known unto God are all his works. If there be any works prepared for us to walk in together, the design of providence will open and prove itself.

Ἔρρωσο¹⁰

Address: ‘The Revd. Mr Wesley / Newcastle / upon Tine.’

Endorsement: by JW, ‘C[harles] May 2 and 4, 1779 / a[nswere]d 15’.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/160b.

¹The opening page of this letter is missing.

²Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 126–27; ‘Let a uniformity of character be preserved, or at least a consistency.’

³JW’s most recent tract was *Popery Calmly Considered*; no major addition was made to this or other recent tracts in further printings.

⁴CW is quoting from JW’s letter responding to that of Apr. 23; JW’s letter is not known to survive.

⁵See CW to JW, Apr. 23, 1779.

⁶Referring to John Montagu’s extramarital relationship with Martha Ray (cf. letter of Apr. 23, 1779) while his wife, Dorothy (Fane) Montagu, was confined for decades in an insane asylum.

⁷Horace, *Epistulae*, I.1.3–4; ‘to insert me back in the old game. I am no longer the same age’.

⁸Cf. Ignatius, *Epistle to the Magnesians*, ch. 2: ‘My fellow-servant the deacon Sotio, whose friendship may I ever enjoy, inasmuch as he is subject to the bishop as to the grace of God, and to the presbytery as to the law of Jesus Christ.’

⁹Cf. *amicus usque ad aras*, a Latin phrase meaning literally ‘a friend as far as to the altars’; i.e., ‘a friend whose only higher allegiance is to God’.

¹⁰‘Farewell.’

From John Francis Valton

Kingswood
May 20, 1779

Dear Sir,

Last Sunday sennight I preached a funeral sermon for Mr. King of Stroud.¹ After sermon I read the following account.

On the Monday before he died (he died on the Saturday [May 8]) he was sweetly resigned to the will of God, and said to one who expressed her fears of his dying, 'I desire you will not pray for my life, but that the Lord may more abundantly fill me with his love; for I see I have lived below my privileges.' He continued most part of the week in fervent prayer to God. He said he had an unclouded sense of his acceptance with God, but did not enjoy that full conviction of his being sanctified, as he had done before some late trials and exercises of mind that he had passed through. These, he said, had in some measure interrupted his happiness. But he had entreated the Lord to undertake for him, and to conform him to his blessed will, whether by sickness or health, prosperity or adversity. Upon a friend's saying she had no hope of his recovery, he replied with great devotion, 'Blessed be the will of the Lord!' Soon after this he changed for death, the silver cord began to loosen and cold chills proclaimed the advance of the last enemy.

His eldest daughter being called up, he expressed the happiness of his soul in the following words,

Not a doubt can arise,
To darken the skies,
Or hide for one moment my Lord from my eyes.²

In that moment the Sun of righteousness broke in upon his soul in a most remarkable manner. The glorious Lord was unto him as a place of broad rivers. His joy was full, and his cup ran over. He then called his children and, like the dying patriarch, gave them a most solemn admonition. He charged them to beware of this wicked, ensnaring world, and told them not to expect to meet him in glory unless they were truly converted to God. He earnestly desired them to love one another, and not to fall out by the way. He gave them to understand that he had indiscriminately loved and impartially provided for them. 'I am not able', says he, 'to say more. But I have not been wanting in instructions to you in times past.' And then finished this parental advice in the words of St. Paul (with which he generally closed his advice to particular persons) 'I now commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among those that are sanctified.'³

To a friend that was present he said, 'Be diligent my friend, and look to it that you be a follower of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.'

To another, 'I am going out of time into eternity, and now feel the reality of religion. I charge you that you give God your whole heart; for you have an alluring world, and a tempting devil to combat with.' And then finished his exhortation with solemn prayer.

To a preacher who came in (looking upon him with the most earnest countenance) he said, 'You have an honourable calling. Make full proof of your ministry. "Preach the word. Be instant in season, out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."⁴ Stop not short of having many seals to your ministry.' Then looking round upon weeping friends, he said, 'I commend you to God,'

¹Likely Ezekiel King, with whom JW's preachers stayed in Stroud.

²CW, Hymn for Believers XVII, st. 5, *HSP* (1749), 1:221.

³Cf. Acts 20:32.

⁴1 Tim. 4:2.

To an afflicted member of the society who came into his chamber he said, 'Do not be discouraged; the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.'⁵

To a Christian friend that was taking leave of him he said, 'Be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.'⁶ To another that was sitting by him he said, 'You were once married to Christ. O return, return to your first husband!⁷ Death will overtake you by and by.' He spoke this in an awful manner. He then looked upon another that was present and said, 'Blessed be God, my hope is a well-grounded, rational, scriptural hope of glory!⁸ The sting of death is taken away. There is no sting in death.'⁹ All is clear!' Then with a smile he cried out, 'What are empires! What are crowns! Christ is all in all.' On one saying, 'You would not have these now if you could, would you?' he answered, 'O no! no!'

One coming in who had been labouring under some discouragements, he said, 'Do not fear my brother. Lift up the hands that hang down. Do not be discouraged; do not be dejected: but,

March on, nor fear to win the day,
Though death and hell obstruct your way.¹⁰

'It won't be long, it won't be long! Seize the crown to victors due. Gird up the loins of your mind. Greater are they that are for you than they who are against you.'

To a neighbour that came in he said, 'God has been long wooing you to return unto him, but you have rejected his grace and grieved his Spirit. Now at last return unto him before it is too late. You have been upon the outlines of religion a long time.' To a member of the society he said, 'Awake, awake, awake! You have left your first love and zeal. Get up again, and strive to recover your former life and power. Get out among the people and do all you can for their good.' To a preacher that was under bodily affliction he sent his love and said, 'Tell him that his affliction will be for the good either of his own soul or for the people.' To one that stood by his bedside he said, 'You have had many trials, but these will not save you. This I have often told you. You must come to Christ.' She replied, 'How must I come?' He answered, 'You must come as a guilty, self-condemned, self-aborred sinner, pleading for mercy through Jesus Christ, and then the Spirit of God will point you to a Saviour'; then added, 'excuse me from saying more. I am very weak.'

He observed to a friend that soon after he had joined the Methodist society, offences arose that caused a temporary separation from them, and that he then joined another society of serious people, in which he continued for some time. But he blessed God that his affections were never alienated from the people, that he loved them afterwards better than ever, and that he never swerved from his first principles. He said to all his friends, 'I thank you my friends for your tears. But O the blood of Christ! how precious, how cleansing!'

His last exhortation was, 'Finally brethren whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'¹¹ This he spake with broken accents; for his breath and memory began to fail. Just before he died he said, 'Can this be dying! It is like going to sleep', and turned his head with a heavenly smile and said, 'My dear friends, it is not for want of matter, but want of breath that I do not continue speaking. I am full and abound! O the love of Christ! O the love

⁵2 Tim. 2:19.

⁶Cf. 1 Cor. 15:58.

⁷Cf. Hosea 2:7.

⁸Cf. Col. 1:27.

⁹Cf. 1 Cor. 15:55.

¹⁰Cf. Isaac Watts, 'The Names of Christ', st. 7, *CPH* (1737), 30.

¹¹Cf. Phil. 4:8.

of Christ! If anyone had told me, I could not have conceived what I feel.' His last words were, 'Sanctified by faith'! He then yielded up his spirit, into the hands of him whom he loved.

John Valton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 126–29.

From John Oliver (autobiography)

June 1, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I was born at Stockport, in Cheshire, in the year 1732.¹ My father was fond of me to excess. I went to school till I was thirteen, and there contracted such acquaintance as led me into every kind of folly; dancing, plays, races, cockfighting, and the like, which laid a foundation for all the vices incident to youth. Indeed, the Spirit of God was daily striving with me; but my companions made all his strivings ineffectual.

My father designed to give me a liberal education, and accordingly put me to the grammar school. But being reduced in the world, he soon took me from school into the shop, where I remained some years.

The Methodists (so called) then coming to Stockport, I was greatly prejudiced against them, and knowing one of them, called upon him and laboured much to convince him they were of a bad religion, and were enemies to the Church [of England]. But he soon convinced *me* that I had no religion at all. So I came near him no more. But I began to feel myself a sinner, and resolved to drop all my acquaintance and diversions, and to keep close to the church and repeat the prayers and collects every day.

Accordingly I dropped them at once, notwithstanding all the arguments and expostulations of my companions. I read, prayed, fasted, went to church, and seemed more and more resolved, till, after a few months, several young men of my acquaintance came from Manchester on the Lord's day, to an inn just opposite to our house, and sent over for *me*. My father pressing me to go, I went; only resolving not to stay long. But I soon forgot this, and all my good resolutions. When I came home at night, I was in an agony. I did not dare to pray. My conscience stared me in the face, and the terror I felt was inconceivable.

It was soon spread abroad, that I was melancholy. A neighbour, who was a hearer of the Methodists, sent me word there was to be preaching that night. My father declared if I went he would knock my brains out, though he should be hanged for it. However, I stole away. The preacher was John Appleton,² who invited 'all that were weary and heavy laden, to come to Jesus'.³ It was balm to my soul. I drank it in with all my heart, and began to seek God as I had not done before. Till now I thought of saving *myself*. My cry now was, 'Lord, save or I perish.'⁴ Yet I knew not how to go on, till one sent me word there was a person at her house who would be glad to see me. It was Miss Simpson. She told me the manner of her conversion to God. She sung an hymn, and went to prayer. I was all in a flame to know these things for myself. As soon as I got home, I went to prayer, and pleaded the merits of Christ. Suddenly, I thought I heard a clear voice, saying, 'Son! thy sins, which are many, are forgiven.'⁵ I cried out, 'Lord, if this be from thy Spirit, let the words be applied with power.'⁶ Instantly I heard a second time, 'Son, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee.' In that instant all my load was gone, and I felt such a change as cannot be expressed. I loved God. I loved all mankind. I could not tell whether I was in the body or out of it. Prayer was turned into wonder, love, and praise.

In this happy state I remained for several months, feeling nothing in my heart but love. Yet I wanted some agreeable companions, and I *thought over* all the people I knew. I could not recollect any of our church that were such as I wanted. No, nor any among the Dissenters or Quakers. The last people I thought of were the Methodists. I found my soul united to them. I took an opportunity of asking one of

¹His baptismal record lists his father as Thomas, and his mother as Mary.

²John Appleton (d. 1784), a currier in Shrewsbury, served as a local preacher in the surrounding area (see *Works*, 10:205), and built a chapel there for the Methodists (see the account of spiritual journey and death in a letter from an unidentified correspondent, c. May 1784).

³Cf. Matt. 11:28.

⁴Cf. Matt. 8:25.

⁵Cf. Luke 7:47.

⁶Cf. Luke 4:32.

them, Robert Anderton, 'What were the terms of admission among them?' He told me, 'These': putting the rules of the society into my hands, and desiring me to read and consider them. Having done this, I told him there was one rule which I was afraid I could not keep: 'Meeting every week'. But I would meet as often as I could. So I joined the society in the year 1748.

I was now tried in a manner I had not been before. My father was a man of a violent temper, and as much as he loved me, his anger quickly overcame his natural affection. He sent to all the Methodists, threatening what he would do if any of them dared to receive me into their houses. Several gentlemen of the town advised him to proceed to more severe methods. He did so, frequently breaking sticks, and sometimes chairs, upon me. When all this did not move me, he tried another way, charging me with disobedience, and telling me I had broke his heart and would bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Several clergymen then called upon me and strove to show me the Methodists were in the wrong. One of them was Mr. Dale, lately my master, who called me his child, prayed for me, wept over me, and conjured me, if I loved my own soul, not to go near those people any more. My father promised before Mr. Dale I should go to church prayers every day, and have every indulgence I could wish, 'provided I would come no more near those d[am]ned villains'. I told him I would do everything in my power, as a child to a parent, to oblige him; but this was a thing that affected my conscience, which therefore I could not give up.

Our society was now much united together, and did indeed love as brethren. Some of them had just began to meet in band, and invited me to meet with them. Here, one of them speaking of the wickedness of his heart, I was greatly surprised, telling them I felt no such things, my heart being kept in peace and love all the day long. But it was not a week before I felt the swelling of pride, and the storms of anger and self-will. So when I met again, I could speak the same language with them. We sympathized with each other, prayed for each other, and believed God was both able and willing to purify our hearts from all sin.

Not long after, having given way to temptation and grieved the Holy Spirit of God, all his comforts were withdrawn in a moment. My soul was all over darkness. I could no longer see him that is invisible. I could not feel his influence on my heart. I sought him, but could not find him. I endeavoured to pray, but the heavens seemed like brass. At the same time such a weight came upon me as if I was instantly to be pressed to death. I sunk into black despair, concluding that God had forgotten to be gracious. My friends strove to lift up my hands, but it yielded me no relief. I found no gleam of light, no trace of hope, no token of any kind for good. The devil improved this hour of darkness, telling me I was sure to be damned, for I was forsaken of God and a mere dead weight upon his people. Thus I passed over several days and nights. Sleep departed from me, and I scarce eat anything, till I was reduced to a mere skeleton.

One day, being able to bear no longer, I rose very early in the morning, resolving to put a period to my wretched life. I went down into the river, where it was very deep. But I was, I know not how, taken out of the water, and in an instant at Mr. Cheetham's at Adswood. How I got thither I never could tell from that day to this, unless God sent one of his ministering spirits to help in the time of need.

The family were all very tender over me and, as Mr. [Peter] Jaco was to preach in the evening, desired me to stay. They told him my case, and he strongly encouraged me to hope in the Lord. But in the morning Satan came upon me like thunder, telling me I was a self-murderer in the sight of God, and that no murderer could inherit eternal life. I utterly sunk again, and attempted to strangle myself with my handkerchief. But in the article of time God sent a friend, who withheld me from my purpose.

My father missing me, and not knowing what was become of me, was almost distracted. He sent persons round about in every road, but could learn nothing till Mr. Cheetham sent a messenger to Stockport, to desire he would come over. He came, but I was afraid of going home till he promised he would use no severity. As soon as we came home, he sent for Dr. H—t, an utter stranger to all religion. In proof whereof, he immediately took a large quantity of blood from me, blistered me on the head, back, and feet, and loaded me with medicines. For near two months I was under his care. All that time none of

my friends were suffered to see me. The clergymen, Messrs. Richmond, Knowles, and Dale, visited me in their turns, and used every argument to induce me to think of the Methodists no more.

In the meantime prayer was made for me continually in the societies, and a day was set apart for fasting and humiliation. I believe it was in consequence of this that I was raised up. The doctor and ministers now judged I might go out. My design was first to visit the church. But as I was going, an old acquaintance came to my mind, who lived three miles off. I had a strong desire to see him, and turning about, went straight to his house. He caught me in his arms and said, 'My dear child, I am glad to see you. I always believed God would deliver you. But where will you go now?' I saw I should not be permitted to serve God at home. After consulting together, we agreed it would be best for me to spend a little time at Manchester. So the next day I went thither. As I was going, a gentleman met me, who told my father. I was hearing Mr. [John] Haughton in the evening when my mother, having come from Stockport on purpose, would not come in but stood at the door and sent a person to tell me one desired to speak with me. When I came, she said, 'Your father is dying, and wants to see you before he dies.' Being exceedingly struck, I went with her. She took me to an acquaintance, Mr. Hibbert's, in Deansgate.⁷ It being late, she said, she must stay in town all night, and go off early in the morning. But they knew not what to do with *me*, being afraid the Methodists would come and take me away. At length they shut me up in a room with strong doors, and a person to guard me all night. In the morning I was guarded home, where I found my father as well as usual. He did everything he could to extort a promise that I would leave the Methodists. But not prevailing, he gave the matter up, and from that time I gained my freedom.

The week following I met my brethren again, and oh the thankfulness that was expressed on every side! I found now every means was to my soul what the river Jordan was to Naaman. My strength came again, my light, my life, my God; and I was filled with all joy and peace in believing. Indeed I could not see at first why God had permitted me to pass through those deep waters. But I now see it was that I might sympathize with other afflicted souls from heartfelt experience.

Soon after it was strongly impressed on my mind, that God had called me to some more public work. I was then a [class] leader, and had occasionally exhorted, but with fear and trembling. For some time I resisted the thought, fearing it was a device of the devil. I earnestly sought the Lord by fasting and prayer. I poured out my supplication against it. But the more I strove and prayed, the more the thought was pressed upon my mind.

Mr. [John] Bennet was then in connexion with you, sir. We were intimate and loved each other dearly. I told him all that was in my heart. He asked, 'What can induce you to undertake such a work as this?' I answered, 'It can be no view of gain, for I am getting money every year, and want nothing. It is not pride. I want no praise of men. It is a tender regard for my fellow creatures. I have had much forgiven, and I now love much. And if I could be an instrument of saving but one soul, it would make amends for the labour of all my life. And I think I am called of God thereto.' He said, 'Then go on in God's name.'

On December 26, in the year 1751, Mr. Bennet wrote me a letter, wherein he desired me to meet him at Manchester and go around with him. I met him there and we rode together to Bolton, where notice had been given of his preaching. When the hour was come, he absolutely refused to preach; but after Mr. [Thomas] Mitchell had given an exhortation, got up on one of the forms and said, 'I have no longer any connexion with Mr. Wesley. He denies the perseverance of the saints, and asserts sinless perfection. Now, I desire that all of you who are of my mind will follow me.' They did so, for out of an hundred and twenty-seven only nineteen remained.

He went on till he came to Stockport, where, after preaching, he met the society and told them what he had done at Bolton, and added, 'Now you must take either me or Mr. Wesley.' They all joined him but one, Molly Williamson. He promised to preach to them every fortnight, but within a year utterly forsook them and preached at Stockport no more.

A few days after, I called on Molly Williamson and found her exceedingly afflicted, Mr. Bennet having taken away her sister and her father. She asked, 'What can we do?' I said, 'There is a family at

⁷Likely Titus Hibbert (c. 1717–95); see his public letter on JW's *Calm Address*, dated Nov. 25, 1775.

Adswood that has lately come to hear, and has neither joined Mr. Bennet nor Mr. Wesley. Go over and propose a weekly meeting at their house.' They willingly accepted of the proposal. We exhorted them every Lord's day, and met as a class every Wednesday evening. The Lord owned and blessed us. We had love and peace; only we wanted the preachers in connexion with you. We prayed for them. Soon after you came yourself, preached at noon, and promised to send us preachers. You did so. They came once a month, and we thought ourselves highly favoured of the Lord.

I still wanted the preachers to come again to Stockport, and Mr. [William] Allwood being in the circuit, I asked him whether he would preach if I could procure a place? He said he would. I spoke to Robert Anderton, who kept the old preaching house, and he consented to his preaching there. Soon after we hired an house and had regular preaching therein, and God then revived and carried on his work in spite of all opposition.

In the year 1759, James Wild came into the Manchester circuit. He was a blessing to many, and to me in particular, being exceeding tender over me. And I believe it was in consequence of what he spoke concerning me at the Conference that soon after it I received a letter from you, sir, wherein you told me that I was accepted on trial as a travelling preacher, and was appointed to labour in the Sheffield circuit. The news seemed to me like a death warrant. I knew not what to do. I thought, 'My abilities are by no means sufficient for the work; and if I attempt it, I shall only expose myself, and bring a discredit upon the gospel.' But on the other hand, I thought, 'If I do not go, I shall grieve Mr. Wesley, and fail in my duty.' After much reasoning, I came to this conclusion: 'I will go and make a trial. If the Lord owns me, and the people receive me, so long as this is the case, I will stay with them. If they do not receive me, or if I see no fruit of my labour, I will return to my business.'

Having prepared all things, and settled my business in such a manner that I could return to it with credit, I was commended by the brethren to the grace of God, and set out with much fear, hardly expecting to stay three months in the circuit.

I thought, certainly they will despise my youth. But it was far otherwise. They bore with all my weaknesses, and I was kindly received and tenderly treated on every side. I was particularly indebted to two faithful friends, Mrs. [Jane] G[reen] of Rotherham, and E[lizabeth] B[ooth] of Woodseats. They were as nursing mothers to me on all occasions. Whenever my mind was burdened, I imparted to them all my trials, and they lifted up my hands.

The circuit being long, the preachers seldom saw each other but on the quarter day. But the people loved us and we loved one another. So that I got the year through much better than I expected. And I did not run in vain. I did see in various places a little fruit of my labour. But I was not satisfied with this. I wanted all the people to be converted to God. And fearing I took up the place of some more useful preacher than I was, or ever should be, at the close of the year I wrote to you, sir, desiring I might go home. You wrote to me, 'You have set your hand to the gospel plough. Therefore never look back. I would have you come up to London this winter. Here is everything to make the man of God perfect.' I was then in the Haworth circuit with good Mr. [William] Grimshaw, who showed me great kindness. He did not let me go without much reluctance. While I was upon the road, I found my heart thoroughly engaged in the work of God, and determined to give up all. Yet when I came within sight of London, my spirits began to sink, having been always of a fearful temper, which indeed continues to this day. And when I came into the great city, everything was strange to me. All the people were strangers to me, and I to them. But we soon knew one another. The longer I stayed, the better I liked everything round about me. I found your words true, 'Here is everything to make the man of God perfect.'

Soon after I received a letter from Thomas Mitchell at Norwich, earnestly pressing me to come and help him. Having consulted with my brethren, I went. but as soon as I came, Thomas Mitchell went away; so I was left alone for above two months, having care enough upon my hands, more than ever I had had before, beside the preaching sixteen or seventeen times a week. Being almost worn out, I wrote to you, sir, desiring you would send me some assistance. In the meantime my situation was made a blessing to me, causing me to give myself much to prayer.

Just at this time a good providence sent to Norwich that saint of God, Jane Cooper. I have great reason to praise God on her account. She was a general blessing to the people. By her conversation and

prayer many, both of the young beginners and old standers, were stirred up; many found remission of sins, and many were renewed in love; so that we had gracious showers on every side. She advised *me* to declare the whole counsel of God. 'Enforce', said she, 'a *present* and *full* salvation. Many will hate you for so doing, but God will love you. And many will believe, and feel the force of his word. Therefore, my brother, be strong, be bold!' Her name is precious to me to this day.

After her came another of like spirit, Paul Greenwood—at the sight of whom my spirit revived, I think as much as Jacob's did when he saw Joseph's wagons. We laboured together in much love, and not without success. He was a man of a truly excellent temper and exemplary behaviour. He was constantly serious, but not sad. He was always cheerful, but not light. And the people drank into the same spirit, so that the year passed very agreeably.

In the year 1761, my scrofulous disorder appeared, and grew more and more troublesome. I applied to an eminent surgeon, but was little better. In spring 1762 I went to Canterbury. Here I had the happiness of conversing with Mr. Charles Perronet, a man of much pain and sorrow, but dead to all things here below and deeply devoted to God. By him I profited much. He wanted to be all spirit. So did I. And we met once a week with a few friends who were like minded. I bless God that ever I saw them.

This summer there was a great pouring out of the Spirit in London, and many were athirst for the whole Christian salvation. So was I. I loved the very name of it. I loved to hear it spoken of. I loved all the people that were in pursuit of it, and was never so happy as in their company and conversation. This was before those extravagancies crept in.⁸ My soul was sweetly united to them. I caught their spirit, and felt such zeal for preaching a present and full salvation that wherever I was I preached it to all believers, in the best manner I could. This soon had its use, both upon the people and upon my own soul. I was convinced more deeply than ever of inbred sin, and of the promise of God to save me from it. And never did man at a bar plead harder for life than I pleaded with God for this salvation.

Mr. Perk, of Lincoln's Inn, then a sober rational Christian, desired me one day to call and dine with him. I there unexpectedly met with Messrs. [Benjamin] Colley, Jay, [Lawrence] Coughlan, [George] Bell, [Daniel] Owen, and some others. When dinner was over, one said, 'Our Lord has promised, whatsoever two or three of you shall agree to ask in my name, I will do it.'⁹ We agree now.' An hymn was sung. It seemed as if the glory of the Lord filled the place. We went to prayer. A general cry arose, but without any confusion. The Lord was conquered by our instant prayer, and we had the petition we asked of him. I was baptized as with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and felt that 'perfect love casteth out fear'.¹⁰ Great was our fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. After an hour spent in supplication and thanksgiving, we sung from the ground of our hearts,

Hang our newborn souls on thee,
Kept from all idolatry;
Nothing want, beneath, above!
Happy, happy in thy love.¹¹

If ever I had access to the throne of grace, it was on this memorable day. Our Lord was inexpressibly near. It seemed we might ask and have whatever we wanted. And we were exceedingly drawn out in prayer, for you, your sons in the gospel, and the people under your care, feeling the communion of saints, both on earth below and in heaven above. But in all this there was nothing wild; but all calmness, meekness, love, and peace.

From this time I went forth in the power and spirit of love. I felt nothing but love, and desired nothing but more love. And so I continued without any intermission all the time I remained in London.

⁸I.e., the controversy that would surround Thomas Maxfield and George Bell.

⁹Cf. John 14:13; Matt. 18:20.

¹⁰1 John 4:18.

¹¹Cf. CW, 'Psalm 131', st. 4, *CPH* (1743), 95.

I could now understand that objection commonly made against those who long to be all-devoted to God that they do not love to converse with other people, with many but those of their own sort. How little spiritual conversation is to be found among other people? Among any that are not 'going on to perfection'?¹² Generally the tenor of their conversation is dry, lifeless, and useless. But those who are earnestly going on, hardly care to talk of anything else. And whatever conversation has no savour of this is dull and insipid to them.

From that day to this, I have not lost my sight of, nor my affection for, Christian perfection. But I have been pressed down by the exercises of every kind which I have passed through since that time. I fear some of them were purposely laid in my way by those who were no friends to this doctrine, and who were not greatly pleased with me for enforcing it in every place. But I willingly leave this and all my affairs to the disposal of a wise and gracious providence.

The next year I was at Bristol with Mr. [James] Oddie, and was happy both with him and with the people. My heart was given up. I was all athirst for God, and wanted every thought to be holiness to the Lord. Jesus was the first beauty to my soul. He reigned alone in my heart. I was entirely and constantly happy in God. He was my all in all.

In 1764, I was again stationed in London. My disorder now increasing much, I was advised to apply without loss of time to Mr. Morley, a gentleman of Halstead in Essex.¹³ I went down without delay. He behaved like a gentleman and a Christian. He first prayed that God would bless his endeavours and, after inquiring minutely into my case, told me my whole mass of blood was corrupted. He therefore advised me to an entire milk diet—to take a quart of milk every day, with some white bread and two tablespoonfuls of clarified honey. In six months my whole habit of body was changed, nor have I had anything of my disorder since.

The next year I spent with Mr. Oddie in the Manchester circuit. We had some severe trials. But going on hand in hand, we were more than conquerors. Where preachers are united, nothing can hurt them; where they are not, nothing can help them.

The year following I was appointed for Newcastle upon Tyne, where I found a most agreeable family. And I never met with a people who valued the preachers like those in this circuit. Their spirit and their conduct throughout the whole was 'courteous, pitiful, and kind'.¹⁴

Afterwards I spent two years in Leeds circuit, two in Bradford, and two in Birstall circuit. Always when I go into a new round, I go with great heaviness. But after a while, I so cleave to the people that I know not how to leave them.

In the year 1773 I was removed to Chester circuit, where I continued two years. In the second year I was invited to Wrexham. The house being too small for the congregation, I was desired to preach abroad, which I accordingly did, to about a thousand serious hearers. While I was speaking, a constable came with orders from a neighbouring justice to apprehend me. I desired him to stay till I had done my discourse, and I would go with him. He agreed so to do. But the justice, impatient of delay, came himself and seized me by the collar. I said, 'Sir, here is no riot. All is peaceable, and I am a licensed preacher.' Notwithstanding he dragged me on, till he saw the constable, and then charged him to carry me to Bridewell.¹⁵ As we were walking, I told the constable, 'I will not go, unless you have a written order.' He went to the justice, and returned with the following order, which I have by me.

This is to order the constables of Wrexham, and Thomas Price in particular, safely to convey the body of [John] Oliver, a vagrant preacher who hath unlawfully assembled a concourse of people in the schoolyard, against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, to the House of Correction in the town of Wrexham. And likewise to

¹²Cf. Heb. 6:1.

¹³John Morley (d. 1777) was the author of an essay on treating scrofula.

¹⁴Cf. 1 Pet. 3:8–9.

¹⁵The prison in Wrexham.

order the keeper of the said house to receive and safely keep the body of him, the said [John] Oliver, for further examination, and that he may be dealt with according to law.

Given under my hand and seal, this tenth day of June 1774.

Thomas Boycott

As I was walking with the constable towards Bridewell, there was such a concourse of people that it was with difficulty we got through them. The house was soon filled with people of all ranks, who expressed all possible kindness. One gentleman said, 'Sir, I will be bound with you for £500.' Another said, 'You shall preach at my door, and let them disturb you that dare.' I had now an opportunity of explaining to them the religion which we wish to propagate in every place. I then went to prayer, wherein I was greatly refreshed, and most of the people were deeply affected. Many would fain have stayed with me all night, but I would not suffer it.

At 9:00 in the morning I was ordered to appear before the justice, with whom I found the high sheriff and an attorney. He asked for my licence, which I gave him. He read it and said it was good for nothing. I said, 'Sir, it was never questioned before, and the questioning the validity of it now is a reflection upon the whole bench of justices who gave it me in open court.' The attorney then beginning to interrogate me, I said, 'Sir, I am under no obligation to answer impertinent questions.' He got up, went out, and I saw him no more. The justice then told me, unless I would promise to preach there no more, he would order me to be whipped out of the town. I answered, 'Sir, I will make no such promise. I am an Englishman. I have violated none of the laws of my country, and therefore am liable to no punishment.' After using a few more contemptuous words, he told me I might go about my business. So I took my leave of Mr. Boycott, rejoicing that I was counted worthy to suffer shame for my Master's sake.

The next year I laboured in Sheffield circuit, where was a great outpouring of the Spirit of God. And throughout the year, there appeared to be a general moving among the people.

In the succeeding years, I was in Manchester, Liverpool, Macclesfield, and Birstall circuits. And I bless God, I never was in any circuit yet, where I had not some seals of my mission.

God has wrought wonderfully of late in Birstall circuit. He is blessing us on every side. Some hundreds have within this year been added to the societies. On the national fast-day, the little society at Thong appointed a prayer meeting in the evening. The spirit of grace and supplication was so poured out upon them that they continued till the morning. Several were in the greatest agony, lying upon the ground in cold sweats, one crying out, 'Lord, help me'; another, 'Save, or I perish'. Before they parted, eight were justified and several renewed in love.

I would beg leave to observe upon the whole that having been near thirty years in the service of a good Master, I have great reason to be humbled for having done so little for God, for my neighbour, and for myself. I might have exerted myself more in the cause of God, and have made greater improvement, both as a preacher and as a Christian. God be merciful to me a sinner!¹⁶

I am, reverend sir, your affectionate son in the gospel,

John Oliver

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 417–32.

¹⁶Luke 18:13.

From John Baxter

Antigua
June 10, 1779

Reverend Sir,

With respect to my conduct as a preacher, I endeavour to follow your rules. This I do for two reasons: first, because I know none more productive of the knowledge of ourselves and God; and secondly, because it is to these I am indebted for all the religious knowledge I have. For these reasons I think it my duty to use them myself, and recommend them to others.

With respect to my own state, I find I am in an enemy's country. Women and drink bear down all before them here. Women are not brought up in this country with that esteem of virtue as in England. And as to the men, it is the custom here to set no bounds to their passions. I therefore find it hard to keep free from censure, as most men naturally judge that all are enslaved to the vices which they themselves indulge.

And as there is no family I can board in, as in England, I am obliged to keep house. But as I use every precaution to prevent reproach, I hire an old woman who has a husband to look after it.

We labour under great hardships in the island, as the hand of God seems to be upon us. We have had no rain for some months, therefore the ground is parched up. Indeed we had no crops these three years, so that all the proprietors of estates are nearly ruined. They have expected rain every full and change of the moon, but still the windows of heaven are shut against them. As to the poor negroes, they are exposed to want, even of water to drink, and have nothing allowed them to eat but a pint of horse-beans a day! But I hope their extremity is God's opportunity, for they seem ripe for the gospel. Six hundred of them have joined our society. And if using the means of grace diligently is any proof, we may conclude that they are in earnest. Some of them come three or four miles, at eight o'clock at night, to hear the word. And on Sundays they come seven or ten miles barefoot to meet their classes.

We thought the distress of the island would have constrained the legislature to appoint a day of fasting and prayer. But as they neglected, we thought it our duty to do it, and appointed Friday the 28th of May for that purpose. And it is remarkable that even while we were assembled for prayer the Lord granted our request, by sending the showers down in great abundance. And at the same time that he was pouring floods on the dry ground, the times of refreshing came from his presence in such a manner that many were constrained to cry, 'My cup runs over!'¹ Some strangers also joined us, who acknowledged the power of God.

The Lord has opened many doors for the preaching of the gospel. There are four estates where I have leave to preach; so that I shall be obliged to alter my plan, from once a week to once a fortnight.

I bless God I still enjoy a tolerable state of health, and have a desire to press forward in the good way. If you please to send an answer to this it will be received with many thanks, for as the people cannot hope to see you, they would be exceeding glad to hear from you. I should esteem it a particular favour if you would send us some books. Dear sir, pray for us, that we may be preserved from evil and that the good pleasure of the Lord may prosper among us. In so doing you will greatly oblige

Your son and servant in the gospel,

J. Baxter

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 439–40.

¹Cf. Ps. 23:5.

From Mrs. Martha Ward

Cork
June 16, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Since I wrote last, I observed a falling off in our congregations. The house grew thin, and even our friends did not attend the preaching as formerly. I observed in Mr. —¹ a tartness of spirit that discovered itself sufficiently to hurt the people. His preaching also was leavened with it. For instead of dwelling on those points which are essential, such as repentance, faith, and holiness, he could hardly preach on any text without introducing controversy about predestination. And as he did not reprove in love, some who were not predestinarians were much displeased. This and some other misunderstanding, I believe, was the cause why the work did not prosper. On these and some other accounts I determined to speak to him. And having implored wisdom from above, I told him my mind, when he said he would alter his manner of preaching and watch against the sharpness of his temper.

The next day the city was greatly alarmed on account of the French. The Sunday after he preached on, 'Be not afraid of him that can kill the body, ...'.² The audience, which was very numerous, seemed to be greatly alarmed; and since that time there has been a remarkable alteration for the better. And Mr. — himself seems to be quite changed. For instead of directing his preaching merely to the understanding, he now speaks more to the heart. The consequence is, contending parties have forgot their disputes, and we sit under the word without murmuring or discontent.

We have also just received an account of a Spanish war, which has increased the anxiety of this city. What a glorious opportunity for our preachers to lift up their voice like a trumpet! I trust God will enable them to cry aloud, and spare not. And I hope that now the judgments of God are hanging over our heads, the inhabitants of these lands will learn righteousness.

As to myself, I see that the Lord is king, be the earth never so unquiet. And I feel that my soul rejoices beneath the shadow of his wing. Dear sir, pray for us all, and in particular for

Your unworthy friend and daughter,

M. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 498–99.

¹Almost certainly John Hampson Sr., who had been assigned to Cork at the 1778 Conference.

²Matt. 10:28.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

London
June 16, 1779

Dear Brother,

Yesterday Sam and I spent at Mr. [William] Briggs's. He has been lately with the committee, and was there informed that our preachers (the three principal¹) have wrote to the country preachers heavy complaints of their ill usage by the clergy here. Not, I should suppose, by quiet John Richardson; not by passive Dr. [Thomas] Coke, for he they say is gone to Bristol, that he may not be a witness of their cruel persecution. The persecuting clergy therefore are neither more nor less than your own brother Charles, and the whole ground of their complaint against me is, 'my serving the [City Road] Chapel on Sunday afternoon, as well as in the morning'.

But this is no new grievance, for I constantly preached Sunday morning and afternoon at Bristol. If they could exclude me here, they would not long permit me there.

My reasons for preaching there twice every Sunday are: 1. Because after you I have the best right. 2. Because I have so short a time to preach anywhere. 3. Because I am fully persuaded I can do more good there than in any other place. They I know are of a different judgment, and make no secret of it; declaring everywhere 'that the work is stopping, the society scattering, the congregation at the New Chapel dwindled away, and quite dead'.

I thank God the Chapel is well filled, last Sunday especially. I preached in the morning on, 'Come, for all things are now ready'.² In the afternoon on, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life',³ never with greater (seldom with equal) effect. After sermon Mr. [Thomas] Rankin followed me to the vestry to assure me he had never spoke disrespectfully of us, and that he was a great friend to the Church. At the same time a gentlewoman came, filled with faith and love by the word just spoken, which she could not contain. Mr. Rankin asked her how she got it (I turned aside to let him examine her). She said in hearing me at this place, that a month ago she was sent up out of the pit of despair under my word. He repeated his enquiries and she her answers—to his satisfaction, shall I say, or dissatisfaction! I would hope the former. You will enquire when here (only not of the preachers) and judge for yourself whether my persevering ministry at the chapel has done good or hurt.

I think the preachers wrong, and in the greatest danger through pride. But I have, and will have, no quarrel with them. Mr. [Richard] Kemp proposed to carry me to meet you on the last day's journey, or I should not have thought of it.⁴ You have taken no notice yet of that part of the letter.⁵ I do not want to have the first word. Let them have the first and the last. I do not want to interfere in that government of yours, or to appear at all at the congress. A word of yours might turn the scale, and send me directly to Bristol.

It is just come into my mind the lay preachers affect to believe I act as a clergyman in opposition to them. To me it seems that I act as I do in good will to them, as well as to the people. If there was no man above them, what would become of them? How would they tear one another in pieces! Convince them if you can that they want a clergyman over them, to keep them and the flock together! Convince them that it is impossible I should stand in their way long. I cannot (should I live to the winter) serve the New Chapel Sundays and holidays in all weathers. But rather persuade each of them to be the least, not

¹The three established lay preachers currently assigned to London were Peter Jaco, John Pawson, and Thomas Rankin.

²Luke 14:17.

³John 14:6.

⁴Responding to a question in a letter from JW, c. June 8, not known to survive.

⁵The reference is to a letter of CW to JW, c. June 1, that is not known to survive.

the greatest;⁶ and then all will be right again. You have no alternative but to conquer that spirit, or to be conquered by it. Can you think I envy you your preeminence?

If God continues my strength, I shall take the best care I can of the [City Road] Chapel till you return. Then I shall deliver up my charge to you, and you alone.

C. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 441–42.

⁶See Matt. 23:11.

From Ann Bolton

Finstock
June 20, 1779

Reverend Sir,

On Wednesday the 2nd instant, our friend John Taylor quitted the scenes of mortality, in sure and certain hope of everlasting blessedness.¹ You are not unacquainted with many circumstances of his life, nevertheless I beg leave briefly to recite a few particulars in order to refresh your memory.

I think it is now twelve years since he was first awakened to a sense of his sin and misery. Weary and heavy laden he earnestly applied himself to seek for mercy, bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. In this state he continued four months, at which time the Lord, in mercy, was found of him and gave him the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

About four years after this he was convinced of his want of a more established state of grace. For this he diligently sought in the use of all the means appointed by divine wisdom, and at length was enabled to testify, that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. He now enjoyed a glorious liberty, was very steady, exemplary, and zealous, and sometimes gave a word of exhortation in public.

Thus he continued about two years, when Satan ensnared him, first by tempting him against his brethren, which cast a dimness over his mind, and drove him into company where he was prevailed on to drink too much, which formerly was his besetting sin. In a short time he left the people of God and associated with ungodly companions. And thus he revolted more and more, though not without remorse of conscience, and sometimes many resolutions to do better; yet often feared he should never forsake his wicked companions. At such times he would say to those who beheld him, 'Do not say the Methodists get drunk, for I am now no Methodist.'

About four years after his fall God, in love to his soul, visited his body with wasting sickness. For several months he seemed to *wish* to return to God, and to make some *feeble* efforts. But at length his desires so increased that he earnestly begged to be admitted again into the society. His disorder now seemed to threaten a speedy dissolution to his mortal frame. I frequently visited him, but did not see that penitence I wished for, till about six weeks before his death, when he bitterly lamented his fall from grace. 'O', said he, 'what an ungrateful wretch have I been! How have I buried my talent, and abused the mercy of so good a God!' For the sin of drunkenness lay heavy on his conscience. He now sought the Lord sorrowing, and not without some gleams of hope, though at times he was tempted to despair.

Thus he continued about a fortnight, when early one morning the Lord visited his soul with the light of his reconciled countenance. O how was the scene changed when I called on him a day or two after! With what joy and gratitude did he speak of the Lord's mercies! His soul was filled with love to God and all mankind, but especially to backsliders. For these his heart mourned, while he wrestled with God in prayer for them.

As he drew nearer his end his confidence was much increased. For several hours before he died he seemed to have large foretastes of the glory he was hastening to, and very often repeated these words, 'O Lord I will praise thee, for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortest me.' After continuing thus for several hours full of peace and joy and love, he went away to see that God who had healed all his backslidings and loved him freely! When he was buried, the whole society attended, with a vast multitude of other people, and I believe many found it a very solemn time.

From hence we learn: first, that the strongest believers are in danger of apostasy; and secondly, that penitent apostates need not despair.

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 237–39.

¹John Taylor was buried on June 6, 1779 in Witney, Oxfordshire.

From Hester Ann Roe¹

[Macclesfield]

June 24, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I love God with every power and faculty of my soul, and him alone. My will is truly and entirely swallowed up in his, and in the moments of my greatest trials he enables me to praise him with joy unspeakable. I am continually offered up in spirit as a sacrifice to him who is my all. I am crucified to the world, and my life is hid with Christ in God. And I assuredly know (if I endure to the end), 'when Christ who is my life shall appear, I shall appear with him in glory!'² 'Praise the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name!'³

The work is of grace
Thine Lord be the praise;
And mine to adore, and Tell of thy ways.⁴

When I begin to speak of God, and of his dealings with the most unworthy, I know not how to break off. But it is now late, so I must leave the precious theme till another opportunity and hasten to assure you, reverend sir, that I am, in sincere affection,

Your unworthy servant,

H. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 443.

¹This is the first surviving letter (or extract therefrom) of Hester Ann (Roe) Rogers (1756–94) to JW. She was the daughter of Rev. James Roe (1711–65), vicar of Macclesfield, Cheshire and his wife Elizabeth (Harper) Roe. She was converted at the age of eighteen under the influence of David Simpson, the evangelical vicar of Christ Church, Macclesfield. She began to attend Methodist meetings despite fierce opposition from her family and became a regular correspondent of JW, who appointed her a class leader in 1781. In 1784 she would marry James Rogers, a Wesleyan itinerant, and become his partner in ministry. See *DEB*, 952; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 299–300.

²Cf. Col. 3:4.

³Ps. 103:1.

⁴Hymn 192, st. 9, in Martin Madan, *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, extracted from various authors (London: Lock Hospital, 1763), 191.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
June 30, 1779

Some months are now elapsed since I had the pleasure of seeing my dear and reverend father.¹ But many of the sacred truths I then heard from your lips left such a lively impression on my mind that the profitable opportunities I then was favoured with seem fresh in my memory as if it was but yesterday. And had I known how to have directed to you, [I] would not have so long deferred acknowledging the grateful sense my heart retains of the many unmerited favours you continue to show me. I knew your plan was altered, but could not find how till a few days ago. My brother [John] brought it [to] me from Mrs. Floyde. Since then I hear brother Floyde is returned but have not yet seen him.²

My dear father [John]'s health has been but very indifferent since you was in Yorkshire; so that, contrary to what I had intended, I have been at home or only at Park Gate ever since. In the daytime he is much as usual. But if he go[es] to bed before one or two [o']clock, [he] is generally forced to rise, else to all appearance he would be suffocated. Soon after he is in an upright posture, he seldom fails to find relief. Of late we generally sit up with him till past the time these fits come on, and then he sometimes rests pretty well the rest of the night.

Last week I heard but a very poor account from Cross Hall. Dear sister [Mary] Bosanquet had for sometime what Mr. [William] Hey (who attended her) calls an inflammation on her lungs. At the first he apprehended no danger, but only thought her complaint would prove tedious. Lately he begged she would call a physician and told her he feared her disorder would terminate in a consumption. She told him she was satisfied with his judgment and begged he would proceed with her as he thought proper. He immediately blistered her side, and if that does not answer the end designed [he] intends to fix a seton there.

Sister Tripp is also much worse and had come to a resolution to have the cancer cut out of her breast.³ But when Mr. Hey examined it, in order to prepare for the operation, [he] was much surprised to find it so far spread (for by the account she had all along given him, he thought it either rather better or at least at a stand) and seemed to think, from many symptoms, the whole mass of blood so affected that it was likely to answer no material end. A young woman near Leeds farther gone than Nancy was cured by using hemlock poultices and drinking a decoction of the inner rind of elm bark, so that (though Mr. Hey would if she chose it still cut her breast) she prefers trying these things at least for sometime.

They are both sweetly supported in spirit, and the last time I heard from them felt the blessed effects of that faith, which believes 'all things shall work together for good unto them that love the Lord'.⁴ I feel much hope that sister Bosanquet will be raised up again, and the efficacy of faith and prayer once more seen. And therefore, my dear sir, entreat our gracious Lord in her behalf and pray that this mother in our Israel may yet be spared to bring many sons and daughters to the Lord of hosts. As to sister Tripp I know not how it is, but of late I seem as if I could only commend her into the hands of him who does all things well and expect from him a sanctified use of this affliction to her precious soul.

¹JW had been in Otley on April 19, 1779.

²These are likely the itinerant John Floyde and his wife. John was admitted to the itinerancy in 1770 (see *Works*, 10:380), and was currently stationed at Leeds. He would desist from travelling in 1782 (ibid., 10:520).

³Ann Tripp (1745–1823) was part of the community of women Mary Bosanquet gathered at Leytonstone, and moved with the community to Yorkshire, where she was governess of Cross Hall school. After Bosanquet married John Fletcher, Tripp and Sarah Crosby moved the community once again to Leeds.

⁴Rom. 8:28.

As to my own part, I bless my dear Lord he has been teaching me lately more of the meaning of these words of the prophets than I ever knew before: 'In confidence shall your strength be.'⁵ Glory be unto his name, I trust in him and know in whom I trust. He keeps my soul in perfect peace. To know, to love, and to enjoy him before whom angels veil their faces is my only aim. And though I know the knowledge I can have of him on earth is but very imperfect to what it shall be when the immortal part within leaves its prison, yet the glories of the Godhead beam forth with such mildness mixed with majesty in the adorable Jesus' face as captivates my whole soul. I daily feel new cause to adore the love I cannot fathom. Faith opens an unbounded prospect. I see such a field before me as makes me daily forget the things which are behind and press toward my calling's glorious prize. And glory be unto my God, my soul pursues in hope of obtaining more of that joy I long to be made capable of receiving the fullness of:

Insatiate to this spring I fly
I drink and yet am ever dry.⁶

About three weeks ago I had a letter from Mr. [Robert] Swan wherein he says he has sinned against God—though not so greatly as some of my brethren have imagined. But he has repented and found forgiveness, and much wishes to be taken into the connection again, as the necessity he has lately been under of silence has laid heavy on his mind. Since then he has written to my brother, and brother asked [me] to write to you in his behalf. Poor man, I trust he has learned by what he has suffered. May God direct you what to do what shall be most for his glory.

Mr. Fairbank, who is a proprietor of our preaching house, is not willing to come into the plan purposed when you was at Otley. Without his mind change, I fear it must still remain in the situation it now is. The rest are tried at him, as they much wished to see the house settled. But nothing can be done without they are all agreed, so for the present we fear it must be dropped. May you, my dear sir, be satisfied with the favour and filled with the blessings of the Lord prays

Your affectionate, though unworthy, daughter,

E. Ritchie

Address: 'The Revd. Mr. Wesley / Lowth'.⁷

Annotation: another hand, '25th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁵Isa. 30:15.

⁶JW, 'We Love Him because He First Loved Us' (originally by Bernard of Clairvaux; taken from translation by Johann Christian Jacobi), st. 9, *CPH* (1741), 40.

⁷I.e., Louth, Lincolnshire; which JW reached on July 2, 1779.

From Thomas Tennant (autobiography)¹

July 1, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I was born in London, in the year 1741. My father came from Norfolk and my mother from Cambridgeshire. They were very honest and well-meaning persons and constantly attended the service of the church, but I fear knew not the power of religion. Shortly after they came to London they saw Mr. [George] Whitefield preaching to a great multitude in Moorfields. As they had never seen or heard of him before, they stared with great astonishment. What he said made some impression on them, and they frequently heard him, till he left England. But when he went to Georgia they were at a loss what to do, till one told them they might hear the same kind of preaching at the Foundery. My father went and heard you, sir, but the first time he did not understand it. But after awhile he understood you very well, and both he and my mother were truly awakened. Presently after they were admitted into the society, which they counted a very great privilege, and continued therein, serving God and his people as long as they lived.

As to myself, I had convictions of sin from my childhood. But as I grew up, I endeavoured to get rid of them, which was partly effected. But I could not shake off the fear of death. I sometimes tried to comfort myself with the thought that death was only my common lot among the rest of mankind. But if I apprehended it near, I was terrified beyond expression. One Sunday afternoon, when I had sauntered up and down St. James's Park, I went into Westminster Abbey, not for devotion but to pass away time. I had not been there long before I was struck with an horrible dread! My sins were set in array against me! I hastened out of the church, but did not expect to get home alive. I seemed ready to expire, and was to my own apprehension

Condemn'd the second death to feel,
Arrested by the pains of hell!²

I cried to the Lord in an agony of fear, who heard me from his holy place and came to my deliverance. My dread and horror were in a measure removed, and I resolved never more to spend any part of the Sabbath in merely seeking my own pleasure.

When I was about fourteen years of age my father put me out to a person who feared God. While I was with him I had frequent visitations from God, and felt the drawings of his blessed Spirit, though I too often resisted them. However I became more serious, which was increased by two severe fits of illness. Before this I had been exceedingly fond of going to plays, yet never went without a dread upon my spirits. When I was there I always seemed as one treading on forbidden ground, and particularly one night when two persons were trampled to death in crowding up the same passage which I had but just before got up.

I also took great delight in reading plays; for which purpose I collected a number of the best I could meet with, and often pleased myself and my companions with the repetition of some of the most striking passages in them. But I found nothing of this kind could give me any real happiness, and was constrained to say, 'This also is vanity!' It will not satisfy an immortal spirit, it will not ease a wounded mind! At last, from a full conviction of this, I committed all my plays to the flames, and determined to spend my leisure hours in reading more profitable books. I therefore read your *Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* with much satisfaction. Yet on reading the former part of your sermon entitled 'The Almost Christian'³ I was quite distressed, and ready to give up all hope. I thought, his *almost* Christian leaves me

¹Thomas Tennent (1741–93) was admitted as an itinerant on trial in 1770 (see *Works*, 10:380). He travelled until bad health forced his settling, a few months before his death. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 414–16.

²CW, Hymn on Psalm 18:1, st. 3, *CPH* (1743), 68.

³See *Works*, 1:131–41.

so far behind that to be *quite* a Christian seems impossible to me. But when I had turned over the next leaf, and saw what was necessary to make a true Christian—viz., ‘the love of God’—my heart was softened and my hopes revived. I said, ‘This is religion, this is Christianity indeed! And this, Lord, is the very thing I want! O give me this love and I shall be satisfied, and all within me shall bless thy name!’

Frequently when I have heard you preach I thought you appeared as with a sword drawn in your hand, with which you cleft me asunder. At such times the word was indeed quick and powerful, piercing and wounding my inmost soul. It was indeed a discernor of the thoughts and intents of my heart. But it still left me without comfort to bewail my wretched condition. Thus I went on, till my burden grew too heavy to be borne. I mourned all the day long. My distress was very great, and I wanted to speak to some experienced person; but being naturally very close and reserved, I could not break through. I was glad indeed when one asked me to go to a meeting of Christian friends, but when I came to the door and heard them singing, I had such an idea both of their goodness and of my own unworthiness that I durst not presume to go in. Therefore I walked back again with a heavy heart.

Some time after this I joined the society, but for a long while durst not venture to go to the Lord’s table. One Sunday I was determined to go, but when I approached my heart failed me and I went back without receiving. But, through the distress of my mind, my legs were scarce able to support me; and being filled with fear, guilt, and shame, I trembled exceedingly. However at last, as a poor, weary, heavy-laden sinner, who had nothing to plead but ‘God be merciful to me for Christ’s sake’, I ventured to eat of that bread and drink of that cup. Just before I came up to the table, these words were deeply impressed upon my mind,

Cover’d with thy blood we are,
Find a part that does not arm,
And strike the sinner there.⁴

This inspired me with such courage that I kneeled down with a strong hope I should not be a victim to God’s justice, but a monument of his mercy. And when Dr. [John] J[ones] gave me the bread and wine, I was enabled to believe that Christ died for *me*, and was filled with peace in the Holy Ghost. I rose from the table with a glad heart, greatly rejoicing in God my Saviour.

After this I walked in the loving fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. I found great sweetness in the word; yea, and in all the other means of grace. Indeed some of the most delightful moments of my whole life were spent in waiting upon God in his ordinances. I enjoyed great tranquillity of spirit, being delivered from my guilty tormenting fears of death and hell. When I laid my body down to rest, I could repose my soul as on the bosom of Jesus, and say,

What if death my sleep invade!
Shall I be of death afraid?
Whilst encircled by thine arm,
Death may strike, but cannot harm.
What if beams of op’ning day
Shine around my breathless clay,
Brighter visions from on high
Shall regale my mental eye.⁵

Meantime I found an earnest desire to live to the glory of God, together with much love to precious souls. And hence I found a desire of preaching—on mentioning which I was desired to go with a

⁴CW, Hymn 122, st. 3, *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* (1745), 104.

⁵Philip Doddridge, ‘An Evening Hymn’, st. 3, *Hymns Founded on Various Texts in the holy Scriptures* (Salop: J. Eddowes and J. Cotton, 1755), 317.

friend, who occasionally exhorted a few people at a house in St. George's Fields. At his request I ventured to speak a few words to them, and found freedom of spirit.

About this time I had a great desire to travel with you, sir. When you was informed of it, you was so kind as to consent to it. So I had the pleasure of accompanying you from March 1770 to the August following, when I was admitted on trial as a travelling preacher and appointed for the Newcastle circuit.

I believe very few, if any, of our preachers set out with so little courage. The depression of spirit I laboured under was nearly insupportable, and if it had not been for the affection and tenderness of my good friend Mr. [Peter] Jaco, who was at that time the assistant, I must have sunk under the burden. The loving, sensible people I laboured among were also very kind to me, and bore with me, though I was with them in weakness, fear, and much trembling.

The next Conference I was sent into Lincolnshire, where I met with many trials, having both the inward and outward cross to bear. Afterwards I was near a year among the poor loving people at Colchester, and I hope my labour was not in vain.

From thence I went to Bradford in Yorkshire, and the year following to Newcastle again. I had now a little more courage than when I was there before and, I trust, was more useful to the people. And from that time I have travelled with more satisfaction than ever I did before.

At present I find a thankful heart for the mercies of a gracious God, and desire to devote myself unreservedly to his service. Indeed it is comfortable to me to reflect, that 'God is love';⁶ that 'he was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself';⁷ that Christ Jesus 'gave himself a ransom for all';⁸ that 'he tasted death for every man';⁹ that 'he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world';¹⁰ and I have often wondered how any man of sense who has tasted that the Lord is gracious can use arguments in opposition to this. But as to the dispute concerning these points, I very seldom mention it in public; never, unless my subject naturally leads to it. And even then, I do it in as few and as calm words as possible. For I am quite convinced that a thousand exclamations and assertions, be they ever so vehemently delivered, will not amount to one argument on either side the question. But what I wish above all things is that I may increase in the knowledge and love of God, and be more holy, happy, and useful every day of my life. Nevertheless, I am truly thankful for, and profited by, the superior talents and labours of any of my brethren, who are more particularly called to explain and defend these glorious truths which I have always believed.

Upon the whole, as far as I know of myself, I love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. And if he is pleased to continue to use in any degree me, his weak unworthy creature, I shall be unfeignedly thankful, and hope to give him all the praise in time and in eternity.

I am, reverend and dear sir, as ever,

Your dutiful son and servant,

Thomas Tennant

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 469–74.¹¹

⁶1 John 4:8.

⁷Cf. 2 Cor. 5:19.

⁸1 Tim. 2:6.

⁹Cf. Heb. 2:9.

¹⁰Cf. 1 John 2:2.

¹¹This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 6:234–40.

From William Mawer¹

Broxholme
July 6, 1779

Reverend Sir,

About three years ago I heard you preach at Gainsborough about building upon the rock.² And glory be to God! I have since then found him to be a Rock of support and defence to my soul. But yet I have not received the abiding witness of his Spirit. Therefore whenever he seems to be absent, my soul is quite restless till he returns.

As to the doctrine of Christian perfection, since it is such a bug-bear in the world, we have reason to bless God for raising up a faithful witness to bear testimony of this truth as it is in Jesus. For as to myself, I am fully convinced that without the perfection which God has required in his word, I cannot be completely happy here, much less be fit to well with him forever.

As to our society, we need your prayers, for our enemies rage horribly. But God is getting himself the victory. Our numbers are increased, and we live in peace and love among ourselves. And we have one little maid who is just brought out of bondage into the liberty of the children of God.

O pray for us, reverend sir, that we may stand fast. That we may walk worthy of our high calling. That we may shine as lights in our dark corner. That Jesus may carry on his work in our hearts with power. And that we may glorify him in life and death, and to all eternity.

Dear sir, I cannot express the love I feel to God and you. O that the Lord God of heaven and earth may so bless you, and all your fellow-labourers, that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ! Till then, I remain, reverend sir,

Your affectionate, though unworthy son in the gospel,

M. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 161.

¹William Mawer was a local preacher and pillar of the society in Broxholme.

²See Matt. 7:24–27.

From Robert Roberts (autobiography)¹

Bolton
July 7, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

When you were at Liverpool in the spring, you desired me to write an account of my life. But at that time I had little thought of doing it, as I could not see that it would answer any valuable end. Having, however, had time to consider the matter seriously, I now judge it may be of some use to those into whose hands it may fall, especially to those among whom I have preached the word of God. I have therefore ventured to send you a sketch of the most material things I can recollect respecting myself, and I pray God that it may be a means of promoting his glory and the cause of religion in the world.

I was born in the year 1731, at Upton, near Chester. My parents were respectable farmers. My mother died when I was but eight years of age, and my father when I was sixteen, to my unspeakable loss. They were industrious, frugal, and prudent, and took more care of their children's morals and education than most parents do. While my father lived I was employed in his business, but after his decease I was put apprentice to a wheelwright in Chester.

As I was brought up a member of the established Church, I attended the church service, but understood neither the prayers, preaching, articles, nor homilies, being ignorant of the Scriptures, and of the power of God. I have reason to believe that the words of St. Paul were but too applicable to myself and the generality of those among whom I then lived: 'We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.'²

I was in great bondage through fear of death from my infancy, and an entire stranger to the way of peace. I had no notion of salvation through a redeemer, and knew no more of the nature and necessity of the new birth than Nicodemus did. Nor do I remember that I ever heard one gospel sermon till I was above twenty years of age. So that I have reason to add, I was at that time 'without Christ, being an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world'.³ And yet I was kept from the commission of scandalous sins. I was sober by constitution, diligent in business, and very careful. And as I went to church oftener than many, I was deemed by myself and those who knew me, better than others. But I was a great sinner before God, and a child of wrath. My heart was deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. And my tempers, words, and actions were abominable in his sight with whom I have to do.

The first good impression, as far as I can recollect, that was made upon my mind was by a few words dropped by Mr. Thomas Brisco, without any seeming design of his. But God sent them home to my heart, and they were as a nail fixed in a sure place. We had been school-fellows when very young, and when I went to live in Cheste, we were intimate companions till he became religious. But then I avoided him, as though he had had the plague, because he was called a Methodist. Nevertheless I retained a secret respect for him. About two years after his conversion, being in company with him and his brother, he happened to mention some rude usage they had met with that day as they returned from the church. Among other things the people cried out, 'There go the sanctified Methodists!' He pitied their ignorance, and with a good deal of fervour wished that what they had said were true; adding, 'If I was sanctified, I should not be long out of heaven.' He talked about death as though he was not afraid of it, but rather as if it were a desirable event. This struck me indeed, and made a deep impression on my soul, and convinced me that there was something in religion which I was a stranger to.

¹Roberts became a traveling preacher in 1759 and served for nearly 40 years. He was among those named in the Deed of Declaration of 1784. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 367–73; and *DEB*, 943.

²Titus 3:3.

³Eph. 2:12.

From this time I determined a good opinion of the Methodists, and believed them to be the servants of the living God. I began to pray and strive against sin. I likewise resolved to join the society, but not yet. For I knew if I went among them, I must suffer persecution. At that time the Methodists were looked upon as the worst of men, and the most horrible things were laid to their charge that could be invented. They were represented as hypocrites, blasphemers, disturbers of the peace of families and of the nation; and to associate with them was said to be the way to destroy body, soul, and substance. Others indeed might curse and swear, get drunk, profane the Sabbath, and starve their families, and yet be in no danger of persecution or ill-treatment of any kind; but on the contrary, were deemed innocent creatures in comparison of the Methodists, etc. I thought, 'I cannot bear this usage where I am known, and from my relations and neighbors; but, if I live to the expiration of my apprenticeship, I will go to London, or some other place where I am not known, and then I will be a Methodist.'

When I was about twenty-one years of age, Mr. Brisco invited me to hear Mr. John Hampson. I went with him, but was very much ashamed and afraid of being seen by any that knew me. However, I was well pleased with what the preacher said, and believed him to be a messenger from God. Notwithstanding this, I did not hear another preacher for near six months, for I feared persecution. Nevertheless, I retained my good opinion of the people, and the way in which they worshipped God; and now and then I spoke a word in their favor. My desires increased, I prayed frequently and more fervently, but was overcome by sin, although I wished to be delivered from it, and made many resolutions against it. But alas, I was without wisdom and power, and too often was led captive by the enemy of souls. At length I took courage, and went to hear another preacher. The discourse was made useful to me, and likewise the conversation of some pious young men belonging to the society. I resolved, by divine grace, to serve God and save my soul. My mind became in a measure enlightened, and I was enabled to forsake my sins and sinful companions all at once. The latter was no hard task, for most of them fled from me as soon as I was reported to be a Methodist. They were glad to get out of my way, lest I should reprove them or cause them to be stigmatized with the same opprobrious name.

I now desired admission into the society. And after being examined by one of the preachers, respecting the state of my mind, my motives, etc., I was favoured with that privilege; for such I then looked upon it to be, and I see it in the same point of light at this day. And I hope and believe I shall have reason to praise God to eternity that I ever was united with that despised people, whom God had greatly blessed. And I trust he will continue to bless them for ages to come.

I now constantly attended upon all the means of grace. I went to church, and received the sacrament almost every Lord's day. Divine light broke in upon my soul with so much clearness that I was astonished at myself and was ready to say, 'Where have I been? And what have I been doing all my life till now?' I compared myself to a man who had lived all his life in a dungeon, and was brought suddenly out of it into the full blaze of day. The Scriptures seemed new, as also the Common-Prayer book and everything that was spiritual. And I was fully convinced that the doctrines taught by the Methodists, and those contained in the word of God and the Common Prayers of the Church of England, must stand or fall together; there being no difference between them. I also saw that the Methodists had been greatly injured by slanders and evil reports. For instead of finding them to be hypocrites, disturbers of the peace of families, enthusiasts, etc., I found them sincere, peaceable, humble, and rational Christians, minding the things of this world in their place, and not neglecting those of another. For these reasons my soul was firmly united to them.

And now I met with what I expected; namely, persecution from relations, friends, and neighbors. And wherever I went some railed, and others cursed me, and said, 'it would be no more sin to kill me than to kill a mad dog'. Others pitied me and cursed the false prophets, as they called the preachers, who had deceived me and driven me out of my senses. Into whatever street or lane in the city I went, I met with reproach and cruel mockings. This was a great trial to me. Yet, by the grace of God, I bore it; though sometimes shame made it a sufficient exercise for all the patience, resolution, and grace I had. From my first setting out to be religious, I never denied the truth. Neither would I suffer its professors to be spoken against, without vindicating them to the utmost of my power. And I thank God I always found somewhat to say that would either convince or stop the mouths of gain sayers. For I have always observed that the

word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, and that the enemies of the truth cannot stand before it.

I had not been long among the Methodists before I was made sensible of my guilt, misery, and danger, and likewise of the absolute necessity of having an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ—that my sins might be forgiven, and that I might be born again, without which, I knew I could not see the kingdom of God. I sought the Lord with earnestness day and night, and even wished it had been possible for me to live without sleep, that I might have spent all my time in this employment. Indeed, I did make a very little sleep serve, though I wrought hard every day. The consideration that I had wasted so much of my short life in a state of sin, ignorance, and rebellion against so good and merciful a God greatly affected me, and I found it hard work to forgive the ministers I had sat under so long a time for not instructing me in the essential doctrines of the gospel. For I was persuaded that if I had heard the truths of the gospel laid down in a clear manner, I should have been brought to an acquaintance with the Lord some years before.

It was in the month of June, 1754, that I joined the society, and about six weeks after I experienced that peace which passeth all understanding. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and his Spirit did bear witness with my spirit that I was his child. And now I blessed his holy name that ever I was born. I loved him who had first loved me, and with joy declared his goodness to my fellow travellers, and we rejoiced together.

In a few weeks after I had found peace with God I began to see and feel the depravity of my nature in a greater degree than I ever had done before. At first I was dejected and cast down. Then I began to doubt that I had deceived myself in concluding that the Lord was reconciled to me. And, my comfort decreasing, by and by I entirely cast away my confidence. And now a horrible dread overwhelmed my soul. And to increase my distress, Satan threw his fiery darts at me, which stuck fast in my mind, particularly blasphemous thoughts. For some months such thoughts crowded into my mind as are not fit to be mentioned, and which could only proceed from the prince of darkness. The enemy then suggested that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, that there was no mercy for me, and that these thoughts were not from him but arose from my own heart. This affected me more than anything I had ever felt. To think that I should have such thoughts against that blessed God who had been so kind to me, and whom I desired to love and honour for ever, pierced me with inexpressible anguish.

In a short time I gave up all hope of mercy and deliverance, and sunk into utter despair. I imagined that I had blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, which threw me into such inexpressible misery that I had no rest day or night; but in the morning I was ready to say, 'Would God it were evening!' and in the evening, 'Would God it were morning!' I fasted, prayed, and used every means of grace constantly, and resolved to serve God as long as I lived, if he did send me to hell when I died. I do not know that I gave way to one known sin, open or secret, when this distress came upon me, except that of unbelief. I conversed with the most experienced of the children of God I met with, but could find none who had drunk so deep of the wormwood and gall as I had done. However, they did all in their power to comfort me. They told me that God was with me, and would deliver me. I likewise read all the books I met with that were calculated to direct and help a soul in deep distress, but found few suited to my dreadful case. The books I received most benefit from were, [Robert] Bolton's *Instructions for the Right Comforting of Afflicted Consciences*, [John] Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and his *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. At one time I was a little comforted with the following lines:

I never shall rise
To my first paradise,
Or come my Redeemer to see;
But I feel a faint hope
That at last He will stoop,
And His pity shall bring Him to me.⁴

⁴CW, 'Hymns for One Fallen from Grace', XV, st. 16, *HSP* (1749), 126

One day when I was at work, musing on my unhappy state, those precious words of Scripture were applied to my soul with some degree of power: 'When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.'⁵ This afforded me some consolation, but it was only like the morning cloud and early dew, it soon vanished away. I often thought that both God and the whole creation were against me, and concluded that I should have been happy had I been anything but a man, and was ready to say, 'O that I had never been born!' But one Saturday evening, at a prayer meeting, the Lord blessed me with the powerful drawings of his love, and with a dawning of hope that he would yet be gracious to me. I was as a man raised from the dead, for I had been a long time in darkness and would, I thought, have given as many worlds, had it been in my power, as there are minutes in eternity, for the least dawning of hope. From this time till my great deliverance, I frequently found comfortable visits from on high.

My great distress continued about nine months, and the Lord was pleased to sanctify it to me. I was more abundantly sensible of the power of unbelief, and of my helplessness. I clearly saw I must be saved by grace or not at all. I was stripped from all self-righteousness, and every other dependence but a crucified Saviour, and was made willing to be saved in God's own way as a sinner; yea, as the most unworthy of all creatures. I thought I was willing to wait till my last breath, if I were but sure the Lord would then smile upon me and show me his salvation. The Lord then graciously manifested himself unto me as my Lord and my God, in a powerful manner. He overturned my unbelief, and all my doubts and fears. He removed all my misery, and filled me with peace and joy through believing. So that I was as a giant refreshed with new wine; my cup ran over, and I was ready to proclaim my great Deliverer's praise upon the house-top. I could no more doubt of the favour of God than of my own existence. And such were the impressions then made upon my mind that I was a stranger to doubt or tormenting fear for many years after.

Being appointed to meet a class, I endeavoured to comfort and strengthen my brethren, and to promote the work of God both among the society and others. I found a willingness to do or suffer anything, so that I might glorify God and be a means of saving sinners. After some time I gave a word of exhortation, first in Chester, then in North Wales, Cheshire, and Lancashire; and the Lord was pleased to make my labours acceptable to many, and useful to some, particularly at Park-gate and Neston, where I lived and followed my business near two years. But I had many trials, for the people agreed not to employ me because I was a Methodist preacher. I was brought before the justices, at one of their monthly meetings. But this did not afford my persecutors cause for triumph, for I had words given to me which confounded them all.

Many things were done to prevent me from staying in Neston, but in vain. For after trying other means, I leased some land there. Then they threatened to press me,⁶ which obliged me to get a licence. Afterwards, they threatened to punish me if I preached in an unlicensed place, and I was obliged to get the house licensed. But this did me little service, for they sent for the man who lived in the house and, partly by threatenings and partly by promises, prevailed upon him not to let me preach there any more. We then had another house to seek, and could not meet with one but at an extravagant price, near two miles from the town. However we went thither winter and summer, and some seed was sown that abides to this day. A few sinners were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and for many years they have had a convenient preaching-house to worship God in.

It was strongly impressed upon my mind that I was called to preach the gospel, and I found such desires to do it that everything else seemed burdensome to me, as I judged I was out of my place. And though the persecution and opposition began to cease, and some of the principal gentlemen in the place employed me so as to give me a fair prospect of doing well with regard to temporal things, yet as I thought I was called to be an instrument in the Lord's hands of saving souls, all worldly prospects were of little account to me. I prayed to God for direction, that I might not run before I was sent, and that his will, and not mine, might be done. This I wished above all things, but at the same time I saw that the saving of one soul would be of more consequence than anything else under the sun.

⁵Luke 22:32.

⁶I.e., require him to serve as a soldier.

I had now several invitations to preach in different places. And as I was willing to go wherever I could, I sometimes took long journeys on foot, and bore my own expenses, which I did with pleasure. After labouring in this manner upwards of two years, I was advised by the preachers who were then in the circuit to give up myself wholly to the work of God. I agreed so to do, and at the Conference held at London in July 1759 I was appointed for Wiltshire circuit. After settling my temporal affairs, I set out for my circuit in the month of September following. So that if I am spared till September next, I shall have been twenty years employed in the Lord's vineyard—two of which I spent in Ireland, upwards of one in Scotland, and the rest in various parts of this kingdom.

But were I to give you an account of what happened in every place respecting my labours, success, trials, persecutions, etc., my letter would swell into a small volume. Waving therefore these particulars, I shall only add a few words more.

I can say, to the glory of God, that I have not gone a warfare at my own charges. I mean, it was not in my own strength that I set out, or have continued labouring these many years. And I am sure it was not to enrich myself. Food and raiment were all I could expect, or ever desired, as a temporal reward. For though I have a numerous family, it has principally been supported these fourteen years out of the income of the little estate which providence entrusted me with. And I have great reason to be thankful that I have been enabled to do the Lord's work, not of necessity, nor by constraint, but of a willing mind.

If I had desired it, I might long ago have had a settled place and comfortable maintenance, both for myself and family. But firmly believing that I was ordained to preach the gospel, I willingly remained where I was called, being persuaded that I could not be more usefully employed than I then was. And I am now of opinion that if it were right for me to choose any employment, I would rather be Methodist preacher than anything else.

Ever since I began to preach I have been settled in my judgment touching the extent of the atonement, believing that Christ tasted death for every man, and that there is a day of grace for all the posterity of Adam, and a door of salvation at which, if they knock, it shall be opened unto them. Indeed, wherever I have yet laboured there have been some visible proofs of success. And I praise God I still find as great a desire to promote the Redeemer's cause and interests among mankind as ever; and, if my health and strength will permit, I am resolved, through God's assistance, to preach the everlasting gospel as long as I live.

I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient son in the gospel,

Robert Roberts

Source: published transcription; Thomas Jackson (ed.), *Lives of Early Methodist Preachers* (4th edn., London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1871), 2:262–76.

From Andrew Blair¹

Belfast
July 22, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Though I once designed going to London, to advise with you concerning my present state of mind and my scruples about preaching, I have declined taking that journey and instead thereof shall write to you my objections—hoping you will favour me with an answer as soon as convenient.

When I told you my state in Sligo, you observed it was that of a servant, and not of a son. It is no better with me since. I feel my bondage great through unbelief, and such deadness of soul that I cannot mourn with those that mourn, nor rejoice with those that rejoice. Hence my zeal is very small, and I am condemned for doing the Lord's work so negligently.

And as a preacher, I judge that my gifts are very small, and I see but little prospect of improvement, as my memory grows weaker. The fruit of my labour (as far as I can judge) in the conversion of souls has also been small ever since I travelled. This, sir, is the general state of my mind, and these the objections which have at times greatly distressed me.

I therefore refer it to you whether it would not be better to decline so public a character, until I have experienced a larger degree of grace. And if you think that going to London to follow my business is best, I beg you will let me know. But if you think it my duty to travel in this state, you know what circuit will suit me best. And therefore I submit to your determination, and remain, reverend sir,

Your servant in the gospel,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 162.²

¹Andrew Blair (c. 1748–93), a native of Ulster, was converted under Methodist preaching in 1771. He was admitted on trial as an itinerant at the 1778 Conference (see *Works*, 10:474) and assigned to Armagh, just southwest of Belfast. He served until his death. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 55–60; and *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1793), 1:278.

²Note added in *AM*: 'N.B. We see here a notable instance of that integrity and candour which influence the most common preachers among the Methodists. Is it not much to be wished that such a spirit was found in all the ministers of the Church of Christ?'

From Thomas Payne

Ballycumber
July 27, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Last Wednesday I went to Ballyboy,¹ and was received by the family of the D—s who are the leading men of the whole country. I preached to near five hundred persons, many of whom are convinced of sin, while the prejudices of hundreds more are removed.

The next day I went from Ballyboy to Pallace,² where I preached once before in the old church. I preached now at four different houses of the most creditable people in the country, and all in the compass of two miles. I was received hospitably, and each of these houses are now open to receive the next preachers that come.

Mr. M. (worth three thousand a year) heard me and invited me to his house, where I dined last Sunday. He enquired into the nature of our doctrine and discipline. On telling him all I knew, he seemed quite satisfied and gave me a general invitation to his house, and also told me that we ought to be encouraged.

I came yesterday to this town, where there are seven convinced of sin and one converted. I preached here last night, and for the first time Mr. A., the owner of the whole town, came to hear me. When preaching was over he invited me home, and gave me a general invitation to his town and house; he also telling me that we ought to be encouraged.

On the whole I have this year, in particular manner, opposed the trifling and worldly-mindedness of the rich Methodists, and thereby lost the favour of many of them. But I have gained the friendship of other rich men, and have planted the gospel in many new places. I have been a visible means in the hands of God of convincing above a hundred sinners, and of converting near twenty. As to myself, [I] am more than ever alive to God, and zealous in his cause. I fear nothing but my own heart. I am anxious for nothing but to live to the glory of God.

To this end an interest in your prayers will great oblige, reverend sir,
Your friend and fellow-labourer,

Thomas Payne

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 163–64.

¹Ballyboy, Co. Offaly; orig., 'Balliboy'.

²Possibly means Pollagh, Co. Offaly.

From Ann Bolton

Witney
July 30, 1779

Reverend Sir,

My soul magnifies the Lord and adores his sacred power, so gloriously manifested in my salvation. I experience the blessedness of being devoted to him in sickness and in health, in prosperity and adversity. My way still lies through suffering, and I never saw so much as of late the expediency thereof; nor felt my heart so reconciled thereto. Yet when I am ready to cry out, 'How can this be for my good?' at such times Satan tempts me to envy and discontent, on which, though I groan being burdened, yet the Lord suffers not my faith to fail.

I have been led within these few days to see the necessity of keeping the witness of the Spirit clear, that Jesus reigns supreme in my heart and that all within me is holiness unto him. I see that the believer's privilege is very great, and that holiness becometh well the habitation of the Most High. I am well assured that he would do great and glorious things for us, if we would but faithfully follow him. This encourages me to look up, and to encounter every difficulty. In looking to and in depending on Jesus all my safety and happiness consists. I want to do this more constantly, and with stronger faith and greater simplicity.

The dispensations of divine providence have lately had a peculiar tendency to fix my affections on things above. I often view the vanities of earth in the most contemptible light, while my heart pities those who seek no other bliss. I long to be more helpful to others, and feel a determination to live and speak as one born from above. That the Lord may grant me this grace, is the real desire of, reverend sir,

Your unworthy friend,

A. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 500–01.

From Dr. James Hamilton¹

Dunbar
July 30, 1779

Reverend Sir,

The good opinion that you and others have of Miss S— caused me to propose her coming here as a governess to my children; at the same time I have a view of a closer connexion, provided we prove agreeable to each other. My fortune is about 150£ a year, independent of my medical practice. Had I a larger income, I might perhaps be more useful in travelling, and who knows but providence may increase it.

I have due to me at Lisbon (left by my late wife's brother) fifteen hundred pounds; but that is so embarrassed that I do not reckon on it. Miss S— in a letter to me says she walks by your advice. May the wisdom from above direct you to advise to our mutual good! Only consider the destitute situation of my family. I feel it necessary for me to marry, and may God direct me in all things.

The enclosed letter came to my hand some time ago. But as I did not know where you were, I kept it by me until you would be in London. I cannot go to Conference this year with a clear conscience, as I have no one to take care of my business and family. May the Almighty fill the house where you meet with the Holy Ghost! And may all your souls be filled with love! May the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church be directed by infinite wisdom!

I hope we are to have preaching here according to the plan agreed on when you were with us. Could Mr. S. be one of our preachers, it might be a great blessing to us.²

My kind love to all the preachers. Pray for me who am, with the greatest love and esteem,

Your most affectionate son and servant,

James Hamilton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 499–500.

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.

²Hamilton was likely requesting Joseph Saunderson, who was assigned instead to Aberdeen that year, but moved to Edinburgh in 1780.

From Richard Freeman¹

August 1, 1779

Friend John Wesley,

Having for a considerable time past been greatly puzzled and perplexed in mind concerning the first matter of evil or what that was which changed that once bright 'Morning Star' or 'Son of the Morning' into such an hateful and detestable spirit of palpable darkness now called the devil or 'Prince of the bottomless pit'; having, I say, been greatly puzzled and perplexed about that most wonderful and astonishing event, etc., etc., etc., etc.

I shall therefore take it kind if thee wilt send me thy judgment or sentiments upon the following questions:

1. What was the first matter of evil or what was it which cast Prince Lucifer from the highest heaven down to the nethermost hell?
2. Whether the host of men would have been called into being, provided Lucifer had kept his first estate in the light?
3. How or after what manner was it that the triune or threefold God was born to this world a son of man, in order to save the fallen host of men from eternal death and hell?
4. What is God himself?
5. What is the inhabi[ta]tion of God?
6. What is that ineffable light in which God dwells?
7. Is that light near or afar off, or both?
8. What is that heaven in which God dwells with the angels of light and souls of holy men?
9. Is that heaven near at hand or far off, or both?
10. What meant the apostle Paul when speaking of God he thus expressed himself 'He is not far from everyone of us for in him we live and move and have our being'?²
11. Did not God create Adam and his host in order to supply the place of fallen Lucifer and his host?
12. Was not this planetary system the kingdom and seat of Prince Lucifer the devil while he kept his first estate in the light?
13. Do not the Spirit search all things yea the deep things of God?³
14. Did not the devil fall soon after his creation?
15. Did not the creation of this visible world soon follow thereupon?
16. For what reason did God Almighty from eternity forbear to create angels, until about eight or nine thousands of years ago?
17. Whether God will create anything more after the time of this visible world of stars and elements?
18. Is there any corporeal thing by which the huge space of eternity is bounded or encircled round about?
19. What is the soul of man, how comes it into the body, in what part of the body does it reside, and how does it go out of the body again in the hour of death?
20. And lastly, out of what shall the bodies of the glorified saints be composed in which they shall inhabit heaven?

¹Richard Freeman (c. 1752–1782), a member of the Society of Friends and a tailor by trade, struggled with mental instability. He lived in Yeovil, Somerset; where he died Mar. 27, 1782. See Frank Baker, 'John Wesley and a Quaker Mystic', *WHS* 26 (1948): 114–16.

²Cf. Acts 17:27–28.

³See 1 Cor. 2:10.

Upon which questions, if thee please to send thy judgment or sentiments, thee wilt much oblige one who wishes salvation not to thee only but likewise to all the host of Adam. Amen. Hallelujah.

R. Freeman

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), John Wesley Papers (MSS 153), 3/18.⁴

⁴A transcription (with minor variants) of a copy kept at the Archives of the Friends House in London was published by Frank Baker in *WHS* 26 (1948): 114–16.

From John Murlin (autobiography)

August 1, 1779

I was born in the parish of St. Stephen, in Cornwall, in the year 1722. I was mostly employed in the farming business till I was twelve years of age. My father died before I was thirteen and, I hope, died in peace.

I was then desirous to learn the business of a carpenter, and accordingly at Michaelmas 1735 was bound apprentice to one. My master lived utterly without God in the world. He was much given to swearing and taking God's name in vain, and I too readily followed his bad example and was much addicted to that vice.

At Michaelmas 1742 my apprenticeship expired. I then wrought with another master three or four years, with whom I made some progress both in my business and in my learning; applying myself in the daytime to my trade, and in the evening to writing and accounts. But all this time I was an enemy to God and to my own soul. Indeed at times I had convictions for sin, and some concern about my future state. But being surrounded by those who had no thought of God, and having no one to direct me, I quickly stifled my convictions and became worse than I was before. To cursing and swearing I soon added gaming, and soon after, drunkenness. Lord, how great is thy mercy in sparing those that live in open rebellion against thee!

In February 1749 I heard the Methodist preachers. I was soon brought under deep conviction on account of my numerous sins. The remembrance of them was grievous to me, the burden of them was intolerable. I grudged myself the food I eat. I thought a burned crust was too good for me. 'The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me, and his hand pressed me sore.'¹ I frequently kneeled at my bedside and wrestled with God in prayer till midnight. And sometimes I was afraid to lie down in bed, lest I should awake in hell. At other times, I fell on the ground and roared for the very disquietness of my heart. Yea, and when I heard the preachers speak of the love of Christ, and of his willingness to save poor lost sinners, it fixed my convictions the deeper to think I should be such a rebel against so loving a Saviour.

In April I heard Mr. [John] Downes preach on part of the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke. Under this sermon I found a great deliverance. My burden was taken away. And from this day, I never found that distress which I had felt before. But I was not fully satisfied that my sins were forgiven, though I read and prayed, and used all the other means of grace at all opportunities.

I had now a calm serenity in my soul, and often much peace and joy. But I wanted a clearer manifestation of the pardoning love of God. And this he was pleased to give me soon after, under the preaching of Richard Trather, a local preacher. I could then indeed say, 'Lord, thine anger is turned aside, and thou comfortest me. Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. For the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song. He also is become my salvation.'² And although since then I have met with sore trials, and sometimes have been brought very low; yet, blessed be God, I have never lost my confidence, and I trust I never shall.

Some time after this Mr. William Roberts, then the travelling preacher in our circuit, told me I must take care of the little class which met near the place where I lived. I was struck with fear, and went out of the room, telling him I could not undertake it. But he insisted upon it, and as the people desired I should, I at last complied; and yet with fear and trembling, as I thought there were some in the class whose abilities were far superior to mine.

In order to qualify myself a little better for the employ, I bought a large Bible, with some other books, and applied myself to prayer and reading, chiefly the holy Scriptures. And it pleased God to open my understanding more and more to see the wondrous things of his word.

But about this time I was often beset by some disputatious Anabaptists, endeavouring to prove unconditional election. I asked them, 'Can this stand without absolute reprobation? And if God from

¹Cf. Ps. 38:2.

²Cf. Isa. 12:1–2.

eternity determined the end—viz., the damnation of the reprobates—did he not also determine their sins, as the means to it? But in saying this, do you not make God the author of all the sin that ever was committed? And if so, is he not the author of all the sins of devils as well as of men.'

I now met my class constantly, to whom I sometimes gave a word of exhortation. And I never found myself more happy than when I was among the children of God.

There were at this time in the neighbourhood several local preachers. But they had more places to preach at on a Sunday than they could possibly supply. One of them, Thomas Randall, came to me, and said, 'The people are starving for want of bread, and can you withhold it from them? The Lord has put it into your hand, but you are not a good steward. Otherwise you would dispense to all their portion of meat in due season.' His words made a deep impression on my mind. And though I put him off for the present, yet I could not shake off a continual fear lest I was burying my talent in the earth.

Some time after this, preaching had been appointed at a neighbouring place and no preacher was at liberty to go. I was in a strait, not knowing what to do. At length I came to this resolution, 'I will go this once, and see whether I am enabled to speak to the people or not; and then I shall be better satisfied, either to speak again or to be silent.' So I set out with a trembling heart. When I came to the place, there were more people than the house would contain. This obliged them to carry out the stand. I got upon it with fear and trembling, gave out an hymn, and went to prayer, wherein I found unexpected liberty. I then read those words, 'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord,' Acts 3:19. It pleased God to give me to speak with a free heart, and with a ready tongue. The people gave great attention to the word, and tears ran down many cheeks. I hope the good impressions were not soon effaced: for when I was last in Cornwall (in July 1777) some of the people remembered what they heard that day.

Not long after, I was appointed to labour in conjunction with several other local preachers. And though my abilities were not large, yet God gave me favour in the eyes of the people, and it pleased him to make the plain words I spoke a blessing to many souls.

At this time the world began to smile upon me. Living with my mother, my board cost me nothing. I got much money at my business. And I had a rich uncle, who always expressed a peculiar regard for me; and it was expected, whenever he died, he would leave me the greatest part of his substance. Being in so agreeable a situation in the midst of my Christian friends, I built me an house in the parish of St. Mewan, in order to fix my tabernacle.

Just then I received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Wesley inquiring if I was willing to be a travelling preacher? And, if I was, desiring me to go into the west of Cornwall. I wrote back my objections: 1) that my aged mother desired I would not leave her; 2) that not only my relations, but my Christian friends were unwilling to part with me; and 3) that though I might be of some use among my neighbours, yet my abilities were not equal to so great a work. Mr. Wesley soon sent me a second letter, which fully answered all my objections. So after a short struggle in my mind, I resolved to give up all for Christ. And accordingly on October the 12th, 1754, I took my horse, and without delay rode away into the west of Cornwall.

I laboured in various parts of England from this time till September 15, 1756. Then I embarked with Captain Davis for Ireland, with four other preachers—two of whom, I trust, James Massiot,³ and Nicholas Gilbert, are safe landed in paradise.

The next year I embarked at Dublin, with Lawrence Coughlan, landed at Parkgate, and rode up to the Conference in London. Thence I went to Whitehaven, where I was much blest, both in my soul and in my labours. Here I met with a companion who for three or four years was inseparable from me. His name was Benjamin Biggs, a favourite servant of the late Sir James Lowther. With him I embarked, in July 1758, for Liverpool. But the captain deceived us and carried us to the Isle of Man. Here we stayed a week. The second evening I preached in a large barn. But on Sunday, it would not contain the congregation, so I was obliged to preach abroad. The people in general behaved well, and gave great

³James Massiot (1710–58) began itinerating about 1751, and died in July 1758 in Cork, Ireland. JW performed his funeral; see JW, *Journal*, July 7, 1758, *Works*, 21:158.

attention. After I left them, some of them sent to Whitehaven, desiring to have another preacher. But it was some years before another preacher went, there being so little probability of doing any considerable good while the whole island was a nest of smugglers. The Duke of Atholl was then king of the Isle.⁴ But the case is now widely altered. Since it has been purchased of the Duke, and united to the crown of England, that detestable trade is rooted out. A considerable part of the island is cultivated. At one part of it an herring fishery is established; at another, a large linen manufactory. And we now see the fruit of our labours there, in the conversion of many sinners to God.

From August 1767 to August 1768 I was in the Bristol circuit. There was this year a very remarkable increase of the work of God in Kingswood. Above an hundred and sixty members were added to the society, and thirteen or fourteen children at the school were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. But which of these will endure to the end?

When I look back on the many years I have now spent in testifying the gospel of the grace of God, though I have not made that advancement in his ways which I might have done, yet I can say to his glory, he hath so kept me, that none can lay anything to my charge with regard to my moral conduct since God first spoke peace to my soul in April 1749.⁵

I am clearly convinced that God has called me to preach his everlasting gospel. And the more, because it has pleased him by his Spirit to confirm the word of his messenger. Indeed I am fully persuaded, that he does confirm the word of all whom he hath sent, by turning sinners, through them, 'from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God'.⁶

And I believe that Christ 'is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto God through him'.⁷ I cannot credit them who are continually telling the people that the Canaanite must dwell in the land, to humble them—that is, Belial must be a partner with Christ in this work; as though Christ was not sufficient to humble the soul of God's children without calling in sin and the devil to his assistance.

I bless God my heart is engaged in his work. And there is nothing gives me greater satisfaction than to hear of the prosperity of Sion. Yet how much longer I shall be able to travel, I cannot tell, as I have a settled rheumatism in my knee and thigh, and am far past the meridian of life. But in all circumstances I have chose God for my portion, and the lot of my inheritance forever. He hath been my helper hitherto, and I trust he will help to the end. O Lord, forsake me not in my old age! Lay thine everlasting arms beneath me, and give me a safe and comfortable passage through the valley of the shadow of death, and bring me to thy holy hill, to praise thy name for evermore!

Meantime, I bless God I can say to his glory I do find constant communion with him. And I pay no regard to those who tell us, 'You must come from the mount, and you must not mind your frames and feelings.' No! If I have the peace of God, do I not feel it? If I do not feel it, I have it not. And if I do not feel joy in the Holy Ghost, it does not exist. And shall I not feel it more and more, if I go on from faith to faith; if I daily 'grow in grace' (as I trust I shall) 'and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ?'⁸

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 530–36; also issued as a booklet; *Bibliography*, No. 372.iii.⁹

⁴James Murray, 2nd Duke of Atholl (1690–1764).

⁵Orig., '1743'; a misprint.

⁶Acts 26:18.

⁷Cf. Heb. 7:25.

⁸Cf. 2 Pet. 3:18.

⁹This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 3:293–306.

From S[arah] J[ames]¹

Caerleon
August 6, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I am pained when I recollect how long it is since I was favoured with your letter, because by my long silence I fear you conclude either that I am very ungrateful or else that I did not like your advice; neither of which was the case. But the true cause was I did not choose to write till I could fully determine what course to pursue.

Before your letter came, my friends had given me the same advice, which I was almost convinced must be right, though I was unwilling to yield to the conviction. But when I read yours, I felt the truth and importance of your advice, and was thankful for it, as it strengthened my resolution to follow that which I now believe I can never prosper without. For I fear there are not many true Christians in Caerleon, and I was sensible the Lord only could give me power to part with my friends there whom I sincerely love. I have indeed earnestly prayed for resolution, and have abundant reason to be thankful, as I believe the Lord will give me the answer of my prayers. At present my desire is to be, not only almost, but altogether a Christian. I have long tried to reconcile religion and the world together, but O may I never attempt it more!

The family I was with at Shoreham I found indeed such as you described. And I trust my visit was not in vain. For while I was there the Lord gave me one more offer of returning unto him, which by his assistance I am determined to do. As I have received so much benefit already from the conversation of Christian friends, I shall certainly esteem it a great privilege to be much with Miss [Elizabeth] Johnson and Mrs. Castleman,² as I am well assured that their examples, prayers, and admonitions will have good effect on me, if I am not wanting to myself.

I am going into Brecknockshire in about nine days. Therefore, if you favour me with an answer to this, please to direct for me at Mr. B[old]'s in Brecon.³ As I wish to see and hear you, I will endeavour to be in Bristol about the latter end of September. But if I should be disappointed, I hope you will favour me with an interest in your prayers, that I may be made more alive to God, that I may be stirred up to be more in earnest in praying for myself and in working out my salvation with fear and trembling. And I am the more urgent in this particular as I am deeply sensible of my manifold wants and weaknesses, and as I know that the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man will avail with God. I am, reverend sir,

Your obliged and unworthy friend,

S. J.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 551–52.

¹Apparently Sarah James (b. 1753), the daughter of Capt. John and Margaret (Jenkins) James, who lived in the Earl's Meads neighbourhood of east Bristol and were friends of CW and his family.

²Letitia (Fisher) Castleman (1738–1822), a pupil of Mary (Francis) Maddern at Kingswood, married John Castleman (d. 1801), a Bristol surgeon, in 1758. She and her husband were supporters of JW.

³Hugh Bold (1731–1809) was a lawyer, and steward of the Wesleyan society in Brecon, Brecknockshire.

From Hester Ann Roe

Macclesfield
August 7, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Every day brings me fresh, and more abundant reason to praise the Lord. For every day I can tell him, 'Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, better than ever I did before!'¹ My soul dwells continually under the shadow of his wings, and rests secure within the arms of his love. O what grace! That the high and holy God should condescend thus to bless one so unworthy, so ignorant, so weak! But I prove daily that the greatest unworthiness is no hindrance with him, if we are willing to be blest. What a mercy is it that nothing but sin can separate us from him, or any way interrupt that holy intercourse, that sweet communion betwixt him and the believing soul. How wretched is that man whose happiness depends on anything but God! And am *I* delivered from this wretchedness! What *me*, who was once tied down to earth! *Me*, a slave to sense and sin, who knew no other bliss? Am *I* set free from this? And made a child, and an heir of God? O what mercy! What love! O where shall I his praise begin! What is there which is not contained in that word: To know him! He is Jehovah, the Almighty; the Incomprehensible! Yet he is *my* God! yea, and if I cleave unto him, will be my God forever and ever, and my guide even unto death! He walketh with me through the water. He is my sun, my shield, and my exceeding great reward.

In a letter from cousin J[oseph] R[oe] he tells me he providentially met you at Gloucester.² How good is the Lord! I should be glad if you could tell me how to direct for him. His sister P[eggy] goes on very well, and bears the cross with humility and patience.³ Miss N. too is humble, steady, watchful, and happy. Glory be to God, my soul is deeply interested in the prosperity of Zion! I share in all the joys and sorrows of God's dear people. O pray for me still, reverend sir, and praise the Lord for all his goodness to

Your unworthy, but truly affectionate friend,

H. A. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 553–54.

¹Cf. John 21:17.

²Joseph Roe (1716–1820) was a son of Hester's uncle Charles and Mary (Stockdale) Roe of Macclesfield.

³Margaret ('Peggy') Roe (b. 1761). Her brother Robert recorded on Aug. 2, 1776 'I heard the joyful news that my sister Peggy was justified'; see Robert Roe to JW, Sept. 28, 1782.

From William Hunter (autobiography)

[London]

August 18[–29], 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

According to your desire, I take the opportunity to write a little of the dealings of God with me. But as I have not kept any account in writing, many things have slipped my mind.

I was born in Northumberland, at a little village near Plessey,¹ in the year 1728. I was put to school early, and taught to read the Scriptures from a child, but delighted most in the historical parts of them. I felt a degree of the fear of God when very young, and sweet drawings of love. Sometimes the thoughts of death were very dreadful to me, so that I felt very unhappy. I once dreamed that Satan came to me, and would have me; when I waked I was full of fear, and prayed much that I might be delivered from him, and the impressions abode upon my mind for many days. But as I had nobody to teach me the right way of coming to Christ, these good impressions gradually wore off.

When I was about fourteen, my father being a farmer, I was put to learn all the branches of the farming. My father was very severe with me, and I dreaded him very much. And yet I was often guilty of much disobedience against him, for which I have been much ashamed before the Lord.

The first time you came to Plessey,² I, with several of my father's family, came to hear you. Some of my brothers were much taken with you and, I trust, will have cause to bless God for it forever.

When I was about sixteen I heard Mr. [Christopher] Hopper. As soon as he began to speak, his words affected me deeply—not with terror, but with love. I had a taste of heaven. It seemed as though I was created anew. There was a wonderful change in my tempers and conduct. I laid aside everything that I thought was contrary to the will of God, and practised all religious duties. I attended preaching on all occasions, and felt much sweetness therein, and love to those that I believed were devoted to God.

I went on in this way for some time, till my companions began to take notice of me, and call me Methodist. Some of them set upon me one Sunday, and cursed and swore bitterly at me, telling me I was going to leave the Church [of England], and the religion I was brought up in. This had a strange effect upon me. I gave way to them. They prevailed upon me to go to the alehouse; there I was overtaken by my old sins again. The Spirit of the Lord departed from me. My heart became as hard as a stone. Darkness covered my mind again, and I was as senseless to the things of God as though I had never known anything at all about them.

I went on in this wretched state many months, living totally without God in the world. Through the advice of a young man, I went to hear preaching again. A great light was communicated to my understanding by the word, and it pierced my conscience like a sword. I felt my inward parts to be very wickedness. All the sins of my life stared me in the face, and lay as a heavy burden upon my conscience. I roared for disquietness of heart, and wept and made supplication. I was convinced I could not help myself, that I could not do anything to reconcile myself to God. And I had many fears lest the day of grace was past. O, the distress of soul I went through for many months! It was as though I had been forsaken of God, and hell was already begun in me. But the Lord was pleased to give me power over sin. I forsook every sinful way, and all my sinful companions. I sought the Lord with all my heart in all the means of grace. I attended preaching on all occasions, and read the Scriptures with great diligence. The way of salvation, revealed therein through Christ, was made clear to me, and I pleaded nothing but the merits of Christ for forgiveness. I often rose in the night to read and pray, and the language of my heart was,

¹Orig., 'Placey'.

²See JW, *Journal*, Apr. 1, 1743, *Works*, 19:321–22.

If I ne'er find the sacred road,
I'll perish crying out for God.³

I felt great love to the Methodists, especially to the preachers, as the servants of the most high God, sent to teach us the way of salvation. The people took notice of me, talked with me, and wished me to cast in my lot amongst them. I did so, though I did not think myself worthy; and I bless God I have never felt a desire to leave them since. I continued mourning after the Lord, and at length he heard my cry. One day, as I remember I was reading in a book where the writer was answering that objection concerning the day of grace being past, the Lord was pleased to send me deliverance. I found springing hope, and a sense of his goodness. How did I admire the love of God, and the love of Jesus Christ to me! All my thoughts were swallowed up in heavenly contemplation, and I could truly say, 'The Lord is my life and my salvation, whom shall I fear?'⁴ 'Thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.'⁵

I now tried what the Spirit had wrought in me by the marks laid down in Holy Scripture, and hence I found reason to believe that I belonged to Christ, and was a child of God. I made a free-will offering of all I had, to be his forever. And I thank him, from the ground of my heart, that I have been kept in the same mind to this day; though I have great cause to be ashamed that I have made no better improvement, and often mourn and weep on that account.

When I had thus found the goodness of God to my own soul, I could not forbear speaking of it to others, and the Lord gave me wonderful light and courage in his blessed work. He helped me to reprove sin, wherever I met with it, with humility, meekness, and much prayer—yet without fearing the face of any man, though many said I was out of my mind, yea and wished me out of the world. The Lord enabled me to set my face as a flint, and to bear a testimony for him wherever I went, and I was much blessed in so doing.

There was a little town not far from ours where I sometimes went, got a few poor people together, and talked to them about their souls. I often read the Scriptures to them, and sometimes made some remarks thereon. The Lord was pleased to bless my weak endeavours among them, so that a few of them gathered together, and the preacher joined them in a society, and put me in to be the leader. I met with many trials in this little way, and was often tempted to give it up; but I durst not.

I used to travel far on the Lord's day, to hear the word of God. If it happened the preacher did not come, I was pressed upon to give an exhortation to the people. This I frequently did, but I often went home distressed to the last degree, through a deep sense of my own unworthiness. Yet it was not always so. At other times I was happy and lively, having strong evidence that I was doing the will of God.

Meantime several of the preachers spoke to me about travelling. But the importance of the work made me afraid, till in the year 1767, at the London Conference, Mr. [Jacob] Rowell recommended me and I was taken in upon trial. I was then appointed for the Barnard Castle circuit, and entered upon my work with great fear. There seemed many difficulties in my way. However I gave myself up to the Lord, and he was pleased to give me favour in the eyes of the people.

Two years after, I was stationed in Yarm circuit. I was afterwards appointed to Barnard Castle circuit again, and God was pleased to bless my labours, with that of the other preachers. We had such a work of God in several parts of this circuit as I never saw. Hardly anything of the kind in England hath exceeded it, both with regard to its swiftness and depth. The power of God bore all down before it, and it seemed as if God was about to convert all the world.

After I left this circuit I was placed at Hull, then at York, and afterwards in the Scarborough circuit. We had a gracious increase of the work of God here, and I never found more enlargement of heart. We broke up much fresh ground, took in many new places, and many souls were converted to God. The

³John Cennick, 'Seek Ye My Face', st. 7, *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God* (London: Milles, 1741), 14.

⁴Cf. Ps. 27:1.

⁵Cf. Isa. 12:1.

last year you appointed me for the Thirsk circuit. This has been a year of trial, but the Lord has stood by me, and I am strengthened.

What success I may have for time to come, I cannot tell. It is still my one desire to give myself wholly to the Lord, and to his blessed work. I wish to live to better purpose than I have yet done, to be more fruitful in his house, and in the world. I am conscious of many defects in myself, and feel my need of Christ every moment. My soul hangs upon him, and I experience salvation from day to day: and I trust he that has kept me till now, will keep me to the end.

Wishing you all peace, and prosperity, I remain, reverend and dear sir,
Your affectionate son in the gospel of Christ,

William Hunter

Postscript.

Richmond
August 29, 1779

Concerning the account I gave you at London, as I writ it in haste, I believe it is very imperfect. Several things have occurred to my mind since, which I should have put in if I had then remembered them.

As touching that greater salvation, being saved from inbred sin, I shall simply relate what I know of the dealings of God with me in this respect.

For some time after I knew the goodness of God to my soul, I was very happy. I sung in his ways for joy of heart, and his consolations were not small in me. I thought indeed, I should 'learn war no more'.⁶ It was then

I rode on the sky,
Freely justified I,
Nor envied Elijah his seat;
My soul mounted higher,
In a chariot of fire,
And the moon it was under my feet:

Jesus all the day long,
Was my joy and my song,
O that all his salvation may see!
He hath lov'd me, I cry'd,
He hath suffer'd and dy'd,
To redeem such a rebel as me.⁷

But afterwards it pleased infinite wisdom to open a new scene to me. I began to be exercised with many uncommon temptations, and felt my own heart ready to comply with the same. This brought me into great straits, and I began to call in question the work of grace in my soul. O, the pain and anguish I felt for weeks together! Yet all this while I was very earnest with the Lord, my soul clave to him, and I often said, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.'⁸ Under this exercise I learned several things. As first, that my nature was not so much changed as I thought. I found many things in me which opposed the grace of God, so that without continual watching and prayer I was capable of committing the very same sins which I had been guilty of before. Second, I began to be more acquainted with Satan's devices, and

⁶Cf. Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3.

⁷CW, 'For One Fallen From Grace, XV', sts. 6 & 4, *HSP* (1749), 1:124.

⁸Job 13:15.

found power from God to resist them. Third, I had very affecting views of Christ, as my great high priest, who was touched with a feeling of all my infirmities. Fourth, the Scriptures were precious to me, and I found great comfort in reading them. And lastly, I was conscious of the need of a far greater change in my nature than I had yet experienced. But I then read mostly the Calvinists' writings, who all write that sin must be in believers till death. Yet I found my mind at times deeply engaged in prayer to be saved from all sin.

Thus I went on for a long time, sometimes up and sometimes down, till it pleased God to bring me to hear you at Newcastle. You preached, I well remember, from 1 John 1:9, 'If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'⁹ This was a precious time to me. While you were preaching, a divine light shone in upon my heart with the word, and I was clearly convinced of the doctrine of sanctification, and the attainableness of it. I came home with full purpose of heart, not to rest till I was made a living witness of it. I had now a clear view 1) of the holiness of God, and saw that sin could not dwell with him. 2) I had a clear view of the purity and perfection of his law, which is a transcript of the divine nature. And 3) I felt my great unlikeness to both. And although I felt no condemnation, yet in the view of these things I felt much pain in my spirit, and my soul was humbled in the dust before him! Oh how I longed to be made like him! To love him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. I had glorious discoveries of the grand provision made in the new covenant, for the complete salvation of the soul. And I went on in joyful expectation, crying to the Lord to put me in possession of all he had purchased for me, and promised to me. Sometimes I seemed to be upon the threshold, just stepping into glorious liberty. But again fear and unbelief prevailed, and I started back. This cast my mind into great perplexity, and I often reasoned concerning the truth of the thing.

It would be tedious to relate the various exercises I went through for several years, without opening my mind to anyone. I do not remember that I ever conversed with one upon the subject, or ever heard any one discourse upon it. Only, I think, about eighteen years ago, it pleased God that I heard Mr. [Thomas] Olivers preach a sermon upon the subject. His text was, 'Let us go on unto perfection.'¹⁰ His doctrine was clear, and his arguments strong. My heart consented to the whole truth, and I had clearer views of the way of attaining it, namely by faith, than ever before. This added new vigour to my spirit, and I seemed to be more on the wing than ever. I prayed and wept at his footstool, that he would show me all his salvation. And he gave me to experience such a measure of his grace as I never knew before. A great measure of heavenly light and divine power spread through all my soul. I found unbelief taken away out of my heart. My soul was filled with such faith as I never felt before. My love to Christ was like fire, and I had such views of him as my life, my portion, my all, as swallowed me up. And oh how I longed to be with him! A change passed upon all the powers of my soul, and I felt a great increase of holy and heavenly tempers. I may say, with humility, it was as though I was emptied of all evil, and filled with heaven and God.

Thus, under the influence of his power and grace, I rode upon the sky. My soul fed on angels' food, and I truly ate the bread of heaven. I had more glorious discoveries than ever of the gospel of God our Saviour, and especially in his saving the soul from all sin. I enjoyed such an evidence of this in my own mind, as put me beyond all doubt. And yet I never had such a sense of my own littleness, helplessness, and unworthiness as now. So true it is that only grace can humble the soul!

From the time the Lord gave me to experience this grace, I became an advocate for the glorious doctrine of Christian perfection. According to the gift he has been pleased to give me, I bear a testimony of it wherever I go, and I never find my soul so happy as when I preach most upon the blessed subject.

Thus I have simply related what I know of the work of God in my heart. I desire to give him all the glory. But I have great cause to be ashamed before him for my unfaithfulness. I feel I need his grace every moment. I stand by faith. I have as much need of Christ as ever. I may truly say,

⁹JW lists preaching on this text in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on June 13, 1757.

¹⁰Heb. 6:1.

Every moment, Lord, I want
The merit of thy death.¹¹

Glory be to his name, I find my soul united to him, and my heart cries, 'None but Christ!' I am kept by his power. I enjoy salvation. My heart is fixed, my anchor is sure and steadfast. I believe nothing shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

I conclude with saying, though the whole of our salvation is from the Lord, yet he deals with us as rational creatures. He gives us light and conviction of our lost state. Then the heart is humbled, and the soul bows before him. He then speaks peace. This is done in a moment, and faith in the soul is the root of all Christian holiness. Thus the work of sanctification is begun in the heart, and the person is in a capacity of living to God, and growing in grace. If he finds us faithful in a little, he shows us there is a state of greater liberty provided for us. The soul being open to the divine teaching, he shows us our want of this. We seek it with our whole heart, and he is pleased to put us in possession of it. This too is generally given in a moment, and perfectly frees the mind from all evil tempers, and enables us to 'love the Lord with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves'.¹²

Being thus perfected in love, we are much more qualified to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ than ever. O, precious salvation! let me ever be a witness of it!

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 589–98.¹³

¹¹CW, 'Hymn on Isaiah 32:2', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 146.

¹²Cf. Luke 10:27.

¹³This narrative is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 2:240–61; along with two accounts of Hunter's life and death.

From John Allen (autobiography)

September 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I was born at Chapel-en-the-Frith, Derbyshire, in June 1737. My parents were honest labouring people, and brought up eight children, all yet living; most of them convinced of sin, and some converted to God. As my father was a Churchman, and my mother a Presbyterian, I went sometimes to church,¹ sometimes to the meeting. And frequently I went with my mother to hear the Methodists, among whom I had several relations. I stood in awe of these, and when I was in their company behaved more seriously than at other times.

From eight or ten years of age, I had many serious thoughts; especially when it thundered and lightened, or when I heard a passing bell. And I was always preserved from swearing, drunkenness, and other scandalous sins. But I delighted much in dancing, singing, and cards, and in making everyone merry wherever I was.

When I was about sixteen, I was deeply convinced of sin, by reading the eighth chapter of Jeremiah; particularly these words, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.'² I concluded that my day of grace was past, and that there remained for me nothing but 'judgment and fiery indignation'.³ The thought of this almost broke my heart, and caused me to weep bitterly before the Lord. But after a time I grew as careless as before, and continued so for above five years, only with intervals of seriousness, and many good desires, but none brought to good effect. My great hindrance was the being joined with a society of singers. I found I could not stay with them and be religious. So I thought I would give religion up for the present, but at times I was of all men most miserable.

Another affliction soon came upon me. I was from a child very fond of my mother, and often thought I could not bear to live after her. In March 1759, she died.⁴ This awakened me once more. I resolved to break off at once, and to seek God with all my heart. My companions, thinking I had only left them through grief, and would soon return, said nothing to me at first. But by and by, when they heard I was turned Methodist, they set upon me in earnest. But by the grace of God I withstood all, and came out from among them.

At that time we had no preaching near us. I often went twelve miles on a Sunday to hear a sermon. But in September following, Mr. Crab[b] came to preach at Chinley, and joined a few together in a society.⁵ I willingly cast in my lot among them, and blessed be God, have never repented of it. About Christmas I got Mr. John Oliver to preach at my father's house. We had no more preaching there for some time. However, three of us continued to meet together to sing, and pray, and converse. One evening when we were met, I was in such distress that I concluded I could live no longer if God did not pardon my sins. Presently I heard a voice saying, 'It is I, be not afraid?'⁶ I looked about to see who it was that spoke, but could see no one. However, my mind was much refreshed for a season, and I remained between hope and fear till we met again. As I was then crying to the Lord those words came strongly to me, 'The Lord is at hand! The Lord is at hand!'⁷ But neither did the impression made by this continue long. Soon after I gave way to trifling, and so grieved the Holy Spirit that I hardly dared to look up, or hope for mercy. But while

¹I.e., the Church of England parish church.

²Jer. 8:20.

³Heb. 10:27.

⁴Ann Allen, wife of George, was buried in Chapel-en-le-Frith on Mar. 27, 1759.

⁵William Crabb (d. 1764) was a pious but temperamentally weak preacher who laboured intermittently between 1754 and 1759 (see Atmore, *Memorials*, 94–95).

⁶Matt. 14:27; Mark 6:50; John 6:20.

⁷Phi. 4:5; etc.

I was overwhelmed, and feebly crying out, 'I am oppressed! Lord, undertake for me';⁸ these words were applied, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? Put thy trust in God.'⁹ This comforted me much. But still I could not rest, without a clear sense of my being reconciled to God. I was one day crying to God for this, and wrestling with him in prayer, when I felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and was constrained to cry out,

For sinners like me,
He bled on the tree.
Ah, who would not love such a Saviour as thee?¹⁰

Now I could say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' My soul was filled with peace, and I rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Soon after we began to have constant preaching; and a little class was formed, of which I was appointed leader. I loved meeting in class, but I trembled at being the leader. Nevertheless, I took up my cross. And many times it proved a blessing both to the people and to my own soul.

Before this I had many thoughts about preaching. But I saw not how it could be, as I was deeply sensible of my own ignorance. This I often laid before the Lord, praying him to give me full proof, if it was his will. Meanwhile I sometimes gave a word of exhortation, which it pleased God to make useful. This encouraged me to speak again; but it was with fear and trembling, and I often thought, 'If I get this time over, I will speak no more.' Thus I went on for more than twelve months, before I attempted to take a text. After I had exhorted and preached about four years I was, in the year 1766, received on trial as a travelling preacher. And although my heart was in the work, yet was I frequently tempted to give it up. But God suffered me not. He again and again refreshed my soul therein, and encouraged me to go on, by letting me see the fruit of my labours.

Some years after, being stationed in London, I was seized with an illness, which held me eight months. In this affliction I was often low-spirited, which laid me open to many temptations. When I got a little better, I resolved to preach again. The first time I was to preach, I went a little before the time to meditate in the fields. As I was walking on the grass I was, I know not how, thrown down with such force that I was much bruised, and my clothes ill torn. Hitherto could Satan go, and no farther.

Three or four years after, I had thoughts of altering my condition. Upon this I consulted my best friends. I gave myself to prayer and, after much deliberation, married Miss Jane Westall, of which I never had cause to repent.¹¹ We lived together in perfect harmony till, on the 30th of June last, she was seized with the epidemic distemper. At first we were not apprehensive it was the fever, though she herself judged it was and believed it was the messenger of death. As her fever increased, and her end drew nearer, she was happier and happier. She said very little to me about dying, because she was sensible it would give me more affliction than I should be well able to bear. But to others she spoke freely concerning it, and with the greatest composure she said, 'I shall soon be'

Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.¹²

⁸Cf. Isa. 38:14.

⁹Ps. 42:5.

¹⁰Cf. CW, Hymn 49, st. 3, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 62.

¹¹John Allen married Jane Westall on Jan. 2, 1774, in Bristol. Jane was the daughter of Thomas Westall/Westall.

¹²CW, Hymns for the Watch-Night, #18, st. 6, *HSP* (1749), 2:143.

The Tuesday before her death, she seemed to be quite transported with joy. When I went upstairs, I found her with heaven in her look, repeating the following lines:

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes!
My ears with sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wing!
I mount! I fly!
O grave, where is thy victory?
And where, O death, thy sting?¹³

On Friday she seemed like one from above. There was in her such a spirit of love and gratitude as I never saw before in any creature. She thanked and blessed everyone that did the least thing for her. She often prayed that God would reward me for all my kindness to her; and broke out, 'My Lord! my God! my Father! my Husband! my Friend! I long to see thee!' When she could speak no longer, I desired, if her soul was happy, to lift up her hand. This she immediately did, and soon after fell asleep.¹⁴

By her death I lost one of the best of wives, and my two small children one of the best of mothers. In many things she was a pattern to the flock of Christ—particularly in plainness of dress and of speech, in neatness, in every relative duty, as well as in private prayer. This I never remember her to have omitted three times a day. Had any told me beforehand how I should be able to bear her death, I could not have believed it. None but God can tell what I felt. But I did not feel a murmuring thought; nor ever, for one moment, imagine that God had dealt hardly with me. I could still say,

Thy medicine puts me to great smart;
Thou wound'st me in the tenderest part!
But 'tis with a design to cure:
I must, I will the touch endure.
All that I priz'd below is gone:
Yet, Father, still thy will be done!¹⁵

I am now more convinced than ever that religion does not turn us into stocks or stones; that it is intended, not to root out, but to regulate our passions; and that there may be the most sensible feelings, with full resignation to the will of God. This, I bless God, is my own experience. I have long been telling the people, that God would give suffering grace for suffering times, and I am now a living proof of it. As I have endeavoured to water others, God hath watered me again; and not as waters that fail, but as a fountain of water springing up within my soul.

Let the Lord now 'do with me as seemeth him good'.¹⁶

I'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come.¹⁷

¹³Alexander Pope, 'Ode: The Dying Christian to His Soul', st. 3.

¹⁴Jane (Westall) Allen was buried in Keighly, Yorkshire, July 11, 1779.

¹⁵John Norris, 'The Resignation', st. 3, as in JW, *CPH* (1738), 26.

¹⁶Cf. Jer. 26:14.

¹⁷Joseph Hart (1712–67), 'How Good is the God We Adore', st. 2.

Hitherto the Lord has been my helper, and he is the same forever. So far as I know my own heart, I have no desire but to live to his glory, and to promote, so far as I am able, the interest of my Redeemer. My greatest grief is that I do not love God more, and that I have not more of heaven in my heart.

I bless God, I have for twenty years been steady in my principles, having never, that I know of, however I was tempted, wavered for one hour. I have read many things on the other side of the question, but was not in the least shaken. I still believe that Christ 'gave himself a ransom for all',¹⁸ and that 'by the grace of God, he tasted death for every man',¹⁹ that he might 'redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works'.²⁰

If this imperfect account may be of use to any, it will answer the end that is wished for by,
reverend and dear sir,

Your son in the gospel,

John Allen

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 635–40.²¹

¹⁸Cf. 1 Tim. 2:6.

¹⁹Cf. Heb. 2:9.

²⁰Titus 2:14.

²¹This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 6:241–48; along with the biography of Allen included in the Conference *Minutes* at his death.

From the Rev. Brian Bury Collins

Witney
September 15, 1779

Dear Sir,

I have been just now preaching in the market-place here, to a pretty large and very quiet congregation, and have given notice that I shall preach again at the room in the evening.

In the circuits round London this seems to be the best way of stirring the people up to come to the houses, as they are not disposed to come without a louder notice than usual.

The week before last I went to Dover. Mr. D. and Mr. W. were so kind as to accompany me. The congregations were not large, but the Lord was with me. I was particularly comforted at Canterbury. Mrs. B. is an excellent person. I never saw in anyone such an uncommon ardour to please her friends as in Mrs. H. She was all spirit and motion; it does me good every time I think of her.

I observe three things in our London brethren, which I took the liberty to tell them, last Sunday morning, would rejoice the hearts of thousands of their country friends. I mean their liberality, their inclination to peace, and submission to instruction. It is easy to preach at London, as our congregations are principally composed of sensible and well-informed people. A lively simplicity seems to me the most wanted.

Mr. Keen and Mr. West have spoken of you with much moderation and respect, and invited me to preach both at the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court Chapel.¹ We do not find the New Chapel too large for us; if it was half as large again, I believe it would still be crowded. The congregation in Moorfields last Sunday evening was such, I am informed, as you have been accustomed to yourself. I was much assisted and comforted there in enforcing, Luke 15:20. 'When he was yet a great way off,'

The Lord continue to be with you, and fill your heart with love, and your lips with blessings! I shall rejoice to see and hear you again at London, and am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate servant in Jesus,

B. B. Collins

N.B. The number of communicants at the New Chapel last Sunday was the greatest I remember to have seen anywhere.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 554–55.

¹In his will George Whitefield entrusted Daniel West Esq. and Robert Keen (d. 1773), a London wool merchant, with caring for the Tabernacle in London and Tottenham Court Chapel.

From 'Veritas' (i.e., Richard Hill¹)

September 25, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I give you this public notice that certain persons who are your enemies, perhaps only because you keep clear of their Calvinistic doctrines, have thought proper to affirm that you and some of your preachers have been vilifying the ashes, and traducing the memory of the late Mr. Augustus Toplady. Nay, it was even positively alleged that you told Mr. Thomas Robinson of Hilderthorpe, near Bridlington in Yorkshire,² and the Rev. Mr. Greaves,³ curate to Mr. Fletcher of Madeley, that the account published concerning Mr. Toplady's death was a gross imposition on the public;⁴ for that he died in black despair, uttering the most horrible blasphemies, and that none of his friends were permitted to see him. All which was repeated at Bridlington by one of your preachers, whose name is [Benjamin] Rhodes; who further compared Mr. Toplady's case to the awful one of Francis Spira,⁵ and added, 'that the dreadful manner in which he died had caused a woman who attended him to join your societies'.

Now, sir, as many living respectable witnesses can testify that Mr. Toplady departed this life in the full triumph of faith, and that the account published to the world of the state of soul he was in during his long illness, and at the hour of dissolution, was strictly and literally a true one, you are earnestly requested, for the satisfaction of your friends, thus publicly to assure the world that you never advanced anything of this sort to Mr. Robinson, Mr. Greaves, or to any other person; or else that you will produce your authority for your assertions. Otherwise it is to be feared that your own character will suffer much, for having vented a most gross malicious falsehood against a dead man who cannot answer for himself, in order to support your own cause and party.

I am, reverend sir, your sincere well wisher,

Veritas

Source: published transcription; *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* (Oct. 8, 1779), p. 1.

¹Richard Hill claimed this letter in a letter dated Nov. 29, 1779 below.

²Thomas Robinson had helped introduce Methodism to Bridlington in 1769; see *WMM* 49 (1826): 289–98, 361–70.

³Alexander Benjamin Greaves (c. 1751–1834), was curate at Madeley 1777–81.

⁴*A Memoir of some Principal Circumstances in the Life and Death of the Reverend and learned Augustus Montague Toplady, B. A. Late Vicar of Broad Hembury, Devon* (London: J. Mathews, 1778).

⁵Refers to an account of an Italian Protestant who recanted his faith, and then died in despair; as told in Nathaniel Bacon, *A Relation of the Fearful Estate of Francis Spira, in the year 1548*. (London: Legat, 1638).

From Hester Ann Roe

Macclesfield
October 15, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Since I received your last,¹ I have had a return of the pain in my side, an oppression of my lungs, and sometimes (which I never had before) such a yellowness on my skin that I apprehended it would turn to the jaunies.² After eating or drinking I was thrown into violent heats, and afterwards into cold, fainting sweats. Then I was either in great pain at my stomach, or else so sleepy that I could not keep my eyes open for a considerable time. But blessed be God, I found it a sweet affliction! For never did I find Christ so precious, my evidence so clear, my will so unreservedly swallowed up in his, nor the intercourse so truly open betwixt him and my believing soul. Hence I loved and praised him for every pain. And had it been his adorable will to have called me hence, how gladly should I have obeyed the joyful summons, and haste to the presence of my beloved, my friend, my God, and my all!

But seeing he still spares me a little longer, I embrace his will, and bless the merciful hand which brought me down, and hath raised me up again. I see an open field, a boundless prospect of new delights lies open before me. I see and feel that God hath engaged all his attributes in my behalf. And in his strength I fear no cross, no shame, no enemies; for my leader, my captain, my king is the Lord of hosts. My enemies are his enemies, and his are mine. His gory is my only aim, and my only happiness. O precious thought! O bliss, not imaginary, but real! Not fading, but everlasting; not decreasing, but ever growing! O vast abyss of unfathomable love! And as this is *my* portion, so dear sir, it is *yours* also. We experience it now, and shall for ever know it! On these accounts, how easy is the fight of faith! How delightful the labours of love! And how welcome the cross we bear for him who is our life, our strength, and our salvation!

Dear Mr. S[haw] is still unable to go into his circuit,³ and I fear he will never be much better. Cold bathing seems to do him most good. But he is very ill, especially in the mornings. His grief at not being able to travel is, I believe, a great hindrance to his recovery. My soul feels great nearness to him, for I believe he is, in a peculiar sense, beloved of God and a faithful steward of his grace.

I hope, sir, you will remember him at the throne of grace, that God may either restore him to his former usefulness or else help him to be perfectly resigned to his adorable will. For you know, dear sir, that to have a soul all on fire for doing good kept back and hindered by sickness, weakness, or other bodily infirmity, must be a great temptation to the contrary. But as there are none so weak as myself, and, of consequence, who stand more in need of divine assistance, I hope you will not cease to mention me in your prayers. In so doing you will greatly oblige, reverend sir,

Your very unworthy, but most affectionate friend and servant,

H. A. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 555–56.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²I.e., jaundice.

³John Shaw (d. 1793) had been assigned to Macclesfield at the 1778 Conference. Shaw was admitted to the itinerant ministry about 1762 and remained active through 1791. He was assigned to Macclesfield at the 1778 Conference (see *Works*, 10:476). He was not well enough to be moved in 1779, but in 1780 was assigned to Birstall.

From Francis Okeley

[Northampton]
October 16, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Your friendly visit to me, in my affliction, was very acceptable.¹ I hope I did not employ too much of the time in reading my lucubrations to you. I confess I am not yet so far advanced in grace as not to feel too much prepossession for anything that may be called my own. Perhaps one may say of this turn of the human mind what St. James says in another case concerning an offence with the tongue, that he who can regard everything of his brother's as he does his own, is a perfect man.² It is easy to think we do this, but hard to do it in reality. At least I find it so. Indeed, my dear sir, I never in all my life saw in heart and spirit so clearly as I do now, the meaning of St. Paul's words, 'The end of the commandment is love, ...'.³ Love to God and, for his sake, love to our neighbour as to ourselves. Of course, I cannot help looking at these two capital and central commandments (or perhaps one, Matt. 13:45–46) as the sum total of all laws, methods, and counsels both of the Old and New Testament, and of every really pious institution since, to this day.

But alas! We all are apt to stop short in the means, and not to press forward till we have reached the end. Hence surely so many discordant sects and opinions, while would all of them as surely drop all their sectarian malignity as the lame man lays by his crutch, and every other thought about it, in comparison with that of his neighbour's, as soon as he has fully recovered the right use of his legs. When the happy time shall come, that Michael and his angels shall have fought with and expelled Satan and his angels out of our church-heaven, and they are cast to the earth (amongst merely natural people), then will all honest and upright souls be no more deceived by them as angels of light. They will no long be kept back from the real possession of that faith in a crucified Jesus which worketh by love; nor will they fight, (as they foolishly think) for God and the truth's sake, one against another. O how my poor heart longs and prays for that time! Because then we shall hear it said with a loud voice in heaven, 'Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God',⁴ etc. etc. And then will the everlasting gospel be again preached out of the love constraining heart of Jesus, simply—not in words which man's wisdom (studied or unstudied) teacheth; but with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. And the faith of all true believers of every denomination will stand no more in the sectarian wisdom of men, but in the enlarged and free power of God. These hopes God gave me a glimpse of in my early years, and they are more brightened and confirmed in these advanced ones, after a series of heavy trials and conflicts. The present are the greatest of all, but experience worketh hope, etc. God help me!

I have searched for the translations of Castellio, but have not yet been able to find them.⁵ I will renew the search, and send them by some good opportunity, if I can meet with them. They are: 1) The translation of the dedication of his Latin Bible to King Edward the sixth. 2) The large and fine note on Rom. 9. And 3) *Tractatus de justificatione*, at the end of his *Dialogi IV. De Praedestinatione*, etc. They are valuable pieces in their way. But I do not believe (as you well remarked about my wish of a general repentance and faith, like that at Nineveh) that the time is come for ending these disputes. The brightness

¹JW was in Northampton, where Okeley pastored a small Moravian congregation, on Oct. 15, 1779; see *Journal, Works*, 23:152.

²See James 3.

³1 Tim. 1:5.

⁴Rev. 12:10.

⁵In 1781 JW published in *AM* extended excerpts in English from Sebastian Castellion (1515–63), *Dialogorum sacrorum libri IV: De Praedestinatione, electione, libero arbitrio, fide* (Edinburgh: T. & W. Ruddiman, 1734). This letter suggests that Okeley was the source of the English translation.

of his coming will be alone able to do it; and that too, *modo simplicissimo*,⁶ which only wisdom's children will understand and acquiesce in. If I cannot find these pieces, I shall conclude they are to remain in their obscurity to the merely English scholar. I have by me a great quantity and variety of much deeper and more experimental things, written by witnesses of full and primitive salvation, from four hundred or more years back. But God knows best whether at all, or when, or how these lights may be set upon a candlestick.

The word mystic frights several. But I am tenacious of no word, of no man, of no sect, of no opinion, etc. as such; and this Paul has taught me, 1 Cor. 3:21–23. All I mean by mysticism is real Christianity, or the life hid with Christ in God. More than this I will not contend for. But less I am unable to be satisfied with, either in myself, or my neighbour.

As the tares and wheat now grow everywhere together, therefore my prayer is to have enlightened eyes to discern the latter from the former; yet not to pluck up the latter too, by officiously and prematurely plucking up the former. Believe me, dear sir, my heart and mind is thus disposed, and that (I am), by God's grace, waiting⁷ for full redemption to our Israel. I see at present more or less of a sectarian spirit in myself and everywhere else. So far as this is the case, we are not yet in the enlarged liberty of God; and for want of it, the grand enemy now does more hurt as an angel of light than as a manifest devil. Ah, who will be the witness or witnesses of God who shall dare, upon a solid basis of his own experience to detect his wiles, by modernizing the third chapter of Philippians! Woe to him or them from the (so called) religious world. But all honest and upright hearts will love and thank them. O may I die, with Jesus, to the world, that I may live, with him, unto God! Excuse all accessory faults, but feel the essential truth of the heart of him who, for Christ's sake, wishes to subscribe himself

Your affectionate friend and brother,

F. O.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 608–11.

⁶'In a simple manner'.

⁷Orig., '(I hope) by God waiting'; changed by JW in his personal copy of *AM*.

From 'Maria'

October 21, 1779

Reverend Sir,

I have waited a long time, with great impatience, in hopes to see an answer, and at the same time a refutation, of the charge brought against you some time since in this paper;¹ namely, that of vilifying the memory of the deceased Mr. Augustus Toplady, and alleging that he not only died without hope, but 'in blasphemy and black despair'. Such a charge, sir, however groundless (and against a man whom all the world must know never liked either Mr. Toplady or his doctrines), must leave a disagreeable impression on the mind of the reader concerning Mr. Wesley; as many know, and were it necessary could testify, that Mr. Toplady (as the author of the letter before mentioned says) died in the full truth of faith.

However Mr. Wesley may affect to disregard anonymous publications, such a charge as this made in the face of the world ought, if false, to have been refuted, as well in justice to your own character as to that of the deceased. If the charge remains still unanswered,² it will certainly be understood to be truth, and of consequence will show Mr. Wesley in no very favourable light. But I suspend my judgment for the present, and remain

Your humble servant,

Maria

Source: published transcription; *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* (Oct. 25, 1779), p. 4.

¹See the letter of 'Veritas' (Richard Hill), dated Oct. 8, 1779, above.

²No answer of JW to this charge has been located.

From Thomas Wride

Scarborough
October 23, 1779

[draft of an earlier letter; not sent at the time]

Darlington
May 1, 1779

Reverend Sir,

It was much upon my mind for to write to you before your last voyage to Ireland. If I had *known* that you would have went, I believe that I should have wrote, although the work would have been very disagreeable upon various accounts.

In the last Conference you made an observation which I think ought strictly to be regarded; namely that 'we should be considered as a band' (or words to that purpose). Now sir, could I be secured in this liberty, half my work would be done to my hand. For I need only so write as to convey my ideas, without fearing to give offence by what I designed for the furthering of the usefulness and supporting the reputation of one to who I am under many obligations. But sir, do not think me self-conceited for this attempt. It is not a supposition of superior abilities that sets my pen to work. But I confess I claim more honesty than some appear possessed of. For sir, excuse me if I say I know there are some who (at least) appear to love you and yet have said behind your back what I suppose they have never said to your face.

Now sir, will you suppose yourself a band-leader, and that I meet in band with you? And will you allow me to tell you what I have in my heart? What I hear? What I believe? What I fear? If you will, I shall be as plain as you require me. But if you will not, burn these lines before you read any farther, and then you cannot be displeased at me for my honest intent.

As your proceeding supposeth your tacit consent to my proposals, I lay my thoughts before you under the following heads: first, your conduct with respect to women as women; second, with respect to some women as governesses; third, with regard to things on the account of which I think I have just cause for to complain of very unfair treatment from various persons, and wherein I think you cannot defend or even excuse yourself, being not only too ready to believe the most improbable absurd lies of one of the most horrid liars I ever knew (let not this be attributed to my heat. I want no such excuse. For I affirm in the presence of God it is my deliberate judgment, and I have no doubt but I am capable before any unprejudiced judges to make ample demonstration of my assertion). But as if that was a light thing, you largely reward such as you ought utterly to reject.

Sir, as I have no favour to ask but of you, or noone's resentment to fear but yours. Nor yours, if you comply with my first proposal; viz., to burn the paper before your read too far or consent to my proposals in general. And sir, if I speak my mind, I do not desire to be your judge, but am content for to leave you to act as in conscience you shall think yourself bound before God. I am in some degree aware of the difficulty of my attempt. But have I not this advantage to expect, that he who reproveth shall afterward find more favour than he that flattereth?

I think, sir, you will have no just cause for to blame me for this. I could conceal my thoughts, although it was not easy to stop my ears. Nor is it easy to forget what I have either heard or been witness unto. Nor is it easy for me to help inferring. As a party, I have a good a right to be heard (at least) as my accusers; but more especially as I fear not to prove my foes (one of them especially) to be guilty of the most wretched deliberate wilful lies.

I expected to see you at Darlington. But as I since find that I shall in course of the plan meet you at Whitby, and if I get to Darlington I expect I can have but little opportunity, I therefore take this method, hoping that you will take it as I design it. Be pleased to let me know (at Darlington) how far it is your choice I should proceed and, God willing, I shall at Whitby fulfill your directions.

I am, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son,

Thomas Wride

Scarborough
October 23, 1779

The greatest part of the above was written (though not on the same paper) according as it is dated, and designed to be left for you as above mentioned. But I afterward determined to give it to you at Whitby, and ask your answer at my return to Whitby from Robin Hood's Bay. But in this I was prevented by your being at Whitby before your appointed time. I have thought it my duty to God and you to speak my mind thus far. As for the consequences, I endeavour to leave them to God.

I received yours of August the 10th.¹ Your advice, sir, I hope conscientiously to regard. But as to the 'pleasing account you received of my behaviour last year', I shall tell you that it was not the fruit of my better behaviour, but of your hearing it from an *honest* man. But as the particulars will more than fill the paper, I must defer until you (or some other season) call for it.

P.S. I hear that you told the Conference that I told *you* that my 'wife would not be burdensome to a circuit', etc., etc., etc. If you had said that John Floyd *told* you that I said so, I had not wondered in the least. But sir, I do wonder at *your mistake*. A little reflection may remove it. At first I never *spoke* a word to you (in private) good or bad about my wife. I never wrote about her to you but while you was in Ireland last, and but two letters in the whole (the copies I have still). In the first I told you her circumstances, with all the simplicity that might be expected from an honest evidence, on his oath, in a court of justice. Yea, and what I feared as well as what I knew. And that my account gave you no such idea as what you reported in Conference is plain from your answer, which I still have. In my second I could not be said to speak of her [at] all, for it was expressly on other things, saving that I told you then if I did not find things as well as I had described them, I would not proceed without further consulting you. However, I will give oath whenever called upon that I *never* by word or writing told you any such thing. And I think, sir, that I have a good right to tell you that you ought to do me justice, by enabling me to vindicate myself when occasion offers.

Now sir, as no person knows of my writing, you may let it be as private as you please. I judge the matter is no trifle, but much concerns you, to remove the objections made by those who—although they seem to love you—yet I am bold to say that they love you far less than doth

Your dutiful son,

[Thomas Wride]

Source: Wride's manuscript copy for records; MARC, MA 1977/610/140.

¹JW to Thomas Wride, Aug. 10, 1779, *Works*, 29:503–04.

Thomas Webb's Proposal for a Methodist Militia¹

London
October 24, 1779

Proposal for embodying and training a number of His Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects to the society (called Methodists) to be ready in order to assist His Majesty in opposing the daring designs of his enemies, in case an actual invasion should take place.

1. The whole to be formed into companies, each company to consist of one captain, one lieutenant, and one ensign commissioned by his Majesty, and of three sergeants, three corporals, two drummers, and sixty-eight private men. In case one society should not be able to furnish the complement, the societies which are the most contiguous will make up the number.

2. Each company to choose the own officers by ballot, agreeable to the above regulations.

3. The officers to receive commissions immediately on the companies being formed, upon the follow terms: viz., That the officers be empowered immediately to train and discipline such men as shall voluntarily offer themselves for that purpose, but shall not be entitled to any pay, or to any rank in the army, except during the time in which they shall be called out into actual service, nor to any half-pay.

4. That ten companies which may be the most contiguous to each other are to form one battalion, which is to consist of six hundred private men; the captains to choose the field and staff officers by ballot, consisting of one lieutenant colonel, one major, one adjutant, and one quarter master, commissioned by His Majesty when the whole shall be called out into actual service. The chaplain to nominated by the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, and presented to the Bishop of London for ordination by the king's orders.

5. That if the whole should consist of ten or more battalions, they are to compose but one legion, and Mr. [Thomas] Webb, who is well known to the people, and who is an old experienced officer, is recommended by Mr. Wesley for this command, with such rank as His Majesty shall think proper

6. The men to be exercised in their own societies as such times and places as they shall fix upon for that purpose. If the officers should think it necessary to assemble the company on particular occasions, in order to exercise the whole together, the place fixed upon should be as near the centre of the societies as possible.

7. That no person who shall join this association shall be required to enter into any other engagement than that of attending the usual places of exercise, until His Majesty shall judge it expedient to call out the said companies into actual service—from which time every person belonging to this association shall serve in such parts of the kingdom as His Majesty shall think proper, subject to such order as they shall receive from the commander in chief for the time being, and this no longer than the invasion shall actually exist.

8. That the said companies shall be provided with arms and clothing by government, such arms to be under the care of the captain of each company, and to be returned into the stores of ordinance when required by His Majesty.

9. That in order to instruct the companies properly in their discipline, suitable persons will be appointed for this service, who shall receive one shilling per diem from government for each day's attendance.

10. When the legion shall be ordered to take the field, the officers and men to receive pay from that moment.

¹Webb crafted this proposal in light of a fleet of French and Spanish ships—now both aligned with the revolting colonists in North America—that was currently just off the southern coast of England (see, for example, the fears expressed in Martha Ward's letter to JW, June 16, 1779). JW wrote a brief letter commending the proposal, that also was dated Oct. 24, 1779 (see *Works*, 29:518–19). Webb soon brought a copy of the proposal and JW's commendation to the attention of Charles Jenkinson, Secretary of War; see Jenkinson's reply to JW of Nov. 10, 1779 below. This proposal was not accepted (see JW to Ann Loxdale, July 24, 1782, 30:59; and JW to Joseph Benson, Aug. 3, 1782, 30:64–65).

11. If the above proposal should meet with His Majesty's approbation, it will be necessary for Mr. Webb to visit the several societies as soon as possible, in order to collect the names of those who shall form this association, and to give such further directions as may be proper to facilitate the general design. Returns of the number of associators will be made out by Mr. Webb, and presented to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, Secretary of War, immediately upon his return to London.

T. Webb

Source: secondary transcription; University of Michigan, William L. Clements Library, George Sackville Germain Papers, Vol. 10, f. 31.²

²The proposal is known only from this secondary copy in a collection formerly owned by Mrs. Stopford Sackville. A published list of this collection in the *Ninth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. Part III. The Manuscripts of Mrs. Stopford Sackville of Drayton House Northamptonshire* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1884), 132, includes mention of the proposal.

From John Bredin

Cork
October 27, 1779

Reverend Sir,

When I came to Bandon I found the society in a scattered way, as they had no preaching for a long time. I told them I intended to preach in the mornings, and likewise to meet the children.

I was informed there had been no morning preaching for years past, and no meeting of the children since Mr. John Manners was in Bandon. I was told by several of the society I need not attempt anything of that kind, but I found it was my duty to make trial and leave events to God. I did so, and have reason to praise God the morning congregations were four times larger than at Cork, and far beyond my expectations.

I preached on the education of children, and informed the congregation that I would meet as many children of every denomination as chose to come, provided they observed the following rules: viz., that they avoid lying, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, disobedience to parents, singing songs, reading bad books, keeping bad company, etc.; that they must pray twice a day in private; and read at least two chapters [of Scripture] every day. I appointed a day to meet them, and when I saw more than eighty collected, I was amazed. I divided them into three classes, and at every meeting speak to each child in such language as I can best convey my meaning by. I am convinced indeed that my abilities are not adequate to so great a work, but still I see a great reformation amongst them.

I went lately to a little market town called Skibbereen, twenty-four miles westward from Bandon, where no Methodist preacher had ever been before. I had no person to show me the way. Neither did I know anyone in the place. But I committed my cause to God, and requested of the man at whose house I alighted to go to the magistrate for the key of the court-house. He went, and the gentleman sent it with the greatest politeness. The congregation was very large, and the collector of the town was so kind as to keep the people from making the least disturbance.

After preaching three times in the town, I returned to Bandon and received a letter the next post-day requesting me to return to Skibbereen as soon as I could conveniently come, and promising that my expenses should be paid. I trust there will be a congregation in that town. Mr. B[radburn] intends to visit them next Monday.³ And I hope we shall attend them once a fortnight, till we give them a fair trial; and that we shall have a comfortable year, as he and I act in the closest union. I am,

Your affectionate son in the gospel,

J. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 611–13.

³Samuel Bradburn had been appoint to Cork, along with Bredin, at the 1779 Conference.

From Samuel Wells

October 28, 1779

Reverend Sir,

From the letter which I sent to you after the publication of the *Calm Address*,¹ you may perhaps suppose that my sentiments are more inclined to republicanism than they really are.

I think that, though depriving the English, Scotch, or Irish of the privilege of representation would be wounding their liberties, and in fact changing the present form of government, yet that the British government, King, Lords, and Commons, had a legal and constitutional right of taxing the Americans. For I do not look upon taxation and representation as inseparable, unless so far as the constitution of any country has made it so. Now it is plain that in England, Scotland, and Ireland actual or virtual representation is inseparable from taxation. But as the Americans never had the privilege of representation, they may be lawfully taxed without it. And that they were bound in conscience to submit to the British government in point of taxation I think is clear from Scripture, for the Jewish nation were bound in conscience to submit to Roman taxation without representation.

I still think that it is no argument for the taxation of the Americans without representation that those who are no English freeholders are taxed without representation. If they are not actually represented, they are virtually, and in a sense that the Americans are not. For our taxes equally affect the represented and unrepresented, but a tax on the Americans affects the unrepresented only. So that I think Dr. [Samuel] Johnson could not justly argue as he has done, since the case of unrepresented Americans and Englishmen is not truly similar.²

I cannot subscribe to Dr. Price's sentiments of liberty.³ I think our form of government a happy medium between republicanism and absolute monarchy—the former of which, I believe, is generally most fatal to liberty, and the latter too often so. I am jealous of our privileges as Englishmen. I dread the levelling spirit of a republican.

I am convinced a republican spirit is injurious to religion among the Methodists, as I find most fallen Methodists (and perhaps some who are not fallen) are republicans. I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

S. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 613–14.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Referring to Samuel Johnson, *Taxation no Tyranny: An Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress* (London: Cadell, 1775), which JW used as a major source for *Calm Address*.

³Richard Price, *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America* (London: T. Cadell, 1776). JW had replied to Price in *Some Observations on Liberty* (1776).

From Lady [Darcy (Brisbane) Maxwell]

Edinburgh
October 29, 1779¹

Reverend Sir,

May the Lord more than ever prosper your attempts for the advancement of his kingdom in the world, and in all things lead you into his will! O what a pure happiness results from this! Unmixed with creature enjoyment, independent of them. The soul thus favoured lives upon God; has no wish but his will, no desires but his glory. I long to prove the utmost degree of this that humanity can admit of.

I have much cause to praise God for his goodness to me. But still I am far short of what I expect to be. I have not that full witness of sanctification, yet I dare not give it up. My fellowship is with the Father and the Son. I daily and hourly taste salvation in the name of Jesus. He is indeed my support, my rest, my true and living way. Wherever I walk, or move, I meet him as the object of my love, and prove him a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

At times he gives me such sweet foretastes and animating views of future glory as I cannot easily express. He keeps me hungering and thirsting after every blessing he has purchased for me, with a continual desire to embrace every opportunity of doing good, and an increasing power to surmount difficulties.

I could say much more, but have said enough to make you believe I am very happy. Yet I must not conceal that at times, through the strong power of temptation of various kinds, I feel keen distress, the bitterest ingredient of which is a fear I have grieved the Spirit of God. On these very trying occasions I experience an alteration of enjoyment. But upon close examination I find it extremely difficult to be faithful. Does not this distress proceed from weakness of faith? May I not expect that degree of grace that will, if not altogether, yet in a good measure free me from it?

My soul pants for the strong, abiding witness of the Spirit, together with the entire fruit thereof; that by these two it may be fully manifested what God has done for my soul. Is not this his will concerning me? But I must not encroach farther upon your time. I will only add my best wishes for your spiritual prosperity, and am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate friend,

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 11 (1788): 662–63.

¹Orig., '1778'; but see letter for Oct. 28, 1778 above, which is of an entirely different tone. This letter's positive tone fits better after JW's visit to Scotland in June 1779.

From Thomas Lee (autobiography)

[Sheffield]
October 30, 1779

1. I was born in May, in the year 1727,¹ at a small village in the parish of Keighley, Yorkshire. When I was four years old my mother died and I was removed to her brother's at Long Addingham. Here I was carefully restrained from outward sin. Yet I often felt an inclination to it, particularly to swear; which one day I did, but blessed be God, he struck me with so deep a conviction that I never swore again from that day, nor had the least inclination to it. About fourteen I was bound apprentice to one of the worsted trade, and was by a kind providence placed in a family where I wanted nothing that was needful either for body or soul.

2. From my early days, the Lord was at times powerfully working upon my soul. From ten or eleven years of age, I was exceedingly distressed. I generally saw, as I thought, hell before me, and believed it was to be my portion. The words 'everlasting' and 'eternity' were much upon my mind, insomuch that my life became a burden to me. For on the one hand, hell appeared intolerable, and on the other I found no delight in the service of God, so that my days were consumed in trouble. Frequently did I murmur against God, and often wished to be annihilated.

3. In this state I continued till I was fourteen, though with some intervals. I was then a little more at ease, and followed what are called recreations. But from fifteen I was more inclined to reading, and for some time spent all my vacant hours in reading the Scripture, and took much pleasure therein. Between sixteen and seventeen I found much delight in prayer, and had many inward consolations, though I had never then heard anyone speak of the comforts of the Holy Ghost. But having none to speak to about these things they gradually died away. From seventeen to nineteen was the most careless part of my life. I now sought pleasure in mirth and company. But the Lord generally disappointed me, and made it bitter to my soul. I could not find any companions to my mind. I sought mirth, but I thought they carried it to excess. And I could not bear their taking the name of God in vain. Hence I had much sorrow at times. Likewise the looking back, and seeing what seriousness I had fallen from, cut me to the heart.

4. During this time I now and then heard that blessed man, Mr. [William] Grimshaw, and made good resolutions. But they lasted not long. Meanwhile I had heard of a people called Methodists, but I was little concerned about them till I heard some of them preach. I liked them well, and heard them more and more frequently. And though I was not deeply affected under any particular sermon, yet my conscience was gradually enlightened by hearing, and reading, and conversing, and praying, till I resolved to cast in my lot among them. From that time my heart was so united to them that all at once I dropped all my former companions. And blessed be God, from that hour I have never had one desire to turn back.

5. I now loved the Bible more than ever, particularly the New Testament. This was my daily companion, and in reading and meditating upon it I found great delight. And hereby I was delivered from a temptation to think, 'These are the false prophets we are bid to be aware of.' This vanished away when I compared their doctrines and practice with my Bible. And my judgment was more fully and clearly informed of all the essential doctrines of Christianity. And in the use of these means, God frequently met me and comforted my soul. Indeed the doctrine of salvation by grace was unspeakably comfortable to me. Yet shortly after, I sunk almost all at once into a desponding state, which continued more than a year. And though during this time I was often comforted, both under the word and in prayer, yet I do not remember passing four-and-twenty hours together, without being some part of the time in despair.

6. In this period I was continually tempted to think myself a hypocrite. Once I mentioned this to a friend, but got no comfort at all, which shut my mouth for a long time. It is impossible to express the anguish I felt. I longed for death, though I knew I was not fit for it. But in the midst of all, I constantly heard the preaching at all opportunities, and never omitted prayer. When I could say nothing, I groaned before God—resolving, if I perished (as I expected to do), it should be in the means of grace.

¹Orig., '1717'; a mistake. Thomas Lee was baptised in Keighley, Yorkshire, June 18, 1727.

7. Yet even in this period, the Lord did not leave me. As I was one night on my knees groaning before him, those words were powerfully applied to my soul, 'Thou shalt bear my name before much people.'² And this impression never after left my mind long together, which often constrained me to hope that the Lord would some time help me. Also during all this time I had favour with my master and mistress and all the family, although they did not much like the people to whom I belonged. Toward the end of this gloomy season, one evening, when sitting in the house, I took courage, rose up, and desired we might have family prayer. I kneeled down (and so did all the family) and prayed with great freedom. And I continued it, though only an apprentice, which proved a great blessing to my own soul. For it kept me watchful all the day long, lest my prayer and my life should contradict each other.

8. Soon after I was desired to pray in another family, which I did several times. I had now more hope, and one day being alone great part of the day, and much engaged in meditation and prayer, I found a persuasion that God was willing to receive me. I left my business immediately and went to prayer. In a moment God broke in upon my soul, in so wonderful a manner that I could no longer doubt of his forgiving love. I cried, 'My Lord and my God!'³ And in the spirit I was then in, I could have praised, and loved, and waited to all eternity.

9. Before this I had attended several meetings for prayer. I was now unawares brought to conduct those meetings, and sometimes to speak a few words in his name whom I loved. When the meetings were over, others asked me to come to their houses, which I promised to do. But when I came home, I feared I had gone too far, and resolved to make no more such promises. One night as I was going to a neighbour's house, one of my master's daughters who was going with me, said, 'My father and mother are not pleased with your proceedings.' I asked, 'Why, what have I done?' She said, 'They would not have you go to such houses. But if you think it is your duty to keep meetings in the neighbourhood, they would have you keep them at home.'

10. That night my soul was greatly comforted, and I gave notice of speaking at home on Sunday evening. We had abundance of people, and neither my master nor mistress seemed to be at all displeased. They loved me dearly, and let me go wherever I would. But in the midst of all these outward blessings, I had many inward trials. Sometimes I doubted of my state. Sometimes I feared I had run before I was sent, and many times said with Jeremiah, 'I will speak no more in this name.'⁴ And thus I continued for several months, though many were blessed and comforted in hearing me. Frequently I consulted my dear friend, Mr. Grimshaw, who strongly exhorted me not to be faint or weary, but to go on valiantly in the work to which God had called me.

11. About this time I was invited to go to Harding-Moor, Lingboblin near Wilsden, and Thornton above Bradford. As these were places where no one had preached yet, I thought if God would own me here, and raise up a people for himself, I shall know that he hath sent me. He did so. Many found peace with God, and a society was raised at each place. After delivering these up to the travelling preachers, I went to Long Addingham. There also God was pleased to set to his seal. A society was quickly raised. Many sinners were convinced, and several of them truly converted to God.

12. During all this time I wrought exceeding hard at my own business when I was at home. But the going up and down to preach frequently took up more than half my time. After a while providence called me to Greenow Hill, to Hartwith, and some other places; at each of which it pleased God to raise up a people for himself. After I had preached some time at Greenow Hill, I was invited to Pateley Bridge. Here I was called to an exercise of my faith which I had not hitherto known. The first time I was there, Mr. — had prepared and encouraged a numerous mob, who spared neither mud nor stones, with many strokes besides, so that they themselves owned, 'We have done enough to make an end of him.' I did indeed reel to and fro, and my head was broke with a stone. But I never found my soul more happy, nor was ever more composed in my closet. It was a glorious time, and there are several who date their

²Cf. Acts 9:15.

³John 20:28.

⁴Cf. Jer. 20:9.

conversion from that day. After I was a little cleaned, I went to a neighbouring town, where, when my head was dressed, I preached abroad to abundance of people, many of whom had followed me from Pateley Bridge. Some of the mob also followed, but as the wretched minister was not present to head them, and as they were greatly outnumbered, they behaved peaceably. And the Lord blessed us much.

13. Having now laboured near four years, and travelled generally on foot; having been often thoroughly wet, and obliged to keep on my wet clothes all day; and having frequently, when at home worked at night, that I might not be burdensome to any; I found I was not so strong as formerly. And the number of places still increasing, I was obliged, though much against my will, to give up my business and buy a horse. Mr. Grimshaw now sent me into his circuit for a month, sending another preacher in my place. Then I returned and spent a considerable time together among the new societies.

14. In the year 1752, and during the winter following, the work of God prospered exceedingly. But persecution raged on every side. The malice of the devil was chiefly levelled against *me*, as I was the first that disturbed his servants in these parts. So that wherever I went, I was in much danger, carrying as it were my life in my hand. One day as I was going through Pateley the captain of the mob, who was kept in constant pay, pursued me and pulled me off my horse. The mob then soon collected about me, and one or other struck up my heels (I believe more than twenty times) upon the stones. They then dragged me into a house by the hair of the head; then pushed me back, with one or two upon me, and threw me with the small of my back upon the edge of the stone stairs. This nearly broke my back, and it was not well for many years after. Thence they dragged me down to the common sewer, which carries the dirt from the town to the river. They rolled me in it for some time, then dragged me to the bridge and threw me into the water. They had me mostly on the ground, my strength being quite spent.

15. My wife, with some friends, now came up.⁵ Seeing her busy about me, some asked, 'What, are you a Methodist', gave her several blows, which made her bleed at the mouth, and swore they would put her into the river. All this time I lay upon the ground, the mob being undetermined what to do. Some cried out, 'Make an end of him.' Others were for sparing my life. But the dispute was cut short by their agreeing to put some others into the water. So they took them away, leaving me and my wife together. She endeavoured to raise me up; but having no strength, I dropped down to the ground again. She got me up again, and supported me about an hundred yards. Then I was set on horseback, and made a shift to ride softly as far as Michael Granger's house. Here I was stripped from head to foot and was washed. I left my wet clothes here and rode to Greenow Hill, where many were waiting for me, and though much bruised and very weak, preached a short sermon from Psalm 34:19, 'Many are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.'

16. The next morning I preached again. Afterwards several accompanied me a byway to North Pasture. There were many serious hearers. But the captain of the mob came and made some disturbance, and then with a great stick broke every pane of glass in a large window. This made a little confusion at first, but afterwards the Lord poured down his blessing in an uncommon manner. Almost all were in tears, and the people 'took joyfully the spoiling of their goods'.⁶ Thence we rode to Hartwith, where we had peace and the power of the Lord was with us. But when the work of the day was over, I was so bruised and sore that I was obliged to be undressed by another.

17. This summer, autumn, and winter were times of hot persecution. Our friends frequently suffered when they went upon business to Pateley Bridge. Their clothes were spoiled, and their persons much abused. They applied for justice to the Dean of Ripon,⁷ but found none. But what made amends was we loved each other dearly, and had exceeding comfortable seasons together. In January I was invited to preach about a mile from Pateley. When I came, the mob was gathered. However, in the name of the Lord I began. And though they blasphemed horribly, and broke the windows, I was not interrupted or discomposed, but prayed, preached, and concluded in peace. As soon as I had ended, they became

⁵Thomas Lee had married Mary Brooke, in Birstall, on Apr. 2, 1750.

⁶Cf. Heb. 10:34.

⁷Rev. Dr. Francis Wanley (1709–91) was Dean of Ripon from 1750 to his death.

outrageous. I retired into a chamber and gave myself to prayer. While I was on my knees, one came and informed me the mob had forced into the house, and would quickly be in the chamber. But that I must get out at the window, and there were some friends below who would catch me as I fell. I did so, and went where I had left my mare. Thus the Lord delivered me this time also.

18. In a while, being desired to preach there again, I fixed it in the daytime, thinking the mob would not leave their work to disturb us. But they soon came and surrounded the house, so that I could not preach at all. After I had been kept prisoner for several hours, I was obliged to run for my life. About the same time I was invited to Gaouthwaite Hall,⁸ where I preached in the open air with little interruption. But when I went again, the Pateley mob came, though the floods were out. When I began to preach, they were more and more violent, till I was forced to desist and retire. Being resolved I should not escape again, they surrounded the house till near sunset. Then they ran to beat one of the people. Our friends snatched the opportunity and brought me a horse, which I immediately mounted. The mob seeing this left him and pursued me. But again God delivered me out of their hands.

19. But hearing I was to preach some miles off, on the other side of the water, they immediately divided (it being a great flood) to the different bridges. This obliged us to ride many miles about. It being very dark, we lost our way upon the moors. We wandered till we were thoroughly wet with snow and rain; but late at night found our way to Thomas Lupton's. The congregation had waited for several hours, being in much trouble for fear I was killed. I changed my clothes, and though it was late, preached to them as the Lord enabled me. It seemed to us little less than heaven; and though it was a hard day, it was a blessed day to my soul.

20. I remember once, during these seasons of trouble wherein my life continually hung in suspense, a thought came into my mind, 'It is hard to have no respite, to be thus perpetually suffering.' Immediately it was impressed upon my mind, 'Did you not, when you was on the borders of despair, promise the Lord that if he would give you an assurance of his favour, you would count no suffering, sorrow, or affliction too great to be endured for his name's sake?' This at once silenced all murmuring, and thenceforth I bore whatever befell me with patience, and after with joy—finding a willingness to bear it, as long as he saw meet, if it were to the end of my life.

21. About this time, I had thirteen or fourteen places where I preached at regularly. And I thought only of spending my life among them, when Mr. Grimshaw mentioned me to you. You sent for me and asked whether I was willing to be a travelling preacher? I said, 'Yes, if Mr. Grimshaw would supply my places', which he promised to do. That year I was most in the Birstall and Leeds circuits; the next in the Leeds circuit altogether, which then comprehended Sheffield and York also, extending into Derbyshire on the south, to Hull on the east, and on the north as far as Newton under Roseberry Topping.

22. In the year 1758 I was stationed in Lincolnshire. The whole county, now divided into three, was then only in one circuit. So I spent two months in the eastern part, and then two months in the western. I was in this circuit about sixteen months in all. And I did not labour in vain. There was a very considerable increase in the societies, and many souls were brought to the saving knowledge of God. And though the rides were long, and the work was hard, yet all was made easy and comfortable. The Lord was greatly with us, and the people in general were loving and teachable. And I know not if I shall ever love a people better, on this side eternity.

23. Thence I removed into Newcastle circuit, which then included Edinburgh—to which we went, and back again, in a fortnight, generally preaching night and morning. I found many trials in this circuit, but the Lord delivered me out of all. The next year I was in the Manchester round, which then contained Lancashire, Cheshire, part of Shropshire, and of Wales, Staffordshire, and part of Derbyshire. Our labour was hard, but we saw much fruit of it, particularly at Manchester and Bolton. In the latter part of the year I was generally supposed to be far gone in a consumption. I was not careful about it, not doubting but if the Lord called me I should finish my course with joy. But it pleased God to restore my health and strength. May I still glorify him with my body and my spirit.

⁸Orig., 'Garthit Hall'.

24. After some years I went (accompanied with my wife), to Edinburgh. Mr. [Christopher] Hopper laboured with me. It was now Dr. Erskine published and recommended the eleven *Letters* ascribed to Mr. Hervey.⁹ This occasioned a good deal of reproach for a time, after which I was called away to Newcastle. The weather was very severe. Day after day we had various storms, and were hardly able to preserve life. But the worst was, when we came to the steep descent from the mountains (called the Pease¹⁰) where the hill had fallen into the deep road, and made it utterly impassable. This obliged us to creep along a path like a sheep track, hanging over a deep vale. Meantime the snow and wind beat so furiously upon us, that we knew not if we should escape with life. After lodging at Old Camus¹¹ (a most uncomfortable inn), we went forward through sharp frost, heavy snow beating upon us, and miserable roads to Alnwick. From thence to Morpeth we had fair weather, but the next day was heavy rain, which attended us all the way to Newcastle. And here I remained, fully employed till the Manchester Conference.

25. In 1760 I was stationed at Epworth once more. This winter we were invited to Newark-upon-Trent. But we met with much opposition from riotous mobs, encouraged by great men. On the 24th of March they took the pulpit out of the preaching house and burned it in the marketplace. I went thither on the 7th of April, with Mr. and Mrs. Pool of North Searle. The preaching was to begin at two o'clock, but a large mob was there before I begun. I prayed and preached a short sermon. Toward the latter end of the discourse they threw a large quantity of eggs filled with blood and sealed with pitch, which made strange work wherever they alighted. When they had discharged these, they grew more outrageous still. We judged it best to send to the mayor. But instead of coming to quell the riot, he sent an order for me to appear before him. In our way to the main street, there was a deep, muddy drain. They attempted to push me into it. But I caught hold of one of the mob and held him so fast that they could not push in one without the other. When we came to the mayor's, he sent for the town clerk. I showed them the Act of Toleration, and the certificate of my license, observing I had done nothing which was not warranted by law. After much conversation, our friends gave evidence against three of the rioters, who were bound over to the assizes.

26. Some thousands of the mob being gathered in the street, I requested the mayor to send an officer to guard me through them. He said he would go himself. And he did go to the gate; but when I was gone out, immediately went back. I was presently surrounded, and they soon began to throw mire, clods of earth and stones in abundance. This they continued to do, all down the street, till we came to the preaching house. Our friends, judging there would be no safety there, brought my great coat into the stable and advised me to mount and gallop through the mob, which I purposed to do. Accordingly I mounted, but some of them held the gate, and others beat both me and my mare in so violent a manner that I thought it would be best to dismount and go the back way. But here also the mob met me, beat both me and the mare, and when I endeavoured to mount, pulled me back and the mare got from me. Then they dragged me along, sometimes on my feet, and sometimes on the ground, to the side of the Trent, swearing they would throw me in. But they were not agreed in this, so they brought water and poured it upon me from head to foot. A painter then came with his pot and brush, and laid it on plentifully. They still surrounded me, throwing dirt and beating me, till I could hardly stir. Then they offered to let me go, if I would promise never to come again. But this I could not do. Just then a man came cursing, swearing, and threatening, offended, it seemed, at their proceedings—at which most of them left me and dispersed.

⁹Lee's memory may be faulty here; John Erskine provided the 'Preface' to the posthumous publication of James Hervey's *Aspasio Vindicated, and the Scripture-Doctrine of Imputed Righteous Defended against the Objections and Animadversions of the Rev. John Wesley, in Eleven Letters* (Edinburgh: W. Gray, 1765). Alternatively, Erskine may have been circulating Hervey's letters (who died in 1758) in an unpublished form around 1759.

¹⁰I.e., Pease Dean Hill.

¹¹Orig., 'Old Cammus'; an inn on Sir John Hall's estate, near Dunglass, Scotland.

27. I rose up and walked as well as I could down the marsh, a few of the mob quietly walking with me. I found my mare in a standing water. I went in, took her and rode off. Coming to a pond, I alighted, washed myself a little, and then went on to North Searle. But it was hard work, as the night came on, and I was very wet, and exceeding cold. When I got there, I procured some dry clothes, and the Lord gave me a quiet night. The next day I was very sore and weak. However I sat up most of the day, and in a little time I recovered my strength, and had still more cause to trust and praise God.

28. On July 16 was our trial at Nottingham. But the grand jury, sparing the rioters all they could, would not find the bill for *disturbing me at public worship*, but only for *assaulting* me. They were accordingly bound over, to be tried for the assault, at the next assizes. Meantime an innumerable mob was collected, both within and without the court, threatening what they would do to me. I therefore addressed the recorder for a guard. He immediately ordered two constables, to conduct me safe to my lodging. The mob roared, but durst go no farther. So I returned home unmolested. At the following assizes several of the rioters were indicted. Judge's warrants were issued out and executed. In October my counsel and the recorder agreed (to prevent all farther trouble) what each offender should pay, after making submission, and promising to offend no more. The recorder then gave them a very pertinent exhortation, and hearing the Nottingham mob was collected again, sent two constables to guard me to my lodgings, and ordered them to give the people notice that if any man offered to assault me, he would immediately send him to prison. Thus ended the troublesome affair at Newark. Since then the work of God has prospered greatly. And a convenient preaching house has been built, in which numerous congregations meet without any disturbance.

29. Thus have I given you a few imperfect hints of the manner wherein our Lord has dealt with me. My whole life, particularly since I have known something of the saving power of religion, has been attended all along with manifold trials, a thousand times more than I have related. Yet has the Lord been exceedingly gracious to me, the most unworthy of all his people. If I this moment saw all the sufferings I have had for his name's sake, if they were now spread before me, I would say, 'Lord, if thou wilt give me strength, I will now begin again, and thou shalt add to them lions' dens, and fiery furnaces, and by thy grace I will go through them all.' My life, though attended with many crosses, has been a life of mercies.

For more than twenty years I have rarely preached upon the controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians. But my judgment is fixed. I have no doubt, either of Christ's 'tasting death for every man',¹² or of his being able and willing 'to save to the uttermost',¹³ all that come unto God through him. I count it one of the greatest favours that he still allows me to do a little for him, and that he in any measure owns the little which I am able to speak in his name. I beg I may be humble at his feet all the days of my life, and may be more and more like him whom my soul loveth, till at last I reign with him in glory!

I am, dear sir,

Your willing, though unworthy servant in the gospel,

Thomas Lee

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 25–32, 140–45.¹⁴

¹²Cf. Heb. 2:9.

¹³Cf. Heb. 7:25.

¹⁴This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 4:152–67; along with the letter describing his death, by his wife, dated Sept. 9, 1786 (see elsewhere in this collection).

From Thomas Taylor, itinerant (autobiography)

[Birstall]

November 1, 1779

Honoured and Dear Sir,

The profit which I have found in reading the lives of experienced Christians makes me the readier comply with your request of selecting a few memoirs of my own unworthy life, hoping it may be of as great use to some simple souls as things of a like nature have been to me.

I am aware how hard it is for anyone to write his own history, as there are many things which would have a far better grace, were they to come from another hand, which nevertheless are needful to be related. Again, there are several things which one would wish to be buried in oblivion, and yet an ingenuous mind cannot pass them over. As this is really my case, it made me the more reluctant in publishing my own folly.

I am, honoured and dear sir,

Your very affectionate son in the gospel,

Thomas Taylor

I was born, November 11, 1738, in the parish of Rothwell, near Leeds, in Yorkshire. I was the youngest of eight children, seven of whom were sons and the eldest a daughter, so that I was a *seventh son*. My father had something handsome to begin the world with. But proving unfortunate in business, he brought his family into a low condition, especially the younger part, which fell particularly on me who was the youngest of all by six years. I have heard much spoke in praise of my mother, but she died before I was a year old, which I apprehend was no small loss to me. I can but just remember my father, so that I was bereaved of both father and mother before I was six years of age. I then fell into the hands of a stepmother for some time, who took care of me as if I had been her own child. I had, pretty early, something of a turn for learning. My father and mother being Presbyterians, I got the [Westminster] Assembly's Catechism off by heart when I was but four years old, and said it to the minister. I had some visits from the divine Spirit very early, but having no one to encourage me they wore off. My natural temper was active, wild, and very mischievous. And I was so known an offender in little unlucky pranks that I have often suffered, though not guilty; for when the real delinquent could not be found out, the saddle was laid upon my back. Being of a turbulent, daring cast, I often, when very little, ran myself into great dangers by climbing up into high trees, and by many other things of a like kind. When I was between five and six years of age, as I was walking by the river Calder, and trying how near the edge I could go, the ground gave way and I fell in where it was very deep. My father and some other men were at a little distance, and heard my cries as I fell in. They ran to me and soon got me out, and found I was not much worse. I often rambled away, even at that age, so that nobody knew where I was. And being frequently pinched with hunger, I sometimes stole fruit. Indeed I often rambled so far that I knew not where I was, and sometimes I had played some unlucky pranks and was afraid to return home. One day, being in my wandering humour, I got to a large farmhouse, and being sauntering about, a large, fierce bull-dog ran at me, seized me, got me down, and tore my clothes. But how I was delivered I know not, for I do not remember anyone near. Being seven years of age, I contracted the abominable habit of cursing and swearing, which never left me till I was brought to know myself. Being of a passionate temper (Oh, could I write it in tears of blood!), I frequently blasphemed in a most dreadful manner. Nor did I stick at lying. Yet, young as I was, I was not without checks from God, and had I been under the care of any that knew how to manage me it might have prevented many years of horrid impiety.

When between nine and ten years of age my elder brother took me, designing I should be brought up to his business—viz., a clothier. Nothing could have been more detestable to me. I abhorred the name of a clothier. Yea, I heartily despised both him and his trade. This being the case, I was not very studious to please him, which brought what I thought hard usage upon me, and after some time I determined to decamp. But the query was, whither should I go? This I knew not. For though I had several relations in

good circumstances, yet I knew I should meet with cold reception from any of them when they knew I had run away from my brother. Nevertheless, being determined not to stay, my resolution was to go somewhere. One morning, having done something amiss, rather by accident than design, I expected to meet with correction; and to avoid it, set out fasting, about the middle of November. It was a hard frost, and I was in a poor habit, having on the worst clothes I had. I wandered all that day, not knowing (nor indeed much caring) what would become of me. I was very hungry, and sorely pinched with cold. I picked the hips from the hedges, and about eight o'clock at night came to another brother's house, eight or nine miles from where I set out in the morning. When I came there, though I was cold and hungry, I durst not for some time go in, as I was not in the dress of a visitor. However at last I ventured in, and my reception was far more agreeable than I expected. The next day I was treated civilly, so that I begun to hope I was to stay there. But, alas! on the third day I was escorted back to my former quarters, though much against my inclination. Nevertheless, I determined to make my escape again the first opportunity, which in a fortnight after I effected. I remembered my nurse used to show great fondness for me, I therefore set out and marched thither, about nine or ten miles off, in the same garb in which I had fled before. Though I was received tolerably well, yet my dress showed me to be a runaway, so that they were at a loss how to treat me. This was not far from that brother's house where I fled before, to whom I now paid another visit. But here I was treated roughly, and in a few days was, by main force, conducted back to the place from whence I came. Yet I was determined not to stay there. But I thought I should succeed better if I could decamp in a better dress. Therefore I considered how to get some of my better clothes. I got a quantity of them together, and resolved to march by night, seeing there was no probability of doing it by day. This was a daring attempt for a boy of ten years old. But the clothes were found before night, and the cause suspected, for which I underwent a severe beating. This was one of the worst methods which could have been taken; for it confirmed my resolution not to stay. I then thought the likeliest way to effect my escape would be to go on a Sunday, when trimmed up on my best fashion. This I therefore resolved upon, and accordingly I put on two shirts that I might have a change. But unfortunately it was discovered as soon as I came downstairs, so that I was ordered to strip, and underwent again a severe discipline. I was now a pretty close prisoner, and especially on Sundays. However one Sunday, being equipped in my best, I waited all day for the opportunity, but could not get my hat. Finding that to be the case, I set out bare-headed and ran for life, determining that night to go to my nurse's, and then to ramble where I should not be known. I got thither, and was vastly pleased with myself, thinking now I should gain my utmost desire. But while I sat by the fire, who should come riding to the door but my brother, who had taken horse and pursued me. And though it was now night, yet some people had taken notice while it was daylight of a strange boy going in great haste without a hat. By this means he easily guessed where I was gone. Well, back again I was brought, but with as fixed a resolution as ever that I would not stay. Being now almost a close prisoner, I was kept in a mean habit. But that was nothing to me. A day or two after Christmas-day, I made my final escape. And now I entered upon a scene of distress indeed! What I endured from hunger and cold no one knows but myself. My case was singular. I had relations living in affluence, on the right hand and on the left, while I should have been glad of the fragments which their servants, yea perhaps their dogs, despised. That winter was particularly severe, and it was just the depth thereof. My friends thought to starve me back again to my eldest brother. But I had an unconquerable aversion both to him and his trade. I would just remark here the impropriety of fixing boys to any business against their inclinations.

Finding nothing could make me submit to return to my eldest brother, the other (to whose house I first fled) took me, and after some time put me out to a business that I less disliked, though not quite to my liking. Indeed my genius turned more for learning. But as I could not have my wish, I was willing to comply.

As I grew up, my habits of sin multiplied, and my mouth was fraught with oaths, lies, and deceit. I loved sinful recreations and foolish pastimes to an immoderate excess, and soon became a pretty dexterous gambler, especially at cards—and having much pride and little money, was the more intent upon furnishing myself that way. I wished to associate with those whose circumstances were better than my own, and strove to equal them in dress and everything else. During this time the Spirit of God was not

wanting to call me, and sometimes good resolutions took place for a season. But no sooner did a horserace or party of pleasure offer itself, than my resolutions died away and I was worse again than ever. Yet I read the Bible, and got much light into many things. I knew that I had not faith. And when at church (for I went to church sometimes) I durst not repeat the creed, for I knew I was no believer, and though I could lie at other times, I would not lie there. I likewise knew that I was not born again, but what the *new birth* was I knew not. Nor had I any to tell me. I knew I was far from being what I ought to be, but I thought I would be better when I was a little older.

When I was about seventeen I heard that eminent servant of God, Mr. [George] Whitefield. The first sight of his countenance struck me. There was an immense multitude, and his voice was like a trumpet. His text was Romans 13:11, 'It is high time to awake out of sleep.' The whole of the discourse was attended with an amazing power, I believe to many. I am sure it was so to me. When he addressed himself to the several ages of the large congregation before him, and among the rest to the young people, *that* took great hold on me. I did not observe anything extraordinary in what he said. But there was such an unction in his word as I had never felt before. I went home full of good resolutions *now* to break off all my bad practices. But alas, this also proved 'as the morning cloud'!¹ I was surrounded by such as were utterly abandoned. So I soon returned with the dog to his vomit. Nay, I was worse than ever. Till happening to read the *Pilgrim's Progress*, I had another powerful visit from the Lord. But that also stayed but a short time, for my passions hurried me on with a surprising impetuosity. I now left off attending any place of worship, and gave full scope to every wretched disposition. I had a brother living at some distance, who had been awakened some time. But I had before taken my leave of him, as his conversation did not at all suit my inclination. I used to wrangle with him as well as I could, yet it generally left an impression upon my mind. But now I never came near him, being wholly taken up with things of another kind. In the midst of my career I was very miserable, and when I was among my jovial companions and saw everyone around all joy and gladness, I was often exceedingly melancholy and dejected, though I assumed an air of cheerfulness. And often have I lain down in great terror with a 'perhaps I may awake in hell'? A whim now came into my head to go into the army. And a party of horse being at this time recruiting in Wakefield, and an acquaintance of mine entering himself a volunteer, I needed but little solicitation to follow his steps. I therefore went to the officer, and being young and pretty well made, was very acceptable. But upon trial I was about half an inch beneath the standard, and therefore he could not take me.

This gave a check to my career in some measure. But I soon returned to my former conduct, being abandoned to everything my age and circumstances could admit of. I cannot say that drinking had much influence over me. Yet I have been intoxicated several times; and once, not long before I was awakened, coming home in the night with others we had a ferry to cross. While we were in the boat I was so bereaved of my senses that I stumbled, and had it not just then come to shore I should have tumbled into the water, and in all likelihood have been lost eternally. However I took my leave of getting drunk and do not remember *that* sin ever took me captive since. Nevertheless, in other respects I was as bad as ever, nay, even worse. For as I was now grown up, my habits of sin were stronger and more enlarged. As I had given up going to any place of worship, so I had in a good measure dropped my reading too. But still my conscience was not quite asleep. I had very uneasy moments. But I ran into wild company, and diversions as soon as I could. And it was a mercy that I had not more money, for that would have added fuel to the fire. And though nothing is impossible with God, yet in all human probability I should never have been saved. Thus lay my poor soul in ruins when, in the beginning of the year 1758, the Lord by a kind of providence was pleased to arrest me in my full career of sin.

There was a young man several years older than myself, yet with whom I had been a companion for several years. He had been in a fever, and during his illness had been awakened and had contracted an acquaintance with the Independents. He persuaded me one Sunday to go hear their ministers. To oblige him I went. The text was, 'They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.'² While the

¹Hosea 13:3.

²Matt. 9:12.

preacher was describing the maladies of a sick soul, several drunken men came in and were very rude. Partly with what the minister said, and partly by being struck with their behaviour, I never felt myself so affected in all my life. I plainly saw there must be a change, or I was undone forever. Yet I cannot say that I was under such terror as might have been expected. The usual temptations awaited me when I came home. Nor did I wholly escape free. But my desires and convictions continued all that week, and on Sunday I went to the same place of worship again. And I now plainly saw I must give up my companions or I could not be saved. But here was a difficulty. Though very young, I had contracted an acquaintance with a girl who was as thoughtless as myself. Being brought up in the same neighbourhood, a fondness had insensibly stolen upon us both. But however, as I was determined to save my soul, and as she had a perfect antipathy to everything of the kind, it was not long before I got disentangled. So that snare was also broken.

I now began to cry unto God in private, but was sorely tempted the first time I went to my knees. I was afraid either I should drop down dead or the devil would appear to me, if not take me away. I frequently thought Satan was behind me when I was praying, and was afraid to open my eyes, lest I should see him. Indeed it is an exercise the devil does not love, and which he will use every means to prevent. I began now to contract an acquaintance with the people of the meeting, and was pretty much taken notice of by them. Several of them had been joined with the Methodists, and gave me such an account of them that I had no desire of being acquainted with them. One of them lived near me, and had a public meeting at his house every Sunday evening, to which I sometimes went. But being more attached to the other people, I kept company with them only. Allen's *Alarm*³ now fell into my hands. It described my case as exactly as if it had been written on purpose, so that I prized it above rubies. I began to have visits from the Lord, exceeding sweet to my soul. But no one said, 'Now believe, and thou shalt be saved'.⁴ So that I was like Samuel, I knew not the voice of the Lord.⁵ I began now to meet with a good deal of opposition. My acquaintance laughed me to scorn. Though whenever they came near me, the Lord opened my mouth in such a manner that I could easily put them to silence. My master (for I was not yet out of my time) was sour and much out of humour at times. He, and others whom I was in some measure under, had no objection to a reformation in me. But now they supposed I was as mad one way as I had been the other. I continued to press forward, and the Lord continued to visit me with tastes of his love, which were exceeding precious to me. The time of Wakefield races drew on. Many expected my religion would be at an end, as they knew how passionately fond I was of those lying vanities. And indeed I was not without fear myself. Not that I found the least inclination to anything of the kind, yet I knew not how it might be when the time came. But God took care of that; that fear was of his planting, and was a means of driving me nearer to himself.

One Lord's-day evening I was retired to my apartment, for my usual purpose of reading and prayer. While I was calling upon the Lord, he appeared in a wonderful manner, as with his vesture dipped in blood. I saw him hanging on the cross, and the sight caused such love to flow into my soul that I believed that moment, and never since gave up my confidence. I had not then any particular promise applied, but was enabled to cast my soul upon that atoning sacrifice which I saw was made for my offences. I had nothing to trust in but that blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel. But

Oh, the rapturous height,
Of that holy delight,
Which I found in the life-giving blood;
Of my Saviour possess'd,
I was perfectly bless'd,

³Joseph Allen, *An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners*.

⁴Cf. Acts 16:31.

⁵See 1 Sam. 3:7.

As if fill'd with the fullness of God!⁶

As I had no one near to tell me what God had done for my soul, I was in a short time brought into doubts. But yet I could not give up my confidence. Some time after the two following scriptures came to me with remarkable power: 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly' (John 10:10); and again, Revelation 20:6, 'Blessed and holy is he which hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death shall have no power.' These two testimonies were indeed words in season, and very precious to my soul. I had some difficulties soon after to grapple with, and at times was brought to a low ebb, but still his grace was sufficient. I often thought if I was to live at Leeds, where there were such plenty of means it would be almost as the gate of heaven to me. And in particular I expected great assistance from the fellowship of those who were strong in grace. But God would have me depend on himself alone. For though I went to Leeds, as I was of a shy disposition I had no fellowship with anyone. I was then tempted to think there was not much life there; at least, I found very little. It was a very dull time with me. Yet I kept close to God in prayer, and he kept my soul in a measure of peace.

From thence I removed to another place, where there were few that pretended to religion. I feared, lest now I should be overthrown. But I found here two or three Methodists, who had preaching sometimes. I soon got among them, and often found it a blessing to my soul; particularly once in hearing that plain, honest man, Paul Greenwood, whose word left a lasting impression on my mind. But though I met with them at times, yet there was a discord in our manner of speaking, which prevented my close union. From thence I removed to Wakefield, where my first religious acquaintance lived, and with whom I had the greatest union. I kept on in much simplicity, watching unto prayer, and still found reading very profitable; as indeed it was from my first setting out.

But now a new scene opened. I began to think in earnest I was called to preach. This had in a measure been pressed upon my mind for some time. But whether it was a delusion from Satan, or a call from the Spirit of God, I knew not. I dreaded the thoughts of running before I was sent.

I likewise thought a preacher should have learning, and I was little more than an English scholar. But, however, the impression grew stronger and stronger. I wanted to recommend my Lord to ruined sinners, and thought I could rejoice if I was torn in pieces for so doing. I had neither ease, nor honour, nor profit in view, but wanted to be an instrument in God's hands of saving souls. The word of the Lord was as a fire shut up in my bones. At the same time I was so conscious of my inability for the work that I was ashamed to intimate my thoughts to anyone. Oh, how have I agonized with God, not to suffer me to engage in such a work unless it was his will; and if it was, to point out my way! That awful declaration, Revelation 22:18–19, stood seemingly in my way. 'For I testify to every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.' It is probable I might understand these words in too general a sense, but however they seemed as if they pointed out a very narrow path for a gospel minister to go in; and made me cry out, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' But God answered for himself from the first of Jeremiah, 'Then the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child.' (My very objection!) 'But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words into thy mouth.'⁷ Now if any passage was ever applied to anyone by the Spirit of God, surely this was to me. Therefore I determined what to do. But still I knew not how to set about it. For I was ashamed to declare my mind to anyone, from a sense of my absolute unfitness for the work. I had never spoken a

⁶CW, 'Hymns for One Fallen from Grace, XV', st. 7, *HSP* (1749), 1:124–25.

⁷Cf. Jer. 1:4–9.

word in the way of exhortation, but had frequently prayed in public. At length one or two of my acquaintance asked me if I did not think I was called to preach? With much confusion, I answered in the affirmative. From that time, I determined to make an attempt. But the question was, when? At last I resolved to begin on a Sunday evening, and pitched upon a very profane place to make my first effort, thinking an ignorant place was the fittest for an ignorant preacher. When I came within sight of the village, my spirit was ready to sink within me—not for fear of persecution (though the place was rude enough) but from a sense of the importance of the undertaking. When I came to the place, the heart of the honest man who had invited me failed him. Therefore I found his house was shut up. This rather damped me, but another door being immediately set open I went in. A house full of people gathered. I stood up, sung a hymn and prayed, but did not give out a text. For as I had never before opened my mouth in public, I did not know whether I could say anything or no. But I found assistance in giving a word of exhortation, and I believe the word was accompanied with the power of God to many present. I appointed to go again the next Sunday, and then chose Matthew 5:3. I found life and liberty in speaking, and a blessing attended it. The tidings of my preaching soon reached the congregation where I was a hearer, and happening to have no preacher the following Lord's day, they requested that I would supply the place of one. This was a hard task, for there were several whom I was much afraid to stand up before. However I durst not decline the offer. I spoke from John 1:29. Here again my mouth was opened and my tongue was loosed, so that they objected nothing. Undoubtedly they made allowance for a young, raw speaker. Being now in some measure satisfied that I ought to speak in God's name, I embraced many opportunities of going to several places.

I now wanted to improve my little smattering of learning, and having a trifle of money, I entirely devoted myself to that purpose, not knowing nor caring how I might be disposed of.

After some time, being destitute of a minister at the place where I was a hearer, they desired I would accept the place. Accordingly I undertook to preach to them awhile, till we should see a little farther. The congregation was but a small one. However I had the satisfaction to see it increase, and some poor sinners were convinced. But some of the leading men having frequently veered about from one system to another, seemed now mightily charmed with antinomianism. Dr. [Tobias] Crisp's and Mr. Saltmarsh's works were mightily approved of,⁸ and some of Dr. [John] Gill's writings. But Mr. [James] Relly was the great apostle amongst them, on account of his famous hymn-book and his *Treatise* of the union of Christ and his church.⁹ By him I was much blinded, and for a time all seemed right which he advanced. But in one particular sermon he explained his sentiments freely, when I was fully satisfied that he had sadly perverted the truth. I went to him the next day, and ventured to object against what he had advanced the preceding night. He was not prepared to answer some things which I had objected, but attempted to puzzle me by starting other questions. I gained but little satisfaction from this interview. But still I was rather tinctured with antinomianism. Yet I laboured to live near to God. I earnestly begged to be entirely right, both in principle and practice. I went one time to hear Mr. Whitefield. One of the preachers who was with him, I was informed was to preach the next Lord's day. It came into my mind to hear him, as the time did not interfere with our time of worship. When I went, I was amazingly struck to find him in a far more evangelical strain than I expected.¹⁰ I had now and then gone to hear the Methodists before, but was generally disgusted. But the present sermon had quite a different effect. I was now more reconciled to the Methodists than I had been, and began to be acquainted with the people. Reprobation was what I never could digest, and I was not without my doubts concerning final

⁸Tobias Crisp (1600–43), *Christ alone exalted* (London: William Marshal, 1690); John Saltmarsh (d. 1647), *The Fountain of Free Grace Opened* (London: Giles Calvert, 1645); Saltmarsh, *Free Grace; or, The Flowings of Christ's Blood Free to Sinners* (London: Giles Calvert, 1646).

⁹James Relly, *Christian Hymns: Poems and Spiritual Songs, Sacred to the Praise of God our Saviour* (London: Lewis, 1758); and Relly, *Union: or, a Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and his Church* (London: np, 1759).

¹⁰The preacher was Thomas Hanby.

perseverance, but could not endure to hear it spoken against. But I was most rooted in imputed righteousness, taking it for granted it was true, because Mr. [James] Hervey had wrote in its defence.

About this time, being invited to preach in the Methodists' preaching house, I accepted the invitation. This gave great offence to my own people, several of whom were runaway Methodists. Meantime I began to think of joining the Methodists, which my congregation suspected. The heads of them met me, and made me some offers in a temporal way. But I told them I thought providence called me to an itinerant life, and wished them to look out for one who might suit them. As I knew few of them would go with me, I recommended Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham's connexion to them, and wrote to Mr. Ingham myself on their behalf. He came, and several of the preachers in his connexion; but as they soon after broke in pieces, the meeting relapsed into its former state of Independency. Being now disengaged, I preached up and down among the Methodists. But being in principle partly a Calvinist, and having been accustomed to read Calvinian books, their phrases were become very familiar to me. However, I aimed at doing good, and when any of the preachers were sick, or had anywhere else to go, I readily supplied their place. And I have reason to believe my labour was not in vain.

The summer being arrived, and Mr. Wesley coming into the country, I met him at Birstall. He received me with that affability and condescension which he is so remarkable for. I heard him preach in several places, but I cannot say that I could cordially receive the doctrine of perfection. As the Conference was drawing near, he advised me to attend it at London. I intimated a desire of spending a year in that place, that I might be fully instructed both in the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists. Accordingly I disposed of some small effects which I had, and set out on foot. When I came, I expected to have undergone a close examination, with regard to my principles, experience and ability. And therefore as I did not in everything agree with Mr. Wesley, it was a doubt with me whether I should not be rejected. But to my surprise, I was not asked one question relative to any of these things, but was appointed for Wales, and was the only travelling preacher of our connexion in those parts. This I have sometimes thought, was not prudently done, as I was but just come into the connexion. However I set out for Bristol, and so into Wales, and truly a rough region it was. A preacher at Bristol said to me, 'You seem pretty well dressed, and will hold out pretty well for a year. But you must expect nothing to buy any more clothes, when those are worn out.' However I did not regard that, for I was determined to spend and be spent in doing all the good I could. I therefore began preaching out of doors in the first town I came to, which was Chepstow, and determined to do so in every town I came to. Thus I went on till after Christmas, and endured a good deal of hardship from hunger and cold, especially in passing over those dreadful mountains from Neath to Brecon—on which I travelled a long way, and saw neither house nor field, hedge nor tree, nor yet any living creature excepting here and there a poor sheep or two, nor scarcely any visible track to know my way by. This was not pleasing to flesh and blood, but still I determined to go on.

In February there seemed a prospect of much good in a large tract of land called Gower, in Glamorganshire. The inhabitants of it were nearly heathens. I went down into this miserable country in very cold, rainy weather. The people flocked to hear, but we were ill provided with convenient places to preach in. Meantime the rain was excessive, and the cold intense, while we had but little fire. So that I frequently put on my wet clothes several days successively, yet without any inconvenience afterwards. Here God blessed my word. I collected several societies, and many were at this time brought to experience the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.

Towards summer a circumstance seemed to open my way sixty or seventy miles farther down to Pembrokeshire. I went thither, and preached at Carmarthen in my way. Afterwards I preached at Pembroke, and had multitudes to hear, who behaved in a respectful manner and generously cleared all my expenses, for at this time there was no provision made for missionaries. I preached in several places round Milford Haven, and had many to hear. Indeed the prospect was so promising, and the people so loving, that I was almost tempted to embrace their pressing invitations to stay with them. But I thought that would be a betraying my trust, so I returned to my old circuit, promising that I would return again after the Conference was over. When I did return, I was seized with a slow fever. I believe it was in some measure occasioned by fatigues. But providence was kind to me, for as I was in a poor place, where little assistance was to be had, by the blessing of God I did without it. Mr. [Alexander] Mather then came from

Staffordshire, to help me to put things into some order, and went with me through the rambling circuit; which indeed has been of use to me in some respects ever since.

I attended the Conference at Leeds in August 1762, and was sent back into Pembrokeshire. But though I had three hundred miles to ride, and a new work to begin, I had nothing allowed me either to take me thither or support me when I got there. But of this I took no care, and through a kind providence I wanted nothing. Another preacher being sent into the old circuit, I had my full scope in the new one. Things turned out beyond my expectations. The Lord blessed the word. I several times visited the societies in Gower which I had joined the year before, for the other preacher had not time. I endured a good deal of hardship and danger in passing and repassing from Gower to Pembrokeshire in winter, there being several dangerous waters to cross. Sometimes a stranger is surrounded by the tides, whilst he is crossing the sands, and knows nothing of the matter till he finds himself hemmed in on every side. This I once narrowly escaped. I had once a pretty long day's journey, when coming to one of the ferries, which is a mile over, I found the boat was broke. I had nine miles to ride up to Carmarthen where the bridge was, and nine miles on the other side back again. This added eighteen miles to my journey. I just got over the last ferry in the evening, but which was my road I knew not, and the people could not or would not speak English. But they pointed me up a dark lane, which at length brought me to a wild mountain. It being quite dark, I knew not which way to go, for there was no road. At length my mare sunk down in a bog and stuck fast. Here I was at a loss what to do, for if I left her it was ten to one if I should find her again. As I knew not which way to go for help, I shouted and hollowed till I was weary, but to no purpose. I pitied the poor creature that, after so long and fatiguing a journey, had such a stable at night. After some time I took hold of the bridle and pulled her head. Being strong, she made a vigorous struggle, and got her foreparts above ground. And, after taking breath made another stout spring, and got entirely free. At this, I was not a little glad. But not knowing the ground, I judged it safest to lead her after me. I was weary, cold, and hungry, and where or when my journey should end I knew not. At length I discovered something like a house. I was not a little glad, but my joy was soon over; for making up to it, I found it an old ruin uninhabited. So my poor, weary companion and I set out again. At last I saw a man, and prevailed upon him for sixpence to show me the way from the common, which was not a quarter of a mile, for it happened that I had come the direct road. But when I came to the place I aimed at, there was nothing to eat for either man or horse. I got the poor beast to a farm-house at some distance. My lodging was but indifferent, but yet very agreeable, and I know not that either I or my beast ailed anything after we got into good quarters.

The Lord prospered my undertaking in Pembrokeshire, so that by this time I had eight or nine societies. And as the people were remarkably loving, my time went on comfortably. It is true, I often met with things not agreeable, for I was continually ranging about to beat up fresh ground, and Wales is not the most pleasing part of the world for a stranger to wander in; especially on the errand which I was upon. But I cared very little about the matter, provided I could see some fruit of my labour. I could rest very well upon straw, when needful, and be well content.

I went to Tenby, which had held out stoutly for their master, and boasted no preachers had ever come there, neither should they but at the price of their lives. I was determined to make the attempt. So a few friends accompanied me one Sunday morning from Pembroke. We arrived there by eight o'clock, and after putting up our horses, went to the cross. I gave out the hundredth psalm.¹¹ The people flocked together amain, and all behaved very well. After singing, I prayed without interruption. I then gave out my text, and all was quite still. By and by I observed a person who, I soon learned, was the mayor. He would fain have got some one to pull me down, but all the people stood staring with their mouths and eyes open, as if they would have devoured every word. Finding the town's people took no notice of him, he addressed a company of sailors who stood by themselves, desiring they would take that fellow down. But the honest tars answered in their own style, 'The devil shall take him down for us.' He then fetched out the Riot Act, and came into the midst of the crowd to read it, so I ceased speaking until he concluded. I asked him if he had done reading? He said he had. Well, then said I, I will begin again. So I went on,

¹¹Almost certainly the rendering by Isaac Watts, included by JW in *CPH* (1737), 5–6.

and concluded in peace. After sermon the constables came to fetch me before the mayor. When I came, I found the rector, the curate, and the town clerk there. Mr. mayor insisted I had been making a riot. I denied the charge, and desired him to prove it. He said he would not stand proving the matter with me. But, says he, 'Show your authority, or to prison you shall go.' I told him, 'I have been preaching, and have a licence so to do', which I then produced. This being read, 'These justices', said he, 'are Methodists every one of them.' Well, but is this all you have to show? I answered, Yes. 'Then', said he, 'you must go to prison. Let his mittimus be made out.' For which purpose pen, ink, and paper were brought. But he was informed there was an Act of Toleration. This was produced, in which it was asserted that a qualified preacher might preach in either house, field, or other place. This seemed to puzzle Mr. mayor a little, and he thought it best to dismiss me, on condition that nothing of the kind might be attempted again. I told him I intended to preach again at two o'clock, which I did to well-nigh all the town, and had no interruption. I went again that day fortnight, and preached three times, and had very large congregations each time. Presently after, I left the country, and must confess I cannot help blaming those who came after me for not following the blow. I was much importuned to stay in the country. However, I tore myself from them, and hastened to the London Conference.

From thence I was appointed for Castlebar in Ireland, and made the best of my way thither. As I sailed up Bristol Channel I looked with a wishful eye to Pembrokeshire, and if I could have got on shore, I should have been tempted to stay with them. But we stretched over for Dublin, and from thence I went to Castlebar. Here I found myself not only in another country, but amongst another sort of people. Instead of having crowds following me, as in Pembrokeshire, I was shut up in a little dark hole, and had but three little congregations in the circuit. And being entirely surrounded by papists, there was no probability of enlarging my sphere of action. For they neither understood English, nor durst they come to hear if they had been ever so desirous. Here I was warmer than ever in my zeal against the papists, and had it not been for three troops of dragoons who lay in the town, and were constant hearers, I know not but I should have paid for my *rashness*.

Finding I could not enlarge my bounds of preaching, I determined to improve my little learning. I did not like to be at the mercy of every pretender, with regard to the original Scriptures, and was much excited to aim at a little more knowledge by your *Address to the Clergy*. I saw every reason assigned for their knowing Greek and Hebrew was doubly applicable to me. Indeed it was my desire, from the time of my first engaging in the work of God, to show myself approved unto God, a workman, that needed not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.¹²

Very providentially there was a grammar school in Castlebar, in which some gentlemen's sons were instructed in the learned languages. The master very freely assisted me. So that I preached night and morning, devoted the forenoon to study, and spent the afternoon in visiting the sick and reading English; and the evening I spent with my friendly schoolmaster. This has proved very useful to me ever since. Some good was done during my stay here. The number of societies were a little increased, and the congregations much enlarged.

From hence I removed into the Athlone circuit. I still attended unto my studies, but had not the same opportunities as before. I here got a sore illness by lying in a damp bed, so that my speech and hearing were well-nigh taken from me. But this was a necessary visitation, and what my carelessness deserved. However, when I was able, I preached abroad in most of the towns, and I hope not in vain. Though I did not live so near to God as I ought to have done.

My next remove was to Cork. Here a blessed work was begun under that indefatigable servant of God, Mr. [William] Penington. It did not decrease during my stay, but increased more abundantly. I preached abroad in every part of the town. Prayer-meetings were regularly kept up. I met the class leaders every Saturday night, and appointed each his work for the ensuing week. Strict discipline was observed. Not a class leader or steward was permitted to enter the society without producing his ticket. And the work of the Lord prospered on every side. In this agreeable manner things went on, when Mr. James Morgan came to help me. He was the older preacher, though the care of things was committed to me. I

¹²See 2 Tim. 2:15.

could soon see a party gathering against me, who did not like that strictness of discipline. At length he insisted on a person's being admitted to the love-feasts and society meetings who would not meet in class. This I could not admit of. I insisted on poor and rich meeting in class, or not having any privilege of meeting in society. Letters were sent to you, sir, and your answers were construed in their favour.¹³ However, I stood to what I saw was right. They then alleged her husband would not let her meet in class. To cut off this pretence I went and asked him if he did hinder her? His answer was, she is at her own liberty. Then Mr. Morgan was obliged to submit. This however caused a shyness betwixt Mr. Morgan and myself, which cast a damp upon the work. Yet I kept up, at all events, the same discipline as long as I stayed at Cork.

At the beginning of the year 1765, I removed to Limerick, and in July I came over to England, to the Manchester Conference. After seeing some of my relations in Yorkshire, I set out for Scotland. Resting on the Sunday at Dumfries, I preached in the ballroom, the day being rainy so that I could not preach out of doors. Here I was much importuned to stay. But my destination was to Glasgow. When I arrived, I entered on a scene I had never done before. The winter was very hard. I was in a strange land. No society, no place of entertainment, no place to preach in, no friend to communicate my mind to. I took a private lodging, and gave out that I should preach on the green, a place of public resort, hard by the town. A table was carried to the place, and at the appointed time I went and found two barber's boys and two old women waiting. My very soul sunk within me. I had travelled by land and by water near six hundred miles to this place, and behold my congregation! Well, I turned upon my heel to go away. No one can tell but they who have experienced it, what a task it is to stand out in the open air, to preach to nobody! More especially in such a place as Glasgow. However, at length I mounted my table, and began to sing, which I had entirely to myself. A few more kept creeping together, all seemingly very poor people, till at length I had about two hundred hearers. But this was poor encouragement. The night following I had a more promising congregation, yet nothing to what I expected. The third night we had heavy rain. This quite cast me down again. Oh, what a day of distress was that! I had not learned in all states to be content. The enemy assaulted me sorely, so that I was ready to cry out, 'It is better for me to die than to live.'¹⁴ But God pitied my weakness. The next day cleared up, and I was never prevented from preaching out of doors for eleven or twelve weeks after. On the Saturday evening I had a large congregation, and on Sunday morning a larger; but such a one on Sunday evening as I do not remember ever seeing before. I mounted my table but was quite too low. I set a chair upon it, but was too low still. I then mounted upon a high wall, and cried aloud, 'The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.'¹⁵ All was still as night, so that I conceived great hopes of this opportunity. But when I had done, they made a lane for me to walk through the huge multitude, while they stood staring at me. But no one said, Where dwellest thou? I walked home much dejected. One great obstacle was, a new edition of the *Eleven Letters*, ascribed to Mr. Hervey, was just come out prefaced by a minister in Edinburgh, a man much esteemed in Scotland.¹⁶ These *Letters* fully answered their design. They carried gall and wormwood wherever they came. So that it was a sufficient reason for everyone to keep their distance, because I was connected with you. I laboured to keep as clear as possible of controversy, dwelling chiefly upon repentance, faith, and the new birth. Indeed as I then leaned much both to imputed righteousness and final perseverance, I had no temptation to bring in controversy.

I soon found that persons may easily learn to con over [i.e., study] several gospel topics—such as original sin, the offices of Christ, his being the only Saviour and the like—and yet be hugely self-

¹³Neither their letters nor JW's response are known to survive.

¹⁴Jon. 4:8.

¹⁵John 5:25.

¹⁶James Hervey, *Aspasio Vindicated, and the Scripture-Doctrine of Imputed Righteous Defended against the Objections and Animadversions of the Rev. John Wesley, in Eleven Letters*, with a Preface by John Erskine (Edinburgh: W. Gray, 1765).

sufficient, unbroken-hearted sinners. This I saw, and levelled all my powers against it. I soon found their pharisaic heart could not stand it. Hence I drew their resentment upon me, and plenty of lies and calumnies were soon spread abroad.

I continued preaching night and morning, when opportunity offered; and tried much to procure a place to preach in, as the winter was now come on. I believe I was disappointed in ten or twelve different places. I sold my horse, and a preacher who passed through Glasgow, to Ireland, having his horse lamed, and little money left, I spared about three guineas to help him on his way. This brought my stock into a small compass; and having everything to pay for, I was reduced to a short allowance. I paid three shillings per week for my room, fire, and attendance. But I really kept a very poor house. I never kept so many fast-days, either before or since. But how to keep up my credit was a difficulty, for I was afraid my landlady would think me either poor or covetous. I frequently desired her not to provide anything for dinner, and a little before noon, I dressed myself, and walked out till after dinner, and then came home to my hungry room with a hungry belly. However she thought I had dined out somewhere, so I saved my credit.

About this time a poor man was executed for the murder of his wife. I attended him several weeks in the prison, and likewise at his execution, which had a circumstance I never saw before. They chopped off his right hand, before his execution, with a great axe, just as a butcher would chop a piece of beef with a cleaver. As I had reason to believe the Lord had plucked him as a brand from the burning, I published a short account of his case.¹⁷ It is amazing what a cry this raised up against me, to say that God had mercy on such a sinner! Papers were cried up and down the streets against me, filled with lies of all sorts. Nay, so zealous was some poor creature that he began publishing weekly numbers, and had no better subject than myself. My case was now deplorable. I had famine within doors, and plenty of reproach without. Just at this time there was an elegant place of worship building, called *a kirk of relief*. Formerly the inhabitants in Scotland had the privilege of choosing their own ministers. This privilege they are now debarred of, and the gift of a living lies in the hands of a patron. But frequently the parishioners unite, build a place of worship, and call a minister themselves; leaving the old kirk to the patron and his friend. This was the case in Glasgow, but they had not chosen their minister. One of their leading men was one of my greatest intimates. He said he would engage me three hundred votes, which would be a majority. This was an alluring bait considering my present circumstances; a place of one hundred and forty pounds per annum with honour and credit on one hand, and hunger and contempt on the other. But I thought it would be betraying the trust which was reposed in me. Afterwards some of that party desired a meeting with me, but I so satisfied them that I heard no more from that quarter. At length I procured a place to preach in, and my hearers furnished it with a pulpit and seats. I saw now a little fruit of my labour, as I had a place to preach in and a little society, which kept continually coming in; some of whom stand to this day, while others are gone to rest.

I observed above how kind providence was in the weather, for though it was a remarkable wet season, yet I never was once prevented preaching abroad till the middle of November, and which was then only one night. So that it became a kind of proverb among the people, 'If it rains all day, it will be fair at night for the *laad*'¹⁸ to preach on the green.' One little circumstance I cannot omit. Some time after my arrival at Glasgow I found myself at a loss for singing, having but a poor voice. And as the people knew nothing of our hymns, I was obliged to sing the Scotch psalms. Yet being frequently at a loss, one of my hearers told me, if I pleased, he would be my precentor—that is, my clerk, to lead off the psalms. At this I was glad. So we went on pretty well. But at length he brought me a bill of thirteen shillings and fourpence for his work, which was just fourpence a time. This did but ill suit my circumstances. However, I paid him his demand, and dismissed him and the Scotch psalms together. I now began to sing our own hymns, the people liking them right well, and in a little time I taught them to sing several of our tunes.

¹⁷Thomas Taylor, *A Short Account of the State of Alexander Provan, during his Confinement after his Condemnation* (Glasgow: John Knox, 1765),

¹⁸Scottish variant of 'lad'.

After the society was increased to forty or fifty, some of them began to inquire how I was maintained? They asked me if I had not an estate, or some supplies from England? I told them I had neither, but having sold my horse, I had made what little I had go as far as I could. I then explained our custom to them. I told them of the little matter we usually received from our people. The poor, dear souls were much affected, and they very liberally supplied my wants, as also those that came after me. I stayed with them till the middle of April, and then bid them an affectionate farewell, leaving about seventy persons joined together. Though I had many trials in Glasgow, yet I had much opportunity to pursue my study. And the privilege of perusing the college library was of singular advantage to me. But I own I did not live so near to God the latter part of my time, as I did in the beginning. I seldom enlarge my acquaintance, but I find it enlarges my temptations. So I found cause to cry out, 'Lord pardon my trifling, and want of deep seriousness!'

From hence I went to Edinburgh, and in my way turned aside to Stirling, where I spent three nights. On the Sunday, preaching under the side of an old uninhabited building, some young men got into the inside, and going upstairs, threw off a number of the slates. But though they fell just by me, I was not hurt, nor anyone else. Leaving Stirling, I came to Edinburgh, where the brethren received me gladly. The octagon [chapel] was not quite finished, but the congregation was miserably small. Several things had concurred to reduce both the society and the congregation, particularly the aforementioned *Letters*. I had soon the pleasure of seeing the congregation increase, yet not as I could wish. The place was never above half filled, even on Sunday evenings. I was therefore determined to take a new step. The Castle Hill being the place of general rendezvous of all sorts of people after they come out of the churches about twelve o'clock, I was determined to preach there just at that time. It was something disagreeable to stand up bare-headed in the blazing sun, but this I regarded not. My method was: to preach in the octagon in the morning, on the Castle Hill at noon, in the high school yard at four o'clock, and in the octagon at six in the evening. As I generally spake with all my might, this was rather too hard for my constitution. However, by this means I got the octagon well-filled on a Sunday evening, and helped the society a little. In order to establish a communication betwixt Edinburgh and Glasgow, I preached in several towns which lie between, such as Borrowstounness, Linlithgow, Falkirk, and Killisyth; but, I fear, with little fruit.

In October [1766] I left my much-esteemed friends at Edinburgh, and removed to Aberdeen. In crossing the Forth, which is seven miles from Leith to Kinghorn, I know not that I was ever nearer being drowned. There were several friends from Edinburgh, and it being an exceeding fine calm morning, the regular passage boat being gone, we had a small pinnace. But when we were about half-way over such a sudden squall of wind arose that we were in danger of being overset every minute. But by a merciful providence we got safe over. At Aberdeen I met with a loving people. But as the winter was at hand, I had no opportunity of enlarging my sphere of action. I was therefore determined to apply myself to study, and to live nearer to God than I had done. A family residing in Aberdeen, which came from Leeds, I immediately contracted an acquaintance with them. But this led me into company, which was a great loss to my soul. After I had spent some time, being fully convinced of my danger, I judged it best to flee. And a ship being ready to sail for Leith, I went on board immediately, taking an abrupt leave. I never was with such a ship's company before. Everyone on board, both sailors and passengers, came upon deck to prayers, and all kneeled down except the man at the helm. After a slow passage we reached Leith. I hastened to Edinburgh, anxious to see my friends, the generality of whom were glad to see me.

As soon as the season would permit, I took my station on the Castle Hill, hoping for the same success which I had the last summer. But a circumstance happened which hindered the usefulness of me and my fellow labourer, for Mr. [Thomas] Olivers was now with me.

There had been a few years before a young man, Mr. T—n—d,¹⁹ who met in our society. He appeared to be much alive to God, and was the leader of one of the classes. He had been in England for some time, had got ordained, turned predestinarian, and affected a popular character. He now came to Edinburgh, partly *on purpose* to do *us* harm, and partly for another purpose. In the latter design he failed, but in the former he was too successful. He would not preach in our place, nor even come to

¹⁹Surely Rev. Joseph Townsend.

hear us, but preached at our usual times and by this means drew away much people from us. There was neither matter nor method in his preaching; but it was loud and quaint, so he was much admired. He first turned Calvinist, and then to nothing. It is plain a man with little parts and little religion may do that harm in a small time, which men of far greater parts and deeper religion cannot repair in a long time. For though my colleague, who was a man of good abilities, and did all in his power, as well as myself; yet could we not either prevent or remove the harm which one shallow young man was doing.

My next remove was to Chester, where a change took place of such consequence to me that I should be much wanting in my gratitude to a kind providence if I passed it over in silence. I found it was expedient for me to marry on several occasions, but it appeared a matter of great consequence. Only two things in all my life had given me greater concern; namely, my acceptance with God, and my call to preach. What I wanted was a person of grace, of good understanding, of a good natural disposition (for my own is violent), and one who had been well-educated. I had contracted an acquaintance with one while in the city of Cork in whom I had reason to believe the above properties met. She was descended from an eminent French family, whose grandfather, among many others, had fled from the rage of Louis XIV. She was early bereaved of her father, and not long after, of her mother. My great objection was the bringing a person of her delicate constitution and education into such a way of life as she must expect if she became my wife. This I feared would be more than her spirits could bear. Besides, I found a great aversion to bring any more burdens upon the societies. Yet, believing it to be the will of God, I at length ventured upon this important step, for which I have abundant reason to bless God, and hope I shall do it forever.²⁰

Before the end of the year, I preached one Sunday morning in the marketplace at Salop, and met with no other molestation than a few clods and small stones. So I gave notice that I would preach in the evening at a place called the Quarry. When I drew near the place, there was a little army gathered together. They did not stay till I came to the place, but came on furiously, so that I was soon hemmed in on every side. They seemed a little at a stand when I demanded to know what they wanted? However they rallied, and though they did not *strike* me, they *kicked* me about to some purpose. By degrees they hurried me up to the door of a house, which belonged to a justice of peace. I thought there might be something providential in this, and took the liberty of going to desire his protection. The justice was at the coffee-house, but I sent for him. The mob by this time had filled the street, and were roaring like lions. At length the justice came. He said, 'Tell me who have hurt you? And I will send for a warrant for them.' And after a little incoherent talk, fairly shoved me out of doors, into the midst of the mob. Providence held them from striking, or a very few blows might have ended the business. I likewise kept on my feet, for if I had once been down there was no likelihood I should have risen again. But I was covered with dirt from head to foot. All the filth they could scrape up was thrown, and when I attempted turning away my face on one side, I met it on the other. Which way to go I knew not, nor indeed could I go anyway, but just as my masters drove me. At length I heard some cry out, 'For shame, for shame!' This occasioned a quarrel among themselves. Meantime, an honest man opened his door, so I slipped in, and went out by a back way, not much hurt but dreadfully bedaubed, so that I really needed much washing.

The next year, the society in Dublin being in much confusion, you desired me sir to go thither to visit them. My affectionate partner was in a very unfit situation for crossing the water. When we got there, I was in great hopes for several weeks the desired end would be accomplished. But my former antagonist [James Morgan] coming to Dublin, who had been the occasion of the confusion, I had all my work to do over again. But he is gone, and I hope to paradise. There I shall leave him, but he occasioned my path to be very rough in Dublin.

While we were there my wife was delivered of her first child, and not being skilfully treated she had such a complaint in her breast as was supposed to be a confirmed cancer. The anguish which I saw her daily in was such an affliction to me as I never experienced before. This continued nine months, during which every means was tried that could be devised. At length, partly by a very abstemious diet,

²⁰Possibly Nancy Motterham, who married a Thomas Taylor in Aug. 1768, in Devanham, Cheshire.

partly by taking quicksilver with the application of boiled hemlock outwardly, through the blessing of God, a perfect cure was effected. But before this we removed to Cork, leaving our infant above a hundred miles from us. But though the nurse was a papist, I have reason to believe she did her duty to the child.

I found Cork was not as I had left it about four years ago. Then everything appeared lively; now alas, all was dull and languid, the prayer-meetings were dropped, discipline was not kept up, and the society was much decayed. I laboured with my might to revive the former flame, but how hard is it to regain the ground which is lost! This has often been a discouragement to me, that whatever steps I have taken to revive or enlarge the work of God, few of my successors will continue to tread in the same. Either indifference, or not seeing things in the same light, envy having had too great an influence, has often hindered the good work of God.

A little before I left Cork I was at Bandon one Sunday. It happened there was to be a review on the Monday of a regiment of light horse. While I was preaching, Colonel Walpole and all the officers came and behaved in a most indecent manner. On my speaking to them, the colonel ordered four trumpeters from the barracks into the middle of the congregation, and commanded them to sound. I gave out, 'Praise God, ...', and when it was sung began again; so that the poor trumpeters sounded till they were black in the face, and at last were fairly worn out. This so enraged the colonel that he even foamed with rage and blasphemies, and I expected every moment his cane would have been laid upon the poor men's heads. However, at last they all retreated, and got little but shame for their trouble. As the colonel was in liquor, I took the liberty to send him a few lines the next morning, and was told he said he would not be guilty of such an indiscretion again for twenty pounds. But as I was preaching in the market house the next night, the officers came again. They stood awhile pretty attentive, and then broke out into horrid blasphemies, and were for forcing their way through the people to pull me down. But a pretty large number, chiefly old women, violently engaged them and gained a complete victory. So that I was left in peaceable possession of the field, and finished my discourse quietly. The history of this war was published in the *Freeman's Journal*, and sent all over the kingdom.

In July I left Cork, and set out for England, taking Dublin in the way. We embarked there in a small cutter for Liverpool, taking our little child with us. After we had got out at sea, there fell a dead calm, so that we could not move forward at all. Our provision fell short. As for my wife, she being sick, could eat nothing; and as for myself, I was not anxious. But I felt for the poor child, only seventeen months old. We had only a little very bad bread, and some stinking water, but the patient little creature would take a morsel of the bread, and drink a little of that water, and so lie down again quite content. The vessel was full of the most abandoned clowns, chiefly new recruits, so that their oaths and low-lived obscene jests made it a kind of a floating hell.

We spent the Sabbath at Liverpool, where I preached to a large congregation out of doors. From thence we went to Chester, where we spent two or three comfortable days; and so on to Manchester, the place of my destination for the year. I was glad that I was in England again, where I expected to find genuine religion. I found my diligent and indefatigable predecessor, Mr. [Alexander] Mather, had done all that a labourious man could do to put the circuit into order, excepting that he had left a family in the preacher's house, which neither suited with them nor us. Indeed the house wanted furnishing. But everything needful was easily granted. I have much reason to acknowledge the kindness of that people, for I was more expensive to them than I have been to any circuit before or since. Yet everything was done without grudging. Here my dear partner had a long and dangerous fever, but no assistance was wanting, and all extra expenses were cheerfully paid. They did the same when she lay-in, so that I had no weight or care on that head. Here I spent two comfortable years, and had the satisfaction to see some fruit of my labour, especially the latter year. My two years being expired, I left this agreeable circuit with much regret. I came into the Birstall circuit, expecting I was going into the land of Goshen. But oh, the amazing difference! There was a general dullness, no discipline, and scarce one class met well. I scarce ever came in so dreary a region. The singing indicated the condition they were in, for the few that did sing sung as if they were half asleep. The congregations were so shrunk at Birstall that they preached on a Thursday evening in the kitchen, and had plenty of room. The house was in great want of necessities, for there was not one decent thing in it. I am astonished that men will slubber on in so slovenly a manner, rather than

exert themselves and take a little trouble, in order to have things decent. Indeed the house and the circuit were just like the vineyard of the slothful. It was highly necessary, if possible, to awaken the people. I began at Birstall, and so proceeded. But I soon found my head in hot water. When I wanted things a little more decent in the dwelling-house, the circuit echoed from side to side with my pride and lordliness. And a world of ill-natured things were said, which made my way very troublesome. One cause of which was, I thought it my duty to keep close to my study, except when preaching, visiting the sick, etc., or other necessary business called me out. I could not prevail upon myself to smoke and lounge away my time with the people, the course which had been followed in this circuit. This was construed into pride and stateliness. I think, for the first half year, I never had such a time in my life. It was intimated to me several times that my fellow labourers helped on the discontent in an underhand way.²¹ How this may be was best known to themselves, but it was a heavy time to me. However, being sensible I was doing my duty, I determined to continue the same conduct, and rather than alter my plan I would choose to leave the circuit. Towards the latter end of the year, great numbers began to have a more favourable idea of my conduct. They believed I acted from principle, and God owned my poor labours. However, prejudice continued in many to the last, and when the Conference drew on, I found a private cabal had formed a letter or two against me, in which my pride and niceness were not forgot, and several surmises added, as if I was a Calvinist and an enemy to the Church. They had their desire, and I had the happiness of being removed to Bradford. My last year's treatment had left a soreness upon my mind, but it was soon healed by a kind people. I did not find much life amongst them at first. But whatever I said was well-received. My fellow labourers also joined hand in hand, so that the work of God greatly revived. This year I was visited with a fever, but found God very present and precious, so that this also was for my good. The second year we had a blessed outpouring of the Spirit, believers daily were multiplying. So that during these two years above six hundred souls were joined, and many, nay, most of them continue to this day. Great numbers were likewise renewed in love, and enabled to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.²²

My next remove was to Keighley. This circuit was a mere scarecrow on various occasions. So that I entered into it with little less than horror. There was a family in the preaching house, which I was obliged to remove. The house was to furnish, and put into repair. And I had to beg the money up and down, which is not pleasing work.

The circuit was a large rambling range. I was to be but three or four days at Keighley in six weeks; and many of the congregations were very small, all which were completely disagreeable circumstances. However, I entered upon my work in the best manner I could. I soon got the house put into good repair and well-furnished, so that my family were comfortably situated. God likewise revived his work in many places, so that between four and five hundred were joined during the year, and the greater part were able to give a reason of the hope that was in them. A little before the Conference, having to preach one Sunday evening at Padiham, the house was by far too small for the congregation. It being a fine evening, we chose a convenient place to preach on out of doors. While I was preaching to a large congregation, the minister came at the head of a mob, in his gown and cassock, and dragged me down. As soon as I could, I mounted again, and again was jostled down. I attempted standing up a third time, but to no purpose. So we adjourned to the preaching house.

At the end of the year the circuit was divided into two as complete rounds as most in the kingdom. After spending a second year at Keighley, I removed to Wednesbury in Staffordshire, where I had the less hopes of doing good, because my predecessor had done all that I could do in any respect. I found the house almost naked of furniture, the circuit poor, and trade bad. So that it was hard to put things in order. However I set about it, and got my design completed in that respect. But still, the great business gave me much uneasiness. The societies were dull, and the congregations miserably small. Calvinism, antinomianism, and downright ranterism had so laid waste this country that there was small hopes of doing much good. My very soul sunk within me, so that at times it seemed as if I must faint. I cannot tell

²¹Taylor's associates that year were Thomas Mitchell and John Nelson.

²²Cf. 1 Thess. 5:16–18.

how they get their time over, who can drag on and see no fruit. Were that my case, I should be ready to conclude that I was out of my place. To me this was a bitter and a trying season, going round and round, and seeing no good effect. However when the new year came in God revived his work. The preaching abroad in the latter end of summer had excited many to come and hear. By hearing they were convinced, and many were brought to the knowledge of the love of God. I think near two hundred were this year added to the societies.

After the next Conference I was appointed for Birstall circuit, into which I came with fear and trembling, remembering the days of old. As my worthy predecessor had been much blessed among the people, and was much esteemed by them, it made my entrance the more difficult. He had much improved the dwelling-house, and had regulated several things, so that all who come after him will reap the fruit of his labour. I endeavoured to complete what he had left undone. There had been a blessed work in Birstall, where many were suddenly brought in. But the fire had not spread much farther. And as these were young converts, and not established, I feared we should have a sad falling away. But this was not the case; some few dropped off, and but a few. On the other hand, the awakening spread into most of the societies. So that I scarce ever saw so extensive a work. We joined above seven hundred this year, and the greater part alive to God. I never knew so simple means made use of, in the hand of a gracious God, to bring sinners to himself. Prayer-meetings were singularly useful, and so was the preaching. But thunder and lightning, dreams and visions, singing and praying, were all made use of for the awakening of sinners. I am now returned into that circuit, and what providence has yet to do in me or by me, I cannot tell. But here I am, a monument of amazing mercy, willing to lie in his blessed hands as clay in the hands of the great potter, so that I may in all things be a vessel meet for my dear Lord's service, wishing only to finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received from him.

Before I close this narration there are two things which, in gratitude to my God, I cannot omit.

I mentioned before, how desirous I was of improving myself in the original languages. After I had made some progress in Greek, and had gone through the Greek Testament and two or three of the classic authors in that language, I wanted to get acquaintance with Hebrew. I procured several books, but they did not answer my purpose. Likewise while I was in Edinburgh I employed a Jew, a professed teacher of Hebrew, at an extravagant rate, but I soon found he was utterly insufficient for what he undertook, so that his teaching was a mere imposition. I began to despair of attaining it, when Robertson's key came in my way, by which I readily went through the psalms.²³ I procured his *Manipulus Linguae Sanctae*, and by the assistance of that, with Buxtorf's *Lexicon*,²⁴ I can read my Hebrew Bible with pleasure. My having a particular method of spending my time, I have found of the utmost importance. Hereby I save much time, and it is likewise a means of stirring me up. It is true I have little time for chit-chat, which has occasioned me many inconveniencies. Some have thought me very proud and reserved, because I would not (as they call it) be free—that is, I would not sit and chatter with them for hours, tell them a great number of little adventures which I had met with. I dare not do it. I deem it quite impertinent, and in no wise calculated to edify.

My method of spending my time is this. The time before breakfast is wholly devoted to my Hebrew Bible, comparing the original text with the Latin and English translations. I did, for some time, carry about with me the Septuagint translation, but finding it to be so wide of the Hebrew I have laid it aside, only consulting it occasionally.

After breakfast, I write or read in some Latin author, till it is time to take horse. If I do not ride, I visit the sick, and others till dinner. After dinner I generally read divinity, history, geography, or philosophy till 4:00; and then spend some time in my Greek Testament, and considering the subject I shall preach from that evening. After preaching and society meeting, I spend the little remains of the

²³Orig., 'Robinson's'; but he means William Robertson (d. 1686), *Thesaurus linguae sanctae ... sive, Concordantiale lexicon Hebraico-Latino-Biblicum* (London: Samuel Roycroft, 1680); as he refers next to Robertson's *Manipulus Linguae Sanctae* (Cambridge: John Hayes, 1686).

²⁴Johannes Buxtorf (1564–1629), *Lexicon Hebraicum et Chaldaicum cum brevi Lexico Rabbinico Philosophico* (Basel: s.n., 1607).

evening in friendly conversation with such as happen to be present, till I retire. I then note down what has occurred in the day, and commit myself into the hands of a gracious God. This is my general manner of spending my time, but I find a good deal of difficulty in keeping to it. Sometimes I want convenient retirement, so that I am obliged to pursue my study in the midst of children, noise, and confusion.

There is a gross error which some of our people labour under, and perhaps some of the preachers too, that we are not to premeditate on what we are to preach; that God is to assist us in an extraordinary manner, and that all study and meditation is taking the matter out of his hands. Such a notion serves to patronize a sluggish, lounging temper, and is evidently productive of confusion, rhapsody, and nonsense. Indeed, if anyone comes to me for advice, or in distress of mind, I directly lay aside everything else, and apply myself wholly to their case. But otherwise I keep to my regular plan. I wonder every preacher does not keep something of a daily journal, more especially of what passes in his own mind. This I have found so useful that I repent I did not adopt it sooner.

The other circumstance which I cannot omit is my commencing what is called an Arminian. I observed above that my first religious acquaintance were Calvinists, some of whom had been joined among the Methodists. From these I received such accounts as gave me a prejudice against them. I likewise read little else than Calvinian authors, and was much delighted with what is called moderate Calvinism. Indeed there is one branch of Calvinism, what Mr. [John] Fletcher calls its left leg, which I never could cordially embrace. But still I hung in suspense, till I read over your *Predestination Calmly Considered*. Then I bid a final adieu to the damning of infants, and the consigning of unborn souls to hell. Your *Appeals [to Men of Reason and Religion]* likewise (which I heartily wish every person, not entirely drunk with prejudice, to read over and over) were of great service to me. I was now a kind of Baxterian,²⁵ or rather Miltonian, for I saw first the scheme in *Paradise Lost*. But still I held fast by Calvinian imputed righteousness, and Calvinian final perseverance. I call them 'Calvinian' to distinguish them from scriptural imputed righteousness, and scriptural perseverance. In this mongrel state I was, when you published your abridgement of John Goodwin on imputed righteousness.²⁶ I had never so much as heard of his name; and no wonder, for he was a condemned heretic among the Calvinists. This book I read, but I did not like it, as he was so unmerciful to my favourite scheme, so warmly set forth in my favourite author Mr. [James] Hervey. However, after some time, I determined to give him a fair reading, and that I might be thoroughly satisfied I read him over twice. I saw the truth as clear as the shining sun. I saw Calvinian imputed righteousness is downright antinomianism. I still hung in suspense about final perseverance, and knew not which side of the question to take. The authors which I had been accustomed to read were all warm advocates for it, and brought such texts, with their comments upon them, as seemed unanswerable. But Goodwin's *Redemption Redeemed* fell into my hands,²⁷ towards the latter end of which he considers the scriptures alleged and the arguments brought for final perseverance, and answers them in so masterly a manner as has not left the shadow of a doubt upon my mind. So that I am firmly persuaded a man may make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

But though my own principles are fixed, yet I wish heartily we could agree to grant each other liberty of conscience, as the king grants it to us all. There is no forcing of the understanding. The attempting of it has frequently lighted up the dreadful flames of persecution. I must confess the ungentle, unchristian, scurrilous treatment with which you have been treated by Mr. [Augustus] Toplady, [Richard] Hill, and several others has given me a very unfavourable idea both of them and the cause in which they are embarked. It seems to be the genuine spirit of the Synod of Dort, or rather, I may say, of Queen Mary

²⁵Richard Baxter was a moderate Calvinist. JW republished his *Aphorisms on Justification*.

²⁶John Goodwin (1594?–1665), *Imputatio Fidei; or, A Treatise on Justification* (London: Andrew Crooke, 1642); which Wesley published in abridged form as *A Treatise on Justification* (1765).

²⁷John Goodwin (1594?–1665), *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).

and Bishop Bonner. It is most certain that giving of hard names, with a deal of low buffoonery, will never advance the cause of the meek and lowly Jesus.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 367–85, 420–41.²⁸

²⁸This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 5:1–107; along with Taylor's autobiographical comments on his subsequent years of ministry.

From Mr. J. G.

[London?]
November 4, 1779

Reverend Sir,

Not having had an opportunity of seeing or hearing you for many months, by reason of my bodily complaint, which I have had since November 1775, I take this method of informing you that my light and love are not in the least diminished. I learn obedience by the things which I suffer. My whole life is prayer and praise. Yet I feel my own indigence, and mourn. The cross of Christ is my only glory, and I can safely say that all my delight is with the saints that are in the earth, and such as excel in virtue. The poor and little children are my companions. Yet I honour all men, not in word only, but in deed and in truth.

My exercise of late has been greater than I can well bear. Last Sunday I was so ill as to be obliged to go to bed, but my soul was filled with love. On Monday, being asked to visit a sick person, I endeavoured to do so without conferring with flesh and blood, though I had not been out of eight months before and the last time I had gone out was to see a dying neighbour. When the sick man very pathetically said, 'What poor creatures we are!' I sensibly felt it, and sympathize with him. When I got up stairs, I felt my breath very short. And as I entered the room, which was full of people, I saw in the sick man my own likeness. I then, as I was able, gave out that hymn, 'Ho! Everyone that thirsts, draw nigh, ...',¹ and afterwards went to prayer. I felt, as I usually do, myself as nothing, and yet such a nearness to the throne as overpowered me. Christ is all in all. I returned home trembling, yet blessing and praising God who had given such power to a poor worm.

On Tuesday the 2nd of November I was again sent for, at the dying man's request, but could not go till six o'clock in the evening. I then went, after having first used much private prayer. And when I came into the room, I could say in truth, that 'the kingdom of God is open to all believers'. I sang that hymn which begins with 'Jesus drinks the bitter cup',² and then went to prayer, when the dying man, though speechless, joined fervently, together with six other persons who were present. I returned home truly humbled to the dust, for

Excluded is my every boast,
My glory's swallowed up in shame.³

The nervous fever then came upon me more violent than ever.

Wednesday was a day of trial. I felt myself, indeed, outwardly all weakness and pain. But what grieved and pained me most was to hear of a child's telling a lie, which appears to me a very great evil. In the evening I was greatly distressed. But having prayed fervently, I was heard in that I feared. That verse of the hymn was a cordial and comfort to me: 'Teach me the happy art, in all things to depend,' I went to bed very weary, and my rest was painful, for the disorder is upon me as well when sleeping as waking. This morning, at waking, the language of my heart was, 'It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed'.⁴ I am, at present, greatly blest and refreshed with the spirit of unity, peace, and love.

Only love to me be given!
Lord, I ask no other heaven.⁵

¹CW, Hymn on Isaiah 55, *HSP* (1740), 1–5.

²CW, Hymn 124 in *Select Hymns* (1761), 124–25.

³CW, Hymn on Micah 6:6, st. 8, *HSP* (1740), 89.

⁴Cf. Lam. 3:22.

⁵Cf. CW, Hymn for the Love Feast, Pt. IV, st. 4, *HSP* (1740), 185.

I subscribe myself, with all humility, reverend sir,
Your devoted son and servant,

J. G.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 664–66.

From Henry Moore¹

Coleraine
November 9, 1779

Honoured Sir,

I received your letter, and desire to express my gratitude for your great love and kindness to me. Nancy too is very thankful for your kind remembrance of her.² And we pray that God may abundantly recompense you for this your love to us.

I had resolved to marry soon, if you should consent. But as I wish to be married by you rather than any other, and as we expect to see you here soon, I mean to postpone the matter till then. Perhaps this delay may answer some good end. I dread doing anything of which I may have cause to repent in the day of judgment. Oh, will God, after all my unfaithfulness, enable me to say in this matter, as well as in all things, 'Thy will be done!'

Glory be to God, I think I am better in every respect than when I wrote to you last. I have not once felt that disorder which I mentioned to you, the palpitation of the heart, since that time. And the Lord hath given me a more firm resolution than I have had for a long time to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. I intend to travel as long as I live, though I have been, and am still afraid of it. I believe it requires great courage, deep and constant communion with God, and a mind wholly emptied of self, to travel with profit, especially to our own souls. I am conscious that in all these respects, I am exceedingly deficient. Nevertheless I will do as you desire, and I entreat you to pray for me often and particularly.

It may be proper for me to give you some account of the infant society here. They knew but little of the Methodist discipline, and I fear sometimes lest I should overdrive them. They had no regular band-meeting, neither did they know well the nature of it. But I have formed, such as I thought fit for it, into bands, and appointed a public meeting for them once a week. I have also desired that Friday may be observed with fasting and prayer and a few of us join in intercession at one o'clock. I think, indeed, that I see a good deal of fruit already. And I am sure I shall be ashamed before them in the day of judgment, when they shall see how much carnality still remains in my heart. We have got some new members, who promise well. But most of the people here are dissenters, and I fear they are, in general, too wise to receive Christ upon his own terms. Indeed the want of simplicity in myself often pierces me through with many sorrows. I have a sincere desire to serve God, but I am unstable as water and cannot excel. O that the Lord may 'stablish, strengthen, and settle me!

I wish to have your advice how I may study (particularly the Scripture) and preach with the greatest profit. Respecting the latter, my present way is this: I strive to get a clear knowledge of the passage, and I speak from it, without writing at all. Some of our brethren write down the heads of their sermons, and they speak regularly, fluently, and pleasingly. I did this a few times, but was confused and barren. Therefore I did not continue it. Besides, I have observed that few who have their skeletons (as they are called) ever take much notice of the great truths of Scripture, which have been lately so clearly and particularly illustrated by Mr. [John] Fletcher. Therefore I fear to use this method, lest either the people or myself should not be so much profited as we might otherwise be.

Dear sir, I desire to be directed by you in this, as in all other things. For I am sensible I know nothing yet as I ought to know, and am

Your dutiful, affectionate son, and servant,

H. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 666–68.

¹Henry Moore (1751–1844), a native of Ireland, had just entered the itinerant ministry in 1779 (see *Works*, 10:484). The letter to which he is replying is not known to survive.

²Anne Young (1757–1813) of Coleraine, whom Moore would marry the following year.

From Charles Jenkinson¹

London
November 10, 1779

Sir,

I have had the favour of your letter expressing your approbation of the proposal made to me by Mr. [Thomas] Webb, late Lieutenant and Quartermaster of the 48th Regiment,² and I send you enclosed a copy of the answer I have returned by the king's command to the said proposal.³ And I beg leave to assure you that your zeal and loyalty on this occasion are in my opinion highly commendable.

I am, etc.

C. Jenkinson

Source: manuscript copy for records; British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add. MS. 38307, f. 76.

¹Charles Jenkinson, 1st Earl of Liverpool (1729–1808), served as Secretary at War 1778–82.

²Cf. Webb's detailed proposal above, dated Oct. 24, 1779; and JW's letter to his Methodist followers bearing the same date (29:518–19).

³The enclosure is not known to survive, but JW reported that it said: 'It was not necessary; but if it ever should be necessary, his Majesty would let me know.' See JW to Joseph Benson, Aug. 3, 1782, 30:64–65.

From Thomas Hanby (autobiography)

Liverpool
November 12, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

My father removed from Barnard Castle, in the county of Durham, to live in the city of Carlisle, where he was employed by a company of gentlemen to carry on a branch of the woollen manufactory. Here he married my mother, who was a person of some small property; by whom he had three children, myself being the youngest. I was born December 16, 1733.

After some years, the factory was given up, and my parents came to live at Barnard Castle again. My mother died when I was about seven years of age, and my father soon after. He was much addicted to drunkenness, which made him neglect the care of his family; by which means he reduced his helpless offspring to a variety of afflictions. I lived some time with an aunt, who had been a person of considerable fortune but was reduced by the extravagancy of my uncle, my father's brother. It is true I was put to school for some years, but made no considerable progress in learning. Before I was twelve I was put out to a trade, whereby a kind providence enabled me to provide for myself such things as I stood in need of.

The first serious impression that I remember was when I was about six years of age. I was in a yard belonging to the house where we lived, in Barnard Castle, and looking up to heaven, I was struck with wonder, and called aloud, 'God Almighty'. But such horror seized me as made me run home and shut the door with all speed. My mother reproved me and said I had been doing some mischief, but I assured her I had not. She then insisted upon knowing the cause of my uncommon haste, and of my shutting the door with such violence. I told her I was in the yard, and called aloud, 'God Almighty', and I was afraid. What she thought, I cannot say. But she said no more to me upon the subject. A few years after, I was greatly alarmed by my sister talking of the day of judgment, which I had not heard of before. But these serious impressions wore off, and I began to be,

Rough in my manners, and untam'd my mind.¹

When I was about thirteen, hearing the bishop was coming to confirm the children in our town, I began to think some kind of reformation and preparation was necessary. Accordingly I applied to a relation, one John Robinson, a maltster, who was a sincere man and esteemed and beloved by all men. He taught me all he knew, viz., many questions and answers, with a great number of prayers; instructed me in the Church catechism (for though I had learned it when at school, I had now entirely forgot it); and in short made me, I thought, a very good boy. The Sabbath came when the bishop was to confirm, and I having passed my examination with the minister, was introduced to the bishop. This was in the forenoon. And towards evening I went with some of my companions into the fields, and played at our usual games. But before I went to bed, horror of conscience seized me, and I thought I heard a voice say, 'Thy confirmation is made void, for thou hast broke the Sabbath.' What to do now I knew not. However I began to make myself good, by reading and repeating many prayers.

In this state I continued, till it pleased God, of his infinite mercy, to send a poor man, one Joseph Cheesebrough, a shoemaker and a Methodist from Leeds, who having received the *truth* himself, was willing to impart it to others—not by preaching or exhortation, but by friendly discourse with his former acquaintance, for he was a Barnard Castle man. Joseph Garnet, one of our preachers now with God, and a few others first received the *truth*. They met together in an upper chamber for fear of the mob. They read the Scriptures and the books you had then published, sang hymns, and prayed. I went one evening with a few of my ungodly companions, and as they were disposed to mock, I joined with them. However I found something within that was far from justifying my conduct, and a secret persuasion that those despised and persecuted people were able to show me the way of salvation. I went again the next night (for they met every night), and begged I might be permitted to come in among them. Accordingly I

¹Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, xvi.53 (Alexander Pope translation).

was admitted, and found myself sweetly drawn to seek an unknown God. From that time I missed no opportunity of assembling with them. My cousin [John] Robinson went at the same time, but the minister sent for him and laboured to convince him that he and the Methodists were all in an error. And to prove it, he showed him several old puritanical books which treated on the new birth, etc., and told him, 'It is a false religion, because it is an old religion!' My cousin, at that time and for four years after, was an entire stranger to himself and his need of a Saviour. The minister prevailed on him to leave the Methodists, and my great opinion of his piety made me, though contrary to my inclinations, leave them also. The minister told my cousin, provided he would form a religious society upon rational principles, he would sometimes come himself. He accordingly did, and in a little time we had a larger society than the Methodists, of formal professors who could play at cards, take their pleasures, and conform to the world in almost everything.

During this period God still worked upon my tender mind, and I was fervent in prayer, reading, and every other exercise of religious duty. I was sometimes much tempted, but knew not that it was temptation. I also found remarkable comforts, but knew not what they meant. I thought I would pray at the same place again, which I did, and was greatly surprised not to meet with the same joy. In this state of ignorance I continued till our society dwindled away, and none remained but my cousin and me. I said to him one night, 'I fear we are wrong in leaving the Methodists; we can meet with none who can show us the way of salvation like them. Come and let us go and join them again.' He had some objections, but my importunity prevailed with him. Accordingly we went and, it being their class meeting, we were admitted. In about twelve months he found peace, and ever after continued in the way, a very serious, steady, and circumspect walker, till the Lord took him to himself. About this time Mr. Whitford, the first Methodist preacher, came to Barnard Castle.² He preached abroad to a very large but unruly congregation. I was much affected, especially when he repeated those words, 'Oh let not Christ's precious blood be shed in vain.' (Mr. Whitford left the Methodists some years after and turned Calvinist, and I suppose would now be shocked to use the words which had such an effect upon my mind that I never could forget them.) After Mr. Whitford, we were favoured with Mr. [William] Tucker, Mr. Turnough,³ Mr. John Fenwick, Mr. [Jacob] Rowell, and others; who often preached to us while the blood run down their faces, by the blows and pointed arrows thrown at them while they were preaching. Soon after you, sir, paid us a visit, but were interrupted by the fire engine being played on the audience. I and our few friends did all we could to prevent it, but were overpowered by the multitude.

God continued to draw me with strong desires, and I spent much time praying in the fields, woods, and barns. Any place, and every place, was now a closet to my mourning soul, who longed for the Day Star to arise in my poor benighted heart. And it pleased infinite mercy, while I was praying in a dark place (greatly terrified for fear I should see the devil), that the Lord set my weary soul at liberty. The next day the Lord was pleased to withdraw the ecstasy of joy, though I had no condemnation, and I had well-nigh given up my confidence, thinking it was nothing but a heated imagination. But the Lord met me again, while I was in the fields, my usual place of retirement, and from that time I was enabled to keep a weak hold of the precious Lord Jesus.

When I was about eighteen I had a desire to see Newcastle upon Tyne, thinking if I was among more experienced Christians I might be taught the ways of the Lord more perfectly. I stayed a few months there, and boarded with our worthy friend, Mr. Robert Carr, whose tenderness for my youth, and truly Christian behaviour, was of singular use to me, for which I shall ever love and esteem him. By attending preaching night and morning, and conversing with many mature Christians, my understanding was much enlightened; and I think I may say, through all-sufficient mercy, that I grew in the fear and knowledge of God.

²John Whitford first appears in the *Minutes* as a local preacher in 1747 (*Works*, 10:205). He was received on probation as a travelling preacher the following year (10:214), and last appears in 1753 (10:268); when he withdrew from the connexion to become minister of an Independent church in Bolton.

³John Turnough first appears in the *Minutes* as a travelling preacher in 1753 (*Works*, 10:260), and is last listed in 1759 (10:287).

When I returned to Barnard Castle, I stayed some time there, and told my beloved friends all I could remember of the many excellent sermons I had heard in Newcastle, the nature of their discipline, and the Christian spirit of the society in that place.

Having profited so much by my Newcastle journey, I thought I would take one more journey to Leeds, and after that I meant to settle at home for life. Accordingly I went, and here providence was equally kind in casting my lot into Mr. Richard Watkinson's family,⁴ where they put themselves to some inconvenience in boarding and accommodating me with a very agreeable lodging. I have often had a thankful remembrance of their kindness to me, and I hope the Lord will reward them for it.

My business now was that of stuff-making, and as I loved to labour hard I was able to procure more than my necessities required. My method was, as formerly, to be much in the fields, praying and meditating. I also attended all the means of grace, and on the Sabbath I frequently took a walk with Mr. Watkinson into the country, where he preached.

During this period I can truly say I walked in the fear of the Lord and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost; and my delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law I meditated day and night.

About this time a sudden impression was made upon my mind that I ought to preach the gospel. I concluded it was nothing but temptation, and would not for a moment encourage such a thought. But it came again, and with it 'a horror of great darkness fell upon me', like that mentioned in Genesis 15:12, and I was truly miserable. I remembered the wormwood and the gall that the preachers drank at Barnard Castle, and I said in my heart, 'I will not preach'. But the terrors of the Lord made me afraid, and his fear took hold upon me. I was in great bitterness of spirit, because of this conviction. Sometimes I thought it was from God, at other times I thought it was all from the devil. In this perplexed situation I continued some time, without ever mentioning my case to any one. I would frequently retire into my closet and express myself in words like these: 'Lord, of what use is my existence in this world? I am profitable neither to God nor man! I cannot preach, for I am a fool, and a child. Oh let me die, for it is better for me to die than to live.'

However I was willing to preach, provided I was sure it was the will of God concerning me. But 'this way, and that, I turned my anxious mind', when a friend of mine, one John Smith, told me of a poor woman in the society who was supposed to be dying, and that she was wonderfully happy. I had read in your tracts the accounts of many happy deaths, but had never seen one. I desired my friend, if he could, to introduce me to see her. He promised to call on me the next night. He did so, and as we were going, I prayed to the Lord that he would remove my intolerable load, and that if it was his will I should preach, he would show it to the dying saint I was going to visit. I said, 'Lord, thou canst as easily do this, as thou canst cause her to triumph over death. If thou wilt but show me a token by which I may know thy will, then I will preach thy word wherever thou shalt please to send me.'

We came to the house where the sick woman lay, and as I was an entire stranger to her and everybody besides, I stood at a distance. Mr. [William] Shent came in and prayed with her. I followed him to tell him our Barnard Castle brethren would be glad of a visit from him. After I had delivered my message, I returned to the sick woman, and was told she had made much inquiry for the young man who stood in the corner. I came to the bedside, and she looked me earnestly in the face and said, 'God has called you to preach the gospel. You have long rejected the call, but he will make you go. Obey the call, obey the call.' She put such an emphasis upon 'He will make you go' that it shocked me exceedingly.

I now resolved through the grace of God to make a trial. Accordingly I sent word to Bramley, that preaching would be there the next Lord's day in the morning. As I went along, my mind was perfectly resigned. I did not think about what I should say, but my heart said, 'If he will have me to preach, something will be given me to say that will be profitable. And if he has not sent me, it will be a less cross to be confounded before the people, than to be a preacher of the gospel.'

⁴Richard Watkinson (1726–93) was a Methodist in Leeds, who would enter the itinerant ministry about 1776 (cf. *Works*, 10:455, n. 618). See Atmore, *Memorial*, 443–44; and *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1793), 1:276.

I was rather behind the time, and the people were waiting, expecting brother Watkinson, as usual. They came to me and asked where he was, and what must be done? I said in my heart, 'The Lord will provide himself a sacrifice.' I stepped to the place, gave out a hymn, prayed and took those words for my text, 'If ye be risen with Christ seek those things which are above.'⁵ The people trembled for fear of me, and prayed heartily. God was pleased to visit us. Two persons received a sense of pardon. I preached again at noon, and at Armley in the evening. This, dear sir, was my beginning, and what I looked upon as my call from God.

I was now occasionally employed by Mr. Shent and the other preachers to take part of a circuit for them.

In 1754 brother [Thomas] Mitchell desired me to come and help them in the Staffordshire circuit for a few months. Accordingly I went to Birmingham, Wednesbury, etc. Brother [William] Crabb was then along with us, and as we were too many for the few places about Birmingham, I made an excursion into the wilds of Derbyshire. Preached at Wootton, near Weaver-hill, the Ford, Snelson, and Ashbourne,⁶ where there had been no such a being as a Methodist preacher. I had often found a great desire to preach in that town, but was at a loss how to introduce myself. However I providentially heard of a serious man, Mr. Thomas Thompson, who kept the toll-gate about half a mile from the town. I took Thomas White with me, from Barton Forge. We came to Mr. Thompson's, and introduced ourselves in the best manner we could. He informed a few of his neighbours that there was a preacher at his house. Accordingly, Mr. Hurd's family, Mr. Peach's, and a few others came in the evening; I suppose as many as they durst invite. I talked to them, and expounded a part of the eighth chapter of the Romans. I found much liberty in my own soul, and the power of God rested upon the people who were deeply affected. I stayed a few days preaching morning and evening, to as many as the house would hold. Miss Beresford condescended to assemble with us, and the Lord opened her heart, as the heart of Lydia. When I had been preaching Christ as a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, she cried out, 'Oh precious gospel! Oh precious gospel!' From that time she continued steadfast, growing in grace, till the Lord took her in glorious triumph to himself.⁷

I left Ashburn for about a fortnight, to visit my new friends in Snelson, Wootton, the Ford, Bottom house, etc., and returned again. I now found I must preach no more at the toll-gate house, the commissioners of the road had forbid my friend Mr. Thompson to admit me. But Mr. Hurd, a gentleman farmer, by the desire of his family whose hearts the Lord had touched, suffered me to preach at his house. It was now that a furious mob arose while I was preaching, and beset the house, and sprang in among us like so many lions. I soon perceived that I was the object of their rage. My mind was variously agitated, yet I durst not but cry aloud, as long as I could be heard. But at last I was overpowered with noise. Some of my friends, in defending me, were bleeding among the mob, and with difficulty I escaped out of their hands. But as Mr. Thompson, Mr. Isaac Peach, Mr. Hurd's family, Miss Beresford, and a few others remained steady, I was constrained to repeat my visits till the Lord gave us peace. Mr. Thompson grew in the knowledge and love of God, till the Lord took him to himself.

In a few weeks, I returned again to Leek, and put up at one of the principal inns, in hopes of seeing some of the society, to encourage them to suffer patiently for the sake of him who suffered death for them. I had ordered dinner, but before it was ready the mob collected together in a large body and beset the inn. The landlord came to me in great confusion, and entreated me to leave the place immediately, or his house would be pulled down and I should be murdered. I was obliged to obey. I mounted my horse in the yard, and rode through the mob, amidst stones, dirt, etc., whilst they were gathering in vast numbers from every part of the town, crying, 'Kill him, kill him'. There was from this time no access to Leek, till the chief men of this mob died miserably, and of the rest some went for

⁵Cf. Col. 3:1.

⁶Orig., 'Ashburn'.

⁷Judith Beresford (c. 1732–56) wrote JW over the next couple of years. She died in late 1756.

soldiers, and all of them were dispersed except one man, who was alive a few months ago, in miserable circumstances.

I had frequently passed through Burton upon Trent, in my way to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and found a desire to preach in that place, which appeared to me to be fit for him who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. I obtained leave to preach in a large house belonging to a shoemaker. Many attended, and I had reason to believe some were awakened. I gave out preaching for another day, and went accordingly. The town was alarmed and a mob (as I understood afterwards) were hired, and made drunk, by the principal persons in town, effectually to prevent my preaching. It was in the winter season, and a dark night. All was quiet till I gave out a hymn. Then they approached the house, broke first the window shutters, and then dashed the windows in. The head of this mob was a forgerman, half an idiot, who had bound himself under an oath he would that night have my *liver*. He brought the pipe of a large bellows, with which he made a frightful noise, and which was to be the instrument of my death. He made what way he could to me, but was rather retarded by the multitude that was before him. I observed him with the fury of a fiend, but knew not well what to do. To attempt to preach was in vain, for I could not be heard. I stepped off the chair and got into a chamber unperceived by my enemy. When he found I was gone, he insisted upon going upstairs, and it was impossible to hinder him and the numbers that were with him. It came into my mind, 'Go downstairs, escape for thy life.' I went down and walked into the shoemaker's shop, unobserved by anyone, though I passed through part of the mob. Soon after he got upstairs, searched the closets, beds, chests, etc., and when he could not find me, foamed at the mouth like a mad dog. Then there was a cry in the street, 'He is in the shop, he's in the shop.' I now concluded all was over with me, and said, 'Lord, give me strength to suffer as a Christian; nor may I count my life dear unto myself for thy sake.' I went under the shoemaker's cutting board. Meantime the mob were not long in breaking open two strong doors that led into the shop. They did not see me. But one of them put down his hand where I was, and cried out, 'He is here, he's here.' I had now no other means to use, so I committed myself into their hands.

They hurried me into the house, and a very stout man, one of those who had been made drunk for the purpose, approached me. But his countenance fell. He took hold of my hand and said, 'Follow me'. I imagined he intended to take me and throw me into the river, and I was content. I committed myself to the disposal of a kind providence, expecting nothing but death. With difficulty he got me through the mob. And as he was one of the best boxers in the town, nobody durst oppose him. When we came to the door, he drew me short by the corner up a narrow street, put me before him, and said, 'Run'. I made my way to the fields, and he kept behind, keeping the rest off, then helping me over walls and hedges, till we had lost them all. I remained in the fields till midnight, and returned with a friend into town, and lodged till early in the morning, when I rode away.

After some time I went again to Leek, stayed ten days, and joined twenty-four in a society. A lawyer then raised a furious mob, who beset the house where I lodged. My few friends kept them off for a considerable time. But at last they lost all patience. They broke in, and were determined to drag me away. But it pleased the Lord that a woman, who then neither feared God nor regarded man, opened a window that looked into the yard, and desired me to come into her house. Here I stayed till about two o'clock in the morning, and then made my escape over the mountains to the Bottom house. This woman is yet alive; but she is a new woman, and in our society. The next day the mob were not a little chagrined to find they had lost their prey, and had no other way to avenge themselves than to burn me in effigy.

Soon after I was pressed in spirit to visit Burton upon Trent once more. The mob soon gathered. And had it not been for a peculiar providence, in turning one of the head of them on my side, I believe I should have had that night the honour of martyrdom.

In weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in joy and sorrow, in weakness and trembling, were my days now spent. And I have frequently thought if God would excuse me from this hard task, how gladly should I embrace the life of a shoeblack, or of a shepherd's boy. I was surrounded with death, and

could seldom expect to survive another day, because of the fury of the people. And yet it was, 'Woe unto thee, if thou preach not the gospel.'⁸

The summer following, 1755, the Conference was held at Leeds, where I was admitted as a travelling preacher. The next year I was sent to Canterbury. My little stock of money was nearly exhausted by the time I got to London, and though it was rather too long a journey for a winter's day, I was under a necessity to push forward, not having money enough to keep me and my horse upon the road all night. It was about eight o'clock at night when I got within sight of the lamps in the city. Two men, with large pistols, then rushed out upon me from a narrow lane and demanded my money. They took my watch and all the money I had in the world, which was two shillings and eightpence. (Indeed, sometimes if a halfpenny would have purchased the three kingdoms, I had it not for weeks together.) I believe this robbery was permitted for good. It was at the time we expected an invasion from France, and the city of Canterbury was full of soldiers. They were two soldiers who robbed me, and this excited a curiosity in their comrades to hear the preacher who had been robbed. And it pleased God to convince many of them. About ten were in society before this; and when I came away, they were increased to sixty.

Several of the following years I spent in Scotland. And I think this was in general the happiest period of my life. In 1763 brother [Robert] Roberts and I came to Dundee. I preached in the evening, and he the next morning. When we parted, I came to Edinburgh, and he went to Aberdeen. Some time after, I had a strong desire to give Dundee a fair trial. Accordingly I went there and stayed three or four months. I continued preaching in the open air till the 10th of November. And it was there God met with many poor sinners, and truly awakened them to a sense of their misery. So that before I left the place there were near a hundred joined in our society. About this time Mr. Erskine published Mr. Hervey's *Letters*, with a preface equally bitter.⁹ Oh the precious convictions those letters destroyed! They made me mourn in secret places. Mr. Erskine being much esteemed in the religious world, and recommending them through the whole kingdom, our enemies made their advantage of them. These made the late Lady Gardiner¹⁰ leave us, after expressing a thousand times in my hearing the great profit she received by hearing our preaching. Many were then brought to the birth, but by those *Letters* their convictions were stifled. What a pity good men should help to destroy the real work of God in the hearts of men!

In 1765 I was appointed to labour in the Leeds circuit. Here the Lord was pleased to try me, by the death of a most amiable wife and my only child.¹¹ Oh how great a debtor to that grace who forbids our murmuring at the dispensations of providence; though it allows us to sorrow, but not as men without hope.

In 1766 I laboured in the Birstall circuit. In 1767, in Staffordshire. In 1768, in Bedfordshire. In 1769 and 1770, in Newcastle. In 1771, in Edinburgh and Glasgow. From hence I made a short visit to my old friends at Dundee, and notwithstanding the many difficulties they had had to encounter, I found many of them serious and steady. In 1772 and 1773, I laboured in Staffordshire again. In 1774 and 1775, in Gloucestershire. In 1776 and 1777, in Macclesfield. There the Lord was pleased again to afflict me in a very tender part, by making a second breach in my family.

Our lives are ever in the power of death.¹²

⁸Cf. 1 Cor. 9:16.

⁹James Hervey, *Aspasio Vindicated, and the Scripture-Doctrine of Imputed Righteous Defended against the Objections and Animadversions of the Rev. John Wesley, in Eleven Letters*, with a Preface by John Erskine (Edinburgh: W. Gray, 1765).

¹⁰Lady Frances (Erskine) Gardiner; orig., 'Gardener'.

¹¹Thomas Hanby married Ann Layland on July 30, 1765 in Leeds. She died in childbirth, buried May 6, 1766; and their unnamed son was buried three weeks later, at St. Peter church in Leeds.

¹²Translation of a quote from Lucan, *The Civil War*, i.461–62; found in Joseph Addison, *The Evidences of the Christian Religion* (Edinburgh: William Darling, 1776), 264.

In 1778 I was appointed for Liverpool. I am now going on in my second year, among a loving, kind, good people, for whom I feel the greatest affection, and hope my weak labours are acceptable.

Thus, dear sir, I have given you a short account of my life. But fain I would do something for him, who has loved me and given himself for me. My sentiments in religion are the same they ever were. I believe man by nature is sinful and helpless. That his only remedy is in Jesus Christ, who tasted death for every man. That the Holy Spirit works conversion in the soul, and a fitness for the kingdom of heaven, by transforming it into the image of the ever-blessed God. This conformity I most ardently long for, and hope, dear sir, you will entreat the Father of mercies for

Your affectionate son and servant in the gospel,

Thomas Hanby

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 538–52.¹³

¹³This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 2:131–57; along with a description of his death and an elegy in his honour.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Bristol
Sunday, November 28, 1779

[[Dear Brother,]]

Keep my letters (for I have no time for copies) as materials for your history of the opposition;¹ and I entreat you, *keep them to yourself*.

Betsy Johnson has taken much pains to pacify Mr. [Alexander] M'Nab and dissuade him from printing. She told me, in a fright, that very few would come this morning to receive the sacrament from Mr. Smyth and me.² It rained hard, yet we had a good congregation. Mr. Smyth read prayers. I preached from 'Follow after peace and holiness.'³ Seldom with such good effect. Old brother Dyer followed us upstairs and said, 'I have heard nothing of this strife. But as I was going into the gallery *I heard the Spirit* say, "Obey those who have the rule over you."⁴ Mr. Smyth gave the cup to the usual number. I prayed in faith—and love. We had an extraordinary time of refreshing.

After sacrament Mary Maddern⁵ told me she has been in the fire ever since Mr. M'Nab and Bristol came.⁶ That they have perverted all the local preachers, closeting them when any came to town, canvassing⁷ and corrupting them into their party. That they never rise [early] to preach, neglect the rules of the society, or openly ask, 'What has Mr. [Charles] Wesley to do with our circuits?' And go from house to house *speaking against you*. Mr. [Thomas] Simpson is as deep in their party as any man. Mr. Welsh, a local preacher, told her he had just heard that a gentleman on the Exchange said, 'Mr. [Charles] Wesley came to Bristol on Wednesday with the devil in him.'⁸

Mr. Smyth preached, excellently well, at 5:00 to an immense company. Having been much in prayer all day, I met the full society, to whom I turned my heart inside out: first concerning the preachers, then concerning you. I assured them I loved the gracious preachers (i.e., almost all of them) the best of

¹The opposition in view is restiveness among Methodist lay preachers about the preeminence given to ordained clergy in the movement. CW had been stoutly defending this primacy in London for months; see CW to JW, Apr. 2, Apr. 23, and June 16, 1779. When he passed through Bristol and Bath in early Oct. 1779 CW echoed this defence, sparking resentment among lay preachers there. On Nov. 13 CW received a letter from John Valton, the lay preacher in Bristol with whom he was closest, challenging him on this front. CW's response was to return to Bristol and confront the "opposition."

²Rev. Edward Smyth (c. 1747–1823) was an evangelical Irish Anglican clergyman supportive of the Wesley brothers. He was currently in Bath while his ailing wife sought treatment at the spa. While CW was in Bath in Oct. 1779 he reportedly prayed for Smyth to be strengthened, that he might become the ordained successor to JW and CW after their deaths; see John Valton to CW, Nov. 13, 1779.

³Heb. 12:14.

⁴Heb. 13:17. The speaker is William Dyer (1730–1801). See Jonathan Barry, 'Piety and the Patient: Medicine and Religion in Eighteenth-Century Bristol'. in Roy Porter (ed.), *Patients and Practitioners* (Cambridge, 1985), 145–75; and Barry (ed.), *The Diary of William Dyer: Bristol in 1762* (Bristol Record Society, 2012).

⁵Mary (Francis) Maddern, wife of John Maddern.

⁶John Bristol was admitted on trial as an itinerant preacher in 1771 (see JW, *Works*, 10:395) and in full standing the next year. He served in both Ireland and England, and had been assigned to Bristol (along with M'Nab and John Valton) at the 1779 Conference (*Works*, 10:485). As this letter portends, John Bristol disappeared from the *Minutes* after 1779, disgruntled with JW's authority. By 1782 he was pastor of a Calvinist congregation in Sheffield.

⁷The first meaning in *OED*: 'to entangle or catch in a net'.

⁸The trade exchange building at the junction of Corn Street and Broad Street.

any persons upon earth; that I looked upon them as the greatest blessing to this nation and the greatest friends to the Church of England, etc.; that I had them in my heart, to live and to die with them. I enlarged on your more than paternal love for them, on all you had done and continued to do for them. I appealed to them whether you deserved to be treated with contempt and opposition and ingratitude by anyone of your sons. Yet I doubted if some did not think you had lived too long, and applying to them said, 'Have a little patience. He is a very old man. He cannot live much longer. Do not trample on his hoary head.'⁹ Bring not down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.¹⁰ Suffer him to depart in peace, and then you will have all in your own hands.'

The people were almost all in tears. While I prayed for you and them the Spirit helped our infirmity.¹¹ The cloud stayed on the solemn assembly, and all was harmony and love.

The moment after I had given the blessing a voice of infernal discord was heard, a jarring string indeed! I asked Mr. Smyth what it meant. He said it was Mr. M'Nab, whom Mr. Bristol had brought and placed in the family-pew opposite to me on a bad purpose. It was well I did not observe him. It might have disturbed or diverted me. He demanded to be heard by the people. I bade them depart in peace, and they obeyed. He threatened us with his public vindication. I spake these words, and no more: 'The press is open. The law is open. But I warn you that you perish *not in the gainsaying of Core*.'¹²

Mr. Brackenbury's eyes were now quite opened.¹³ He saw all things clearly. The whole society, I trust, were much confirmed in their earnestness and in their love for you.

He [McNab] had stood the whole hour and an half, never kneeling at the prayers, but hardening his heart and making himself ready for battle. His brother [John] Bristol will not fail to bring him into the society, till he *can fully vindicate himself*.

Nancy Stafford heard him say in departing [that] no man should abuse or injure him, without his returning it.

After all this violent conflict I slept in peace.

Monday, November 29

I met Mr. Bristol at Betsy Johnson's, spake kindly to him, and gave him your letter.¹⁴ He said he could not leave his wife in her condition;¹⁵ neither could he leave off preaching. If his friend [M'Nab] got a preaching place for himself, he will need an assistant. In our [New] Room Mr. Bristol cannot continue without keeping the door open for Mr. M'Nab. He can well afford to take a lodging. He will not go into the Bradford round. He must not, I think, stay where he is.

At ten Mr. Smyth and I met Mr. Carlill at the [New] Room, the faithful Abdiel.¹⁶ They have thrust sore at him that he might fall into their party, spirit, confederacy. He said any man would have thought by my words last night that he had told me what he never did, but would tell me now: that Mr. M'Nab had

⁹Cf. 1 Kgs. 2:6.

¹⁰See Gen. 44:29.

¹¹See Rom. 8:26.

¹²Cf. Jude 11 (CW orig., 'Corah'). CW is warning that the rebellion of the lay preachers is like that of Korah and other Levites against Moses in Num. 16, for which they perished.

¹³Robert Carr Brackenbury (1752–1818), Squire of Raithby Hall (Lincolnshire), who had been influenced by Methodist preaching in Hull, and met JW in 1776.

¹⁴This letter, reassigning Bristol to the Bradford circuit, is not known to survive.

¹⁵John Bristol had married Mary Ridler in Rodborough, Gloucestershire in July 1778.

¹⁶*Abdiel* is Hebrew for "servant of God." Thomas Carlill (d. 1801) had served as Assistant in Bristol 1777–78, and nearby Oxfordshire the following year. While Carlill had been assigned to Tiverton by the 1779 Conference, he was one of the preachers trusted highly by JW and had been called to Bristol to help deal with the current trouble. CW spells "Carlisle."

spoke to him these words (which I made him repeat again and again): '*I think it my duty to pray for the death of Mr. John Wesley, or that God would take him away. It would be a great mercy if he was dead.*' I should not have wondered if he had prayed for my death. But that he should pray for yours—I want words to express my horror at his ingratitude.

Mr. Carlill farther informed me that there is an actual confederacy between him [M'Nab] and some of the preachers. That he [M'Nab] was appointed to strike the first blow at Bath. That he himself had told M'Nab he was the cat's paw,¹⁷ and he owned it. That they had agreed at the next Conference to take all into their own hands, and ease you of any farther trouble. 'But they must have my brother's leave', I said, 'to hold another Conference.' 'No', he replied, 'they will have it without his leave.'

What a wonderful providence that this evil should break out while you are still alive! Now you have time to prevent it; or at least to prove all your sons, and choose out those you can depend upon, and to whom you can safely trust your societies.

Dr. [Thomas] Coke, just returned from Bath, says some there have left the society, yet he continually recovers others. Symes must be no longer steward.¹⁸ He has too long turned your power against yourself. Dr. Coke must be spared to Bath and Bristol for some time. Carlill must be settled here to undo their mischief. You should lose no time in writing to the preachers. Direct your next to me here, where I shall probably stay till Monday.

Let not your hands hang down.¹⁹ The Lord is with us. Trust not those about you. Live as long as you can, and assent of a

Faithful friend and brother in,

C. W.

Address: by an unknown hand, 'The Revd. Mr. Wesley / at the New Chapel / near the City Road / London'.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/164.

¹⁷*OED*: "fig. that which comes down like the paw of a cat upon its victim."

¹⁸Orig., "Syms." Joseph Symes (c. 1748–87), a member of the Methodist society in Paulton, was currently steward of the circuit that included Bath; see *AM* 11 (1788): 297–99.

¹⁹See Exod. 17:11–12; Heb. 12:12.

From Richard Hill

Hawkstone
November 29, 1779

[p. 3]

Reverend Sir,

The cause of my thus publicly addressing you is owing to an information I received that you wished to know who was the author of a letter, which appeared in the *General Advertiser* on Friday the 8th of October last, wherein were some queries put to you concerning certain reports which it was supposed you had spread, [p. 4] relative to the illness and death of the late Mr. Augustus Toplady. I was further given to understand that you had declared your intention of answering that letter if the writer would annex his name to it. This being the case, though no names cannot at all alter facts, yet as I really wish to be rightly informed myself, and as the reports which have been propagated about Mr. Toplady have much staggered and grieved many serious Christians, I now (under my real signature) beg with all plainness, and with no other design than that the real truth may be known, again to propound those questions to you which were put in that letter, of which I confess myself to have been the sole author. And as I hear you have been pleased to call the letter a scurrilous one, I should be glad if you would point out to me wherein that scurrility consists. For though it were anonymous, I am not in the least conscious that there was anything in it unbecoming that [p. 5] respect which might be due to a gentleman of your venerable age and function; and when you have shown me wherein I have been culpable, I shall then readily and submissively ask your pardon. The letter itself I shall annex to this. The queries contained in it may be reduced to the following.

First, did you, sir, or did you not tell Mr. Thomas Robinson of Hilderthorpe, near Bridlington in Yorkshire, that Mr. Toplady died in black despair, blaspheming; and that a greater imposition never was imposed on the public than that published by his friends relative to his death?¹

Secondly, did you ever tell the same in substance to the Rev. Mr. [Alexander] Greaves,² curate to Mr. Fletcher of Madeley, or to any other person? [p. 6]

Thirdly, did you or did you not say that none of Mr. Toplady's friends were permitted to see him during his illness?

I now beg leave to tell you that the cause of my offering these queries to you was owing to the following letter, which I received just before, from a kind friend and worthy minister of the gospel at Burlington (or Bridlington) in Yorkshire.

Bridlington
August 30, 1779

Honoured and Dear Friend,

Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you from the Father, and from Jesus Christ, by the blessed Spirit. On the 21st day of August, 1779, I received from Mr. Thomas Robinson of Hilderthorpe the following awful, and no less shocking, account respecting the death of Mr. Toplady. He said Mr. John Wesley told him that Mr. Toplady died in black despair, blaspheming; and that a greater imposition was never imposed on the public than [p. 7] that published by his friends relative to his death. He added also that none of his friends were permitted to see him in his illness, and that one of Mr. John Wesley's preachers, whose name is [Benjamin] Rhodes, did on the 20th instant declare that Mr. Toplady's case was equal to that of Francis Spira. And that the servant who waited upon him did, after his death, join Mr. Wesley's societies, signifying that there

¹*A Memoir of some Principal Circumstances in the Life and Death of the Reverend and learned Augustus Montague Toplady, B. A. Late Vicar of Broad Hembury, Devon* (London: J. Mathews, 1778).

²Note in original: 'I hope this worthy gentleman, for whom I profess a sincere esteem, will pardon my having introduced his name without asking his permission.'

was something very awful.³ Now, dear sir, as I know nobody more capable of giving me some satisfaction respecting this heart-affecting report than what you are, please to excuse the liberty I have taken in troubling you; wishing and [p. 8] beseeching you to give me, if you can, a true account of this gloomy story, and you will very much oblige one who wishes you the peaceable enjoyment of every temporal and spiritual good. Believing, nevertheless, that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Sion, etc.

Dear sir, believe me to be your sincere, affectionate friend, and
humble servant, in the gospel of Christ Jesus our Lord,

J[oseph] Gawkrödger

Methinks, sir, this letter breathes the language of real Christianity, and of an heart deeply concerned and interested in the [p. 9] welfare of one from whose works, I know, that Mr. Gawkrödger had received the highest delight and satisfaction. He had read the account of Mr. Toplady's illness and death. He rejoiced to see the doctrines of the gospel confirmed and established in the experience of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ, and his own heart found strong consolation whilst he meditated on the triumphant victory which his late brother in the ministry had obtained over the king of terrors, through faith in our glorious Immanuel.

Amidst these views and meditations, he is told by a pious friend and neighbour of his that Mr. John Wesley had assured him: that Mr. Toplady died blaspheming, in black despair; that none of his friends were permitted to see him in his illness; that the account of his death, published by his friends, was a gross imposition on the public; and that a preacher of Mr. Wesley's had moreover asserted the same, with this further [p. 10] circumstance, that the person who attended Mr. Toplady in his illness, struck with horror at his awful departure, had joined the Methodists.

Overwhelmed with grief and amazement at this declaration, and the authority produced in defence of it (an authority which he dares not call in question), he writes to me to be further informed of the matter. Upon the receipt of this letter I thought it best to go to the fountainhead, in order to investigate the truth, and therefore called upon you, in the public papers, to know whether you did or did not assert the things which are charged upon you. If you *did not* assert them, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Greaves, and several other persons have treated you in a manner the most injurious, by making use of the sanction of your name for the propagation of a most wicked and malicious lie. If you *did* assert them, either you *had* or had *not* authority for your assertions. If you had *no* [p. 11] authority, then you yourself must have been the inventor of them. If you *had* authority, then you must know whence that authority came. In order, therefore, to exculpate your own character before the world, be pleased now to name that authority. Tell us how you became so well acquainted with what passed in Mr. Toplady's sick chamber, and on his dying bed, when even his most dear and intimate friends were not permitted to see him? Did his nurse, Mrs. [Elizabeth] Sterling, who attended him, and was with him when he died, communicate this intelligence? I hear she has called upon you on purpose to vindicate herself from the charge of any such assertion, and is ready to declare to all the world that throughout Mr. Toplady's long illness, to the hour of his dissolution, prayer and praise, joy and triumph in the God of his salvation, were the continual employments of his lips and heart. But as your conduct will probably make *one* of the many friends who *were permitted* [p. 12] to see Mr. Toplady in his illness think it necessary to give the public some further particulars, relative to the state of his soul in that trying season; I shall only, in this place, present you with a short abstract from a letter which I received from a worthy clergyman, a friend of Mr. Toplady's, soon after his departure. His words are as follow:

³Note in original: 'I cannot believe so ill of Mr. Rhodes as to suppose he himself invented this horrid tale. He best knows whence he had it. But Mr. Wesley and he being at Burlington about the same time, there is reason to suppose he received it from the same quarter Mr. Thomas Robinson did.'

You will be pleased with the two following remarks made by Mr. Toplady, not long before his death: 'To a person interested in the salvation of Christ, sickness is no disease, pain no affliction, death no dissolution.' The other was an answer to Doctor Gifford,⁴ in consequence of the doctor's expressing hopes that Mr. Toplady might recover, and be again useful. Mr. Toplady heard what his friend had to say, and then expressed himself nearly in the following words: 'I believe God never gave such manifestations of his love to any [p. 13] creature, and suffered him to live.'

Thus far, my friend.

We can now look to no other source from whence these reports may have flowed than to the most deliberate malice of Mr. Toplady's avowed foes, among whom, notwithstanding your continual preaching about '*love, love; peace, peace, my brethren*', I fear you are chief. Till therefore you produce your authority for what you told Mr. Thomas Robinson and others, I have full right, nay I am absolutely necessitated to fix upon you, reverend sir, as the raiser and fabricator of this most nefarious report. Which I cannot look upon merely as a common falsity, but as a malicious attempt to invalidate and set aside the testimony which God, the eternal Spirit himself, was pleased to bear to his own truth, and to his own work, upon the heart of a dying believer; and even to turn that testimony into the blasphemies of Satan. And in this view of it, how far short it falls of the unpardonable [p. 14] sin against the Holy Ghost must be left to your awful consideration.

When one Jane Cooper,⁵ a person belonging to your societies, died you were ready enough to give your imprimatur and recommendation to every wild flight of fancy she uttered as 'all strong sterling sense, strictly agreeable to sound reason'. 'Here', says Mr. Wesley in his preface, 'are no extravagant flights, no mystic reveries, no unscriptural enthusiasm. The sentiments are all just and noble.'⁶ The cause is plain. The Lord (it seems) had promised this Jane Cowper, 'that Mr. John Wesley's latter works should exceed his former'.⁷ Therefore she must be canonized.⁸ But Mr. Toplady, [p. 15] in his *Dying Avowal*,⁹ had borne his open testimony both against Mr. Wesley and his principles, therefore 'the devil himself could not have invented anything worse than what he had uttered', and he must be sent blaspheming and despairing into the bottomless pit. Behold sir what self-partiality and a desire to make known your own importance leads you to!

The like spirit runs throughout all your publications, whether sermons, journals, appeals, preservatives, Arminian magazines, etc., etc.; in all of which it is too evident that the grand design in view is that of trumpeting forth your own praises. Tedious and fulsome as this appears in the eyes of men of sense and judgment, yet a gentleman of Mr. Wesley's cunning and subtlety can, from hence, suck no small advantage, as there are multitudes amongst your own people who, through a blind attachment to your person, and a no less blind zeal to promote your interests, look upon it as perfectly [p. 16] right and proper; and are at all times, and upon all occasions, ready to pay the most implicit obedience to your *ipse*

⁴Andrew Gifford, DD (1700–84). a Baptist Minister who was the first Assistant Librarian in the Department of Manuscripts of the British Museum.

⁵Orig., 'Cowper'.

⁶JW, Preface, §3, *Letters Wrote by Jane Cooper; to which is prefixed Some Account of Her Life and Death* (London: np, 1764), [p. 4].

⁷'Some Account of the Life of Jane Cooper', §12, in *ibid.*, p. 10.

⁸Note in original: 'Notwithstanding this young woman might, in some instances, be under the influence of a spirit of enthusiasm, yet far be it from me to affirm that the whole of her experience was a delusion. On the contrary, I am persuaded she was a sincere devoted Christian, and believe that she is now in heaven.'

⁹Augustus Toplady, *The Reverend Mr Toplady's Dying Avowal of his Religious Sentiments* (London: J. Mathews, 1778). This is his letter of July 22, 1778, to the *London Chronicle* (above).

dixits, and to believe, or disbelieve, just as you would have them. But I have nothing to do with such bigots. To endeavour to open their eyes by argument would be as vain as to attempt to wash the Ethiopian white, or to change the leopard's spots. There are, however, many persons of good sense and true piety in your societies who, in spite of all your artifices, begin to form a judgment of you according to facts. It is for the benefit of such persons, as well as to vindicate the memory of a departed saint from your foul aspersions, that you are presented with this epistle. Though I confess I was some time before I could bring myself to write or print it. I considered that a misjudging, prejudiced world would be happy to take advantage from its contents, and to cry 'there, there, so would we have [p. 17] it'; 'the Methodists are all fallen together by the ears, and are discharging their artillery at one another.'¹⁰ I considered again that, as to expose you was not my motive, so to bring you to any submission was never in human power. I had well nigh resolved to be silent. On the other hand, I perceived that the sealing testimony which God vouchsafed to his own truths in the experience of Mr. Toplady during his illness, and at the time of his death, was not only [p. 18] denied by you, but even construed into a gross imposition of his friends to deceive the public, and thereby the good effects which might justly have been hoped for were in great measure counteracted. That his enemies were hardened against the truths he maintained, and so ably vindicated; and even his friends staggered by the shocking accounts forged and propagated. I say, when I saw this to be the case, I determined (to adopt an expression of your own) to '*write and print*'.¹¹ I said, 'Let God be true, and every man a liar.'¹² If you make no reply, I cannot avoid construing your silence into an acquiescence of your being guilty of the matter brought against you. If you do '*write and print*' in answer, let me beg you, for once, to avoid quibbles and evasions.

I am, reverend sir, your sincere well wisher, etc., and most humble servant,

Richard Hill

[pp. 19–21 contain a copy of the Sept. 25, 1779 letter by 'Veritas', now claimed by Hill]

[pp. 21–22 contain a petition signed by several others attesting to the validity of the account published in *A Memoir of some Principal Circumstances in the Life and Death of the Reverend and learned Augustus Montague Toplady, B. A. Late Vicar of Broad Hembury, Devon* (London: J. Mathews, 1778).]

Source: published transcription; Richard Hill, *A Letter to the Rev. John Wesley; wherein that Gentleman is called upon to declare whether he be or be not the author of certain malicious calumnies cast on the late Rev. Augustus Toplady* (London: J. Mathews, 1780).

¹⁰Note in original: 'I observed upon a former occasion that the name of Methodist, as it is indiscriminately given by way of reproach to all who have more zeal for religion than is consistent with the fashion of the times, I have no desire to shake off. On the contrary, I would glory in it, as the badge which every real Christian is allotted to wear. And I would pray that I might deserve it much more than I do. But as it conveys the idea of an attachment to the tenets of Mr. Wesley, in opposition to the word of God, and to the doctrines of all the Protestant churches, that of this nation in particular; in this view of it, I desire totally to renounce it.'

¹¹Cf. JW's decision to 'preach and print' on predestination, described in JW letter to James Hutton, Apr. 30, 1739 (*Works*, 25:640); and cited by Whitefield in his *Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley* (London: W. Strahan, 1741), 7.

¹²Cf. Rom. 3:4.

From Alexander Mather (autobiography)

c. December 1779

Reverend Sir,

1. I was born at Brechin, in North Britain [i.e., Scotland], in February 1733, of reputable parents, who made it their business to bring me up in the fear of God. They instructed me early in the principles of religion, and took particular care to keep me from evil company. So that when I grew up, I was an utter stranger to the vices common among men. And I took pleasure in reading good books and learning our catechisms by heart. When I was at the Latin school it was the custom of our master, every Lord's day, after the evening service, to hear what we could remember of the sermons and to pray with us. Under one of his prayers (when I was about ten years old) I was struck with strong convictions. And these never quite left me, but I always retained a desire to be a Christian.

2. Soon after this, out of a childish frolic, I went away with a party of the rebels.¹ But I knew not what I did. I hereby exposed myself to many hardships and dangers. But the Lord delivered me out of all. Many mighty ones fell on Culloden Heath, and in the way to Inverness, and indeed on every side. Yet I was mercifully preserved. But when I came near my father's house, there was no entrance for me. And I knew not where to go, till my mother resolved to take me to a relation of hers, near Perth.

3. We had a large river to cross, which was much swelled by the late rains. We were just got into the boat when a gentleman on horseback came and begged us to stay and take him in, which we accordingly did. He seemed much fatigued. My mother desired me to hold his horse, which I did, twisting the bridle round my hand. When we were about the middle of the river, the horse took fright and leaped out of the boat, taking me, and the oars, and both the boatmen with him. So that none were left in the boat but my mother and the gentleman, without any means of helping themselves. The horse swam to the opposite shore, dragging me with him; then turned back and swam to the shore we had left. He then jumped out, pulling me just above the water. But I there lost my hold, and fell back into the river. It carried me down, rolling me over and over, till it brought me to the side of the boat, which was strangely got to the same shore. They caught hold of me and pulled me in.

4. Here I cannot but remark several providential incidents: 1) That both the boatmen should get safe to that side of the water. 2) Yet when they were there, they should be able to get the boat, with my mother and the gentleman safe in it. 3) Yet the horse did not leave me on the opposite side, where to all appearance, I must have perished. 4) Yet, notwithstanding the impetuosity of the stream, the horse should reach the land *above the boat*. Had it been below, I had probably been lost. I admire above all the exact timing of every circumstance! Had I been brought to the same side *first*, I could have had no help. Had the boatmen reached the opposite side, they in the boat could have had none. And had any of us been carried but a little lower, we must inevitably have been swallowed up in a whirlpool.

5. After having thrown up much water, I was so far recovered as to be able to take boat again. And having got safe over, we travelled twelve Scotch miles (eighteen English) before night. But we could not travel without much danger, as the country was full of parties, both horse and foot, who abused all the strangers they met with and often took them prisoners. When we came near a town, we inquired of one we met where we could have a quiet lodging? She said she could recommend us to no inn, for they would inform the soldiers of us, who were very rude to all strangers, especially to women. But if we would put up with the house of a poor man, she knew one that she thought would receive us. So she conducted us to a little cottage, where we found the man engaged in family worship. When it was ended, he looked upon my mother and said, 'Good wife, I have no place fit to entertain *you*, who appear to have a good home somewhere. Neither can I protect you if the soldiers hear you are in my house. But if you please to sit by the fire, with a little straw for the lad to lie on, you are welcome.' They then gave us something to eat and drink, which we received with thankfulness to God. The good woman then laid me down on the straw,

¹That is, he joined the Scottish Jacobites, supporting Charles Edward Stuart's attempt to retake the British throne; a rebellion ended by a decisive defeat in April 1746 in the moorland of Culloden, just east of Inverness.

and sat by my mother till the morning; when having been commended to God in prayer by our host, we went on our journey.

6. My mother's brother was a considerable farmer, in the Carse of Gowrie, near Perth. Thither we got before sunset, and were kindly received, till my mother told him her design of leaving me there. But his wife opposed it much, fearing lest, if it was discovered, they should be ruined for harbouring me. However my uncle, seeing the distress my mother was in, overruled her and said I should stay. And the next morning he sent a servant with my mother, who saw her safe home.

7. I stayed the Sunday at my uncle's. But on Monday morning before sunrise he called me (his wife having prevailed) and told me, 'You must go hence.' So I set off with one to guide me across the mountains. He then left me, to find my way as I could, to a place and a person I had never heard of before. But I had a line to the man. Providence brought me to the place, but the man was not at home. However he came the next day, and received me kindly. Here I stayed till about midsummer, and then removed to a distant relation's, where I stayed till November. It was then judged I might go home safely. But when I came, my father would not let me come into his house. Nay he went and made information against me to the commanding officer, and I should have been sent to prison, had not a gentleman of the town interfered for me, and procured leave for me to lodge at my father's house. In the morning a file of musketeers came to take me into custody, and brought me to the officer. After asking many questions, he told me, 'You may go home.' But when I came to the door the soldiers, not knowing his order, were going to carry me to prison, till he looked out of the window and bade them let me go. However, my father would not put me to school any more, but kept me to his business, that of baking.

8. I continued with my father till the beginning of May 1751, when being well acquainted with my business, I determined to go abroad. I set out with another young man, who was engaged in Perth. Here a place was provided for me in a pious family, where I remained till after Christmas. Two persons then came from London, with one of whom I contracted an intimate acquaintance. One Lord's day she asked me to go with her to the Episcopal meeting. It affected me much, and from that time I attended it whenever I could. And I cannot but say it was of great use to my soul, and has proved so ever since.

9. About this time I formed a purpose of going to London. And having took leave of my relations, we set sail from Montrose about the middle of June 1752. When I came to London, I knew no one there. But the kind hand of God was over me. I found a brother of my father's who, being of the same trade, took me to work with him, till he procured me a place in a serious family at Billingsgate. But as I was a foreigner, my master was summoned to Guildhall and obliged to put me away. In a little time I got me another place, near Whitechapel Bars. And as I was strong and active, my master persuaded me to engage for a year certain. Afterwards he did not use me well. Till one day being in a passion, he ordered me instantly to quit his house, which I immediately did.

10. In the year 1753 my present wife, who was born near where I was and had lived several years with my parents in my infancy, heard I was in London and resolved to see me. We had not seen one another for many years, and were both glad of the meeting. And as I was then out of place, we had opportunity of seeing each other frequently. On February 14 we were married.² I had then forgot the resolutions I had often made of living wholly to God whenever I should marry; but he soon brought them back to my remembrance, by laying affliction upon my wife. I now began to be in good earnest for salvation. I bought up all opportunities for prayer. I resolved to break through all opposition, and to serve God with all my heart.

11. But it still lay heavy upon my mind that I had not performed my vow of praying with my wife. And my convictions increased day by day, till my appetite was gone and my sleep departed from me. My bones were filled as with a sore disease, and my tears were my meat day and night. I now broke through and prayed with my wife, and we never after left the practice. It was not long after this that she knew God to be a pardoning God. And all that summer we continued praying and striving together, and steadily walking in all the ordinances of God.

²Actually, records show Alexander Mather and Mary Duncan (d. 1789) were married on Feb. 24, 1753, at the Fleet Prison chapel in London.

12. After living at Hampstead some time, I removed to a place in St. Katherine's. While I was here, I was one day going hastily along the street and a loaded cart stood in it which nearly filled it up. However I went on, thinking I could get by. But just as I was going by, it moved, caught my basket, crushed me up against the wall, and dragged me along till we came against a shop window which gave way and released me. Everyone that saw it supposed I should be crushed to death, or at least that my arms or legs would be broken. But I received no hurt at all, besides a little bruise on the back of my hand.

13. In September 1753 I was hired to Mr. [Thomas] Marriott. Our meeting was not expected on either side. He had been inquiring the character of another, which he did not approve of; and I was inquiring for a master, when he came and asked me if I was out of place? I answered, 'Yes.' He asked if I would keep good hours? Which I promised to do. So we agreed, and I entered upon his service. Here I found what I had long desired, a family wherein was the worship of God. This stirred me up to be more earnest in seeking him, to be exact in praying by myself every morning and with my wife every afternoon. And we continued seeking him with our whole heart and shunning whatever we thought offensive to him. We used likewise every means of grace. I have sometimes gone to my knees when I was going to bed, and have continued in that position till two o'clock, when I was called to go to work.

14. My wife had some time since found a degree of peace with God. But I could find no peace, nor could I tell what hindered, unless it were the 'baking of pans', as they called it, on Sundays. I would gladly have refrained from this, but then I must have left my place, and I had no hope of finding another place which would not have been liable to the same inconvenience. However I resolved, as soon as Christmas was over, to give up my place at all events. Meantime my flesh consumed away, like as a moth fretting a garment. And my bones were ready to start through my skin, for I had no rest day or night. The following Sunday my wife and I ventured for the first time to the holy communion, and I found some comfort. But the sense of my profaning the Sabbath soon took it away. I now resolved to delay no longer than the next day, being willing to suffer rather than to sin. Accordingly on Monday morning as soon as my master came downstairs, I gave him warning. He did not then speak one word. But soon after he came into the shop and asked me if I had got another place. I answered, 'No'. He said, 'Why then would you leave this?' I answered, 'Because I dare not commit sin by breaking the Sabbath, as I have done.' He used many arguments with me, but in vain. I told him, 'I must abide by the word of God, whatever be the consequence. But I will not go away till you suit yourself with another man.'

15. God now gave me much confidence, and I found much power to pray that if it was not his will we should part, he would incline my master to give it up. And the same day he went with a neighbouring baker to all of the trade in Shoreditch and Bishopsgate Without, proposing that they should all enter into an agreement to give it up at once. All but two agreed. He then advertised for a meeting of master bakers upon the subject, but nothing could be concluded. Afterwards I supposed he asked the advice of our brethren at the Foundery. After he had taken all these steps, more than I could reasonably expect, he told me, 'I have done all I can, and now I hope you will be content.' I sincerely thanked him for what he had done, but told him I could not stay any longer than till he had suited himself. But I continued in prayer. And on Sunday evening, after family worship, he stopped me and said, 'I have done today what will please you. I have stayed at home and told all my customers, I will no more bake on a Sunday.' I told him, 'If you have done this out of conscience toward God, be assured it will end well.' And so it did. That very year his trade considerably increased. And he had a large augmentation of his fortune, so that he was enabled to relieve many that were in want, and also to lay up abundance for his children. May they herein tread in their father's steps!

16. He then asked me how I came to scruple baking on Sundays. And I told him simply how God had dealt with my soul. And I believe it was then he first felt that affection for me, which continued to his dying day. (From that time both he and my good mistress³ were particularly kind to me and mine. And when some years after my station in London placed me in some sense over them, there were none in the society that more fully submitted to every branch of discipline.) It was then he asked me to go with him to the Foundery, which I did at 5:00 the next morning. When I came back, I told my wife where I had been.

³Webster (Langdon) Marriott, Thomas's wife.

It grieved her much, as she believed all the idle reports she had heard; many of which she rehearsed, and added, 'Now our peace is broken forever.' This stirred me up to be more earnest in prayer, but did not prevent my going every morning. On Sunday she was persuaded to go with me, though much afraid of my being drawn into some wrong way. John Nelson preached an alarming discourse, which I hoped would affect her much. But on the contrary, she was much disgusted, saying, 'He has shown me the way to hell, and not the way to get out of it. But I thank God, he has shown me that Jesus Christ is the way, and has brought me out of it too.' However she went again the next Sunday. Mr. Charles Wesley then preached, and described the whole process of the work of God in the soul. She followed him step by step, till he came to the abiding witness of adoption, and here he left her behind. She was now both pleased and profited, and we now went on hand in hand in the ways of God. But still I did not find the Spirit of adoption,⁴ though I sought it diligently, continuing instant in prayer and attending the word every morning and evening. Indeed this was not without difficulty, for I had no time for either but what I took from my sleep, which should have been from six to ten in the evening, and from half-past four to six in the morning. I now slept little and ate little, and the grief of my soul drank up my spirits. But yet I could not believe, though I continued in prayer and supplication day and night seeking God in sincerity of heart, and carefully departing from evil.

17. About this time my wife and I were permitted to stay at the meeting of one of the classes. I was much pleased and refreshed. But she said, 'They had all agreed what to say, in order to catch us.' Such is the folly of prejudice! It was soon after this that you returned from the Bristol Hotwells (being just recovered from your consumption), namely on Easter Eve, 1754. The next day you preached at West Street, April the 14th.⁵ It was the first time I ever saw or heard you. Under that sermon God set my heart at liberty, removing my sins from me, as far as the east is from the west, which the very change of my countenance testified before my tongue could utter it. I had no great transport of joy. But my load was gone, and I could praise God from the ground of my heart. All my sorrow, and fear, and anguish of spirit being changed into a solid peace.

18. But on Monday in the afternoon, as I was going along, I began to think, 'You fancy your sins are forgiven, but you are deceived.' I had but a little time given way to these thoughts before I was quite miserable. And when I got home, my wife immediately asked, 'What is the matter with you?' I said, 'Matter enough. I have deceived my own soul. I wish I had my sorrow again.' She strongly urged me not to reason, but believe! To look unto Jesus, as giving himself for me. I was encouraged. I soon recovered my peace, which by the mercy of God, I have not lost since. Soon after we both joined the society, and met in brother Goodes' class—and this, among all the means of grace, was peculiarly useful to my soul.

19. About this time my elder brother who used the sea, after being wrecked, got his passage to London. He was easily convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. So being all of one heart and one mind, we rejoiced in God all the day long. But it was not long before I had strong impressions upon my mind that God had called me to preach. I mentioned this in my band, after I had often sought God by fasting and prayer. We set apart some days for the same exercises. Afterwards they advised me to mention it to you. You said, 'This is a common temptation among young men. Several have mentioned it to *me*. But the next thing I hear of them is that they are married, or upon the point of it.' I said, 'Sir, I am married already.' You said, 'Care not for it, but seek God by fasting and prayer.' I answered, 'This I have done.' You strongly recommended patience and perseverance therein, and said you doubted not but God would soon make the way plain before my face.

20. Soon after you appointed me to be the leader of a band, and in a little time, of a class. And God blessed me in both. But this did not at all alter my conviction that I must preach; nay, it grew stronger and stronger, till having no rest day or night I was constrained to come to you again and tell you just what I felt. You told me, 'To be a Methodist preacher is not the way to ease, honour, pleasure, or profit. It is a life of much labour and reproach. They often fare hard, often are in want. They are liable to

⁴Rom. 8:15.

⁵Unfortunately, JW does not record the text for this sermon in either his *Journal* or his manuscript sermon register.

be stoned, beaten and abused in various manners. Consider this before you engage in so uncomfortable a way of life.' I replied I had no desire to engage therein unless it was the call of God, and I did not regard what I suffered in doing the will of God. You said, 'You may then make a trial tomorrow morning at Snowsfields chapel.' I did so. The Monday following you appointed me for Wapping chapel, and for the Foundry on Tuesday morning. It was near ten at night when I received the message. I soon went to work, but was engaged in meditation and prayer for assistance all the time I was making my dough. As soon as I had done (the rest of the family being in bed) I went to prayer, in which I found great liberty. I then read in my Bible to find a text, and continued reading and praying till two o'clock. It was then time to call my fellow servant, and we went to work together, being employed, as usual, till near 4:00 in preparing the bread for the oven. All this time I was still in meditation and prayer, but could not fix upon a text. Soon after 4:00 he went to bed again, and I went to prayer, till a quarter before five, when I went to the Foundry, but with much fear and trembling. And when I took up the hymn book, I was so faint that I could not speak so as to be understood. The people therefore could not sing; and as I was no singer, we were all at a stand. This did not a little increase my agitation, which was so great that I could not keep one of my joints from shaking. However in a while I went on, and after prayer, opened the Bible on those words, 'Ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God with your body and spirit, which are God's.'⁶ I now left the determination of this weighty affair with *you*, desiring that if you judged I was called of God to preach, you would employ me (as my business would permit) just when and where you pleased.

21. In a little time I was more employed than my strength would well allow. I had no time for preaching but what I took from my sleep, so that I had frequently not eight hours sleep in a week. This, with hard labour, constant abstemiousness, and frequent fasting, brought me so low that in a little more than two years I was hardly able to follow my business. My master was often afraid I should kill myself. And perhaps his fear was not groundless. I have frequently put off my shirts as wet with sweat, as if they had been dipped in water. After hastening to finish my business abroad, I have come home all on a sweat in the evening, changed my clothes, and ran to preach at one or another chapel. Then walked or ran back, changed my clothes, and gone to work at 10:00, wrought hard all night and preached at 5:00 the next morning. I ran back to draw the bread at a quarter or half an hour past six, wrought hard in the bakehouse till eight, then hurried about with the bread till the afternoon, and perhaps at night set off again.

22. It is true I need not have continued so long in this way. For you proposed my going to Ireland with you, as a travelling preacher, in the beginning of March 1756. I cheerfully agreed thereto, as you promised my wife should be provided for in my absence. This I mentioned to one of my friends, who said, 'No doubt he intends it, but when he is gone the stewards will do as they please', adding, 'How can you labour in Ireland, while your wife is starving here?' I thought, however, I will talk with the stewards myself. I did so, and Mr. Broelts and Hobbins asked, 'What will be sufficient for your wife?' I answered, 'Four shillings a week.' But this they were unwilling to allow. So I remained at my business till another pointed out, which I followed till August 1757. It was then agreed that I should travel, and that my wife should have that fixed allowance. This was the beginning of that settlement for preachers' wives, which (with the addition of forty shillings a year) continues to this day.

23. I was appointed for Epworth circuit in Lincolnshire, which then included Gainsborough, Grimsby, and Sheffield circuits. I left London August 15, 1757, to walk to Epworth, about an hundred and fifty miles. My fellow labourers were Thomas Hanby, Thomas Tobias, and afterwards Thomas Lee. It pleased God to give me much of his presence in my own soul, and to let me see some fruit of my labour. This supported me under the various exercises I met with. The first of these was at Rotherham, where John Thorpe, one of our local preachers, had just separated from us.⁷ He declared open war against us, particularly opposing what he called *my perfection*. Yet it pleased God to raise up many witnesses of it, many that loved him with all their hearts—several of whom are still burning and shining lights, and several removed into Abraham's bosom. Yea, it was observed that some of his own hearers, even while

⁶Cf. 1 Cor. 6:20.

⁷John Thorpe (1730–76) had been a follower of Benjamin Ingham, before preaching within Wesley's connexion for a short time. He became pastor of an Independent church at Masborough in 1763.

he was preaching against salvation from sin, were fully convinced of the necessity of it; and indeed never rested more, till they were happy witnesses of it.

24. In autumn I was desired to go to Boston [Lincolnshire]. I did so, and preached in a field on a Sunday evening, with tolerable quietness. The next time I went, Mr. [William] Allwood and I judged it would be best to be in the marketplace. We began singing, when suddenly a large mob appeared, with a drum beating before them. Meantime a great number of squibs⁸ were thrown among the people. Finding it was impossible to be heard, we purposed going to a friend's about a mile from the town. The moment we turned our backs, the dirt and stones flew like hail on every side. On the bridge a man stopped us, but we broke from him, and went on with the mob at our heels, throwing all that came to hand. Their number continually increasing, we thought it would be most advisable to face them, and try to get back to the town, where we had left our horses. My two companions immediately leaped over a wide ditch, which divided the field. But before I could follow them one of the mob, coming behind me, struck up my heels and gave me a violent fall. When I got up, my friends were out of sight and the mob surrounded me on every side. I knew not which way to go, neither indeed how to go at all, being exceeding weak and spent, both with the fall and the many blows I had received. Being a little recovered, I tried to go through them, to a footbridge that was over the ditch. They forbore throwing till I drew near the bridge, and then all cried out, 'Ditch him, ditch him.' And just on the side of the ditch one struck up my heels again. Yet he stood by me, and let me rise up and walk quietly over the bridge. There I was in the middle of the mob, and had a large field to go through, parted from the road by high rails, which had a broad ditch on either side. When I came to the rails I knew not how to get over, my breath being almost spent. And if I could, I saw no likelihood of escaping the being thrown into the ditch. However they let me crawl over without much hurt. But as soon as I was on the road, the same person who stopped us on the bridge collared me, to drag me to the horse-pond, while the rest plastered me over afresh with dirt. But just as we came to the pond a gentleman called out to him that held me, 'Let the man go.' He immediately let go his hold, and I passed by the pond.

25. I had still to walk through the whole town, my horse being at the far end of it. When I came into the street, they got the dirt out of the kennels, and threw it in my face. As no door was open to take me in, I was obliged now and then to turn and face them (otherwise they seldom looked me in the face) in order to get breath. When I came into the marketplace, there was a general shout, for the glorious victory. Before I got to the inn I was just ready to lie down, when one struck me violently, in order to strike up my heels. But I kept my feet, I know not how—which I looked upon as a great mercy, as such a fall upon the stones might have done me much hurt. At the same time one threw a stone, which struck me on the temple. I then concluded I must die in their hands. But by the mercy of God I was strangely brought through all the multitude, to the inn where I had alighted. Being sat down, my first thought was, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'⁹ Indeed my mind (glory be to God!) was kept through the whole in perfect peace. By this time some of my friends, who had followed at a distance, were come in and were washing my wound; when the mob came to the door, threatening what they would do to the house if the landlord did not turn me out. He came in and said, 'I cannot keep you here, for the mob will pull my house down.' I told him, 'Sir, I am in *your* house. But while I use it as an inn, it is *mine*. Turn me out at your peril. If you fear your house, apply to a magistrate for protection.' He went to his landlord, who was a magistrate, and ordered him to take down the names of the chief rioters. After a while I mounted my horse in the yard, and then, the gates being opened, rode through a shower of stones, and came safe to our friend's house. But I was so bruised, almost from head to foot, that when I was cold I could hardly stir. And it was a full year before I quite recovered the hurts which I then received.

26. The next day I went back with a friend to the town. I soon found three of the rioters, to whom I could swear, but the rest were absconded. Hearing the justices were in the hall, we went thither without delay, and telling the clerk we had business with the court, we were speedily introduced. The chairman,

⁸*OED*: 'A common species of firework, in which the burning of the composition is usually terminated by a slight explosion'.

⁹Luke 23:34.

after we had made our complaint, roughly said, 'You are the aggressor. And now you have the impudence to come to *us*, requiring justice against others!' I answered, 'I am here. If I have broke any law, inflict the penalty upon me. But in the meantime, I require you, in His Majesty's name, to do justice upon these rioters.' After more threats, I was desired to call upon one of them at his own house, when the court was over. I did so, and he behaved exceeding well, sending his sergeant for two of the rioters; one of whom brought his master to speak for him. But the justice told him plainly, 'Either make it up with Mr. Mather, or I will send you to gaol directly.' They both then asked pardon, promised good behaviour for the future, paid the expenses, and were dismissed. The third fled. But a warrant being given, he was apprehended; but upon the same terms he was released.

27. I cannot but remark another thing which happened this year. Nottingham had at this time no regular preaching. I had a strong desire to make a trial there, and came thither in the afternoon. At Matthew Bagshaw's I found John Johnson, of York, who said, 'I am glad you are come. For here is a poor man who is to die tomorrow, whose behaviour is terrifying. He curses, swears, and threatens death to all that have given evidence against him, the jailer in particular. He will see no clergyman, but says he resolves to be a devil, that he may revenge himself. The minister has given me free leave to visit him. I went this morning, but he said, "Give yourself no trouble about *me*. By this time tomorrow, I shall be a devil, and then I will come and tear that villain in pieces."' We immediately went to prayer, and vehemently wrestled with God on his behalf. After prayer, we went to him, and at first sight observed an entire change in his behaviour. We inquired when this sudden change began, and found it was just while we were at prayer. But we had little opportunity of speaking to him, the minister (for whom he had sent) being just come. I could only say, as he passed by me heavily ironed, 'Jesus Christ is both able and willing to strike off the heavier fetters of sin from your soul.' He looked earnestly, but said nothing. We applied again to the throne of grace before and after the preaching, and likewise great part of the night. We went early in the morning, and he was brought to us in the parlour. We talked and prayed with him some time. After rising from prayer, he said to the jailer, 'I now forgive and love you. And I hope and pray that you will forgive *me*.' This was quickly noised about the town, which filled the yard with spectators, who crowded about the windows, which gave us an opportunity of speaking to them also. He now acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and was resigned to it, having a strong hope of finding mercy. We attended him into the yard, when his irons were knocked off, amidst a vast crowd, to whom we spake much on the occasion. Thence we accompanied him to the church, and afterwards to the cart, which stood at the gate, ready to receive him. But as he desired to walk between us, the sheriff gave him leave, and took much pains to keep off the crowd. At the end of the town we sang part of that hymn,

O for a thousand tongues to sing,
My great Redeemer's praise!¹⁰

During the three first verses he seemed lifted up. But when we came to those words in the fourth verse,

His blood can make the foulest clean:
His blood avail'd for *me*!¹¹

he rejoiced with joy unspeakable. When we came to the place of execution, the minister prayed and went away. The sheriff allowed us to pray with him again. And we committed his soul to God, in cheerful hope of meeting him again in Abraham's bosom.

28. In the year 1758, being stationed in Newcastle circuit (which then reached as far as Musselborough), I made a visit to Brechin, in my way to which I was seized with the bloody flux. As soon as I got home, I took my room. I was not able to come downstairs for a month. My wife was quite a stranger at Newcastle, but I could leave her and all things to God. I spoke freely to all who came to see

¹⁰CW, in *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1753), 57; this is an extract from *HSP* (1740), 121.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 58.

me, not letting any escape out of my hands. Mr. Blair, the minister, came frequently.¹² And his son, a physician, visited me several times a day. It was now I discharged the clotted blood which had lain in me ever since the riot at Boston. Yet I did not recover, till I prevailed upon my mother to give me a large quantity of toast and water. The disorder was then presently stopped, and in a day or two I went downstairs.

29. The Sunday following the sacrament was to be administered. I sent a line to Mr. Blair and desired to be admitted to it, if it would not offend any of his parishioners. He immediately sent me a token, saying, 'I will admit you, if they are all offended.' I went on Sunday, the first day I was abroad. The service lasted from 9:00 in the morning to 5:00 in the evening, but I received no hurt. The next morning I breakfasted at Mr. Blair's, with the minister that assisted at the sacrament. They were sensible, candid men. Mr. Blair desired me to give them an account of the work of God in England. But when I mentioned the greatness of the work, and the fewness of the labourers, he said, 'Among so great a number of people, there must be many men of learning. Why does not Mr. Wesley send them out?' This led me to mention the prerequisites of a Methodist preacher, namely: 1) a knowledge of God as his God, as having pardoned all his sins; 2) a life and conversation suitable thereto; 3) a clear conviction that he was called of God to the work, otherwise he could not bear the crosses attending it; 4) some fruit of his labour, in convincing and converting of sinners. Mr. Blair broke out, 'If these are the prerequisites of a Methodist preacher, they must not come here for them.' I preached twice before I left Brechin, to a vast concourse of people, and afterwards at Montrose. But I know not that it had any lasting effect, unless the removing of prejudice.

30. In 1759 I was stationed in York circuit, which then included Yarm, Scarborough, and Hull circuits. In this year the work at Whitby began, and we had a great outpouring of the Spirit in many places. The next year I was in Staffordshire, where it pleased God to work in a very eminent manner; at Darlaston in particular, where there was a small, but steady society of long standing. Several of these had borne much persecution, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Ever since, their behaviour has been unblameable. And yet none of them could say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'¹³ Some of these coming over to the prayer-meetings at Wednesbury, and hearing (what they thought they had never heard before) that they were to believe *now*, that they might come to Christ *now*, without any other qualification than a sense of their own sinfulness and helplessness, were utterly astonished. And they began to be amazed at their slowness of heart. Presently a prayer meeting was set up at Darlaston. And in a little time many souls were set at liberty. The oldest stood out longest. After all they had done and suffered, they found it hard to come as having done nothing. And when they were urged to it in a class or prayer meeting, they were ready to gnash with their teeth. But whether they would hear or forbear, God continued to add more and more souls to his genuine gospel. Nothing stood before it. Many of the servants and children of these old professors cried out, 'What must I do to be saved?'¹⁴ Being pointed to the Lamb of God, they believed and rejoiced in God their Saviour, to the utter astonishment of their unbelieving masters and parents. In one night it was common to see five or six (and sometimes more) praising God for his pardoning mercy. And not a few in Birmingham, Dudley, and Wolverhampton, as well as in Wednesbury and Darlaston, clearly testified that the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed them from all sin.

31. Meantime the societies increased greatly. In Darlaston we purchased ground and built a preaching house, and in Birmingham we hired a large building. Satan was alarmed at this, and stirred up outward persecution, both at Birmingham and Wolverhampton. But it did us no hurt. Our brethren went on, not counting their lives dear unto themselves. He then made the minds of some of the old Methodists evil affected towards their brethren. They began to speak much evil (particularly in their classes) of them and of this 'new doctrine'. And any defect in these 'new converts' (as they called them) was magnified to

¹²Rev. David Blair (1701–69) was minister of Brechin Cathedral.

¹³Job 19:25.

¹⁴Acts 16:30.

the utmost, and then brought as an undeniable proof that the whole matter was wrong. These were earnestly supported by Mr. [James] J[one]s, formerly an itinerant, now a local preacher. To him they sent every tale that malice could invent, either against the work, or the instruments employed therein, my wife [Mary] in particular—whom indeed God had been pleased to make eminently useful. This embarrassed me a little. However we went on, and the work did not suffer much. Till about the time of the Conference, when some of the preachers, going through the circuit and hearing only one side (though they might have heard both, as I was present) both privately encouraged the opposition, and in their public discourses, dividing the people into the *new* and *old* believers, used many unkind expressions, to encourage the old and discourage the new believers, as they called them. This went hard with one that was not an old preacher, this being but the fourth year of my preaching, and the first of my acting as an Assistant. However, by the grace of God, far less hurt was done than might reasonably have been expected.

32. As I wrote to you the most minute circumstances of the work, and you were there in the very height of it, you judged it best to place me in the circuit another year. But I made a false step in the beginning of it. Longing for peace, and preferring the judgment of other men to my own, I agreed that my wife should not hold any more prayer-meetings. Immediately the work began to decay, both as to its swiftness and extensiveness. And though I continued to insist as strongly as ever upon the same points, yet there was not the same effect, for want of seconding by prayer-meetings the blow which was given in preaching. Mr. [Thomas] Westell laboured with me this year. We constantly attended Stroud and Painswick. At both places there was a large increase; as also in several other parts of the circuit, which then included Coventry and Shrewsbury.

33. After having been married near ten years, I had this year a son.¹⁵ May he prove a blessing to many, and a comfort to his parents! In May and June you desired me to visit Wales, and regulate the societies there. They were all then supplied by Mr. [Thomas] Taylor, who was exceedingly useful among them. But the people in general were difficult to get, and more so to keep, in society. In many places however they joined together, and not a few of them remain to this day.

34. In 1763 God revived his work in the Staffordshire circuit, especially at Birmingham; notwithstanding the disturbance which we constantly had during the preaching, and the danger of being murdered by the mob when we came out of the house. No magistrate could quell the rioters—or rather I should say, none *would*. For it is certain any magistrate has power to preserve the peace, if he will. But at length Mr. Wortly Birch took them in hand.¹⁶ He laid some of the rioters in the dungeon, and left them there a night or two to cool. He fined the rest according to law, obliged them to pay the money down, and gave it to the poor. By this means their stout spirits were humbled, and we have had peace ever since. This year a preaching house was built at Stroud, and another at Wolverhampton. But this was not long-lived, for soon after the mob assembled and pulled it down to the ground.

35. They had reigned here for a long time, insomuch it was difficult for a Methodist to pass the streets. And now, one could hardly appear in them but at the hazard of his life. The rioters had broke most of their windows, and swore they would pull down their houses, and every preaching house near. Hearing of this at Stroud, I rode over immediately and found the whole country in terror, as they expected every night the mob from Wolverhampton to pull down the preaching houses at Dudley, Darlaston, and Wednesbury, with the houses of the Methodists. They came first to Darlaston, a place long famous for rioting, hoping to meet with good encouragement. But a hog butcher, who lived near the house, hearing the alarm, leaped out of bed, seized his cleaver, and running out, swore death to the first that meddled with it. So unexpected a reception quite discouraged them, and made them run away faster than they came. Here we saw the good effect which the late revival had upon the town in general. There were few left who would either persecute themselves or suffer others to do it.

36. But Wolverhampton itself was still in a flame. A friend who was to accompany me to the town had procured a pair of pocket pistols, and offered me one. But I told him, 'No. I am in God's work, and trust to his protection. And you must return your pistols, or I cannot accept of your company.' He did

¹⁵Alexander Mather [Jr.] was baptized at St. Bartholomew's, in Wednesbury, on May 20, 1762.

¹⁶I.e., John Wyrley Birch (1707–75), of Hanstead Hall, Birmingham.

so. When I came to the end of the town, the alarm was quickly spread. So that before we came into the main street, we had company enough. But they were restrained, so that we received little abuse, further than bad language. I immediately went to the justice, who granted a warrant. But the constable gave notice of it to the rioters, so that none was taken. Some fled, some hid themselves, the rest set the justice at defiance. This occasioned several neighbouring justices to fix a day for meeting in the town. When they met, several of the rioters were brought before them. Three were bound over to appear at Stafford, where all the magistrates gave attendance. The proof against the rioters was full, yet the *honourable* jury acquitted them all!

37. This gave them fresh spirits. So they hasted home with ribbons flying, and were saluted with bells and bonfires, in one of which they burned me and my friend in effigy. Our friends now found it more dangerous than ever to come into the town, or get to their houses. Before I left Stafford, I waited on Lord D[artmouth]¹⁷ with Mr. Hayes, attorney, the person who prepared the mob and himself made the first breach in the house. I told him plain, either let Mr. Hayes rebuild the house, or we will try him for his life. He promised it should be rebuilt in such a time, and it was built accordingly. So did God deliver us out of this complicated trouble. And all the time his work prospered.

38. But what could not be done by persecution, has been done by those who brought in a *new doctrine* among us.¹⁸ This soon checked, and has now well-nigh destroyed, both the root and branch of vital religion. They who receive this *new light*, not only despise and speak evil of those that begat them to God, but even deny the reality of that unspeakable blessing which they then received. They say, 'We were then blind, and knew nothing.' Happy ignorance! which enabled them to endure reproach, pain, want—yea, to carry their lives in their hands, counting nothing dear, but to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.¹⁹

39. In August 1770 I was stationed in Bristol circuit. Here I met with various exercises. But I was more than conqueror, and good was done in Bristol and in several other places. Particularly at Bath, where they were obliged first to enlarge and then to gallery the preaching house. In the spring I was called to Monmouth, to open a preaching house, which was duly licensed. We preached with tolerable quietness till Sunday evening. The churchwardens then came before me, went in, and shut the doors. Meantime the street was all in an uproar. I went on with Mrs. Hearne²⁰ and Miss Fortune²¹ (my only companions) till we met the mob, who opened to the right and left, and let us pass to the door. It was shut, but in a while I prevailed to have it opened. And one of them asked what authority I had to preach. I asked who he was. He said, the churchwarden. 'Then you have no authority to question *me*. I shall not show mine but to a proper person. And I desire you will either behave well, or withdraw.' Another said, 'Sir, will you show it me? I am the chief constable.' I answered, 'Sir, I will.' While he was reading, the churchwarden looked over him, and said, 'O Sir, this will not do.' I said, 'Sir, it will do for *me*. And I require all of you who stay, to behave in a becoming manner.' The chief constable then withdrew. But the crowd was so great that they could not half get in, and those without were so noisy that nothing could be heard. So after a time I judged it best to withdraw.

40. In the evening the mayor sent desiring me to attend him in the morning at the Town Hall. I went. Soon after came the mayor, the clerk of the peace, and all the chief men of the town. The rector and

¹⁷William Legge, 2nd Earl of Dartmouth, lived in Sandwell Hall, about a mile east of West Bromwich, Staffordshire.

¹⁸This was one of the centers of Calvinist opposition to the 'anti-Calvinist' statement in the Minutes of the 1770 Conference.

¹⁹See Acts 24:16.

²⁰Mrs. Hearne's son Edward Hearne was killed by a mob in Monmouth on Apr. 28, 1776; see CW's epitaph in MS Funeral Hymns (1756–87), 111.

²¹Theodosia Fortune (1735–1803), a native of Monmouth who never married, was supportive of Methodist work there.

curate used some harsh words. The other gentlemen behaved civilly. But they asked so many questions, and spoke so many at a time, it was impossible to answer. I said, 'Gentlemen, be pleased to speak one at a time.' But this could not be done. Only they all agreed in desiring me to promise that I would come no more. I told them, 'I would make no such promise. No, not if my life depended upon it.' So we parted as we met, and the next day I got safe to Bristol.

41. In 1773 I was stationed at Canterbury. During my stay in this circuit we had a fair prospect of doing good at Gravesend. The congregations were large, and not a few appeared to be much affected. The society increased, and all things were in a flourishing condition till a poor creature, one George Gould, appeared, who at first came as one of our friends. But no sooner had he gained the affections of the people than he pulled off the mask and preached Calvinism. And hereby such a wound was given to the society as is not healed to this day.

42. In the year 1777 I was appointed for the Colne circuit. It was not long before that the gallery in the preaching house, being full of people, had fallen flat to the ground. And though no one was killed, yet some limbs were broken, and many poor people bruised. This obliged me to travel through many societies, in order to defray those large expenses of taking care of those that were hurt, and rebuilding the gallery, as well as building and furnishing a house for the preacher. But whatever fatigue I had was abundantly made up by the kindness and liberality of our brethren.

43. Having prepared the materials for the preaching house at Padiham the next year, on the first of October we laid the foundation. But a person pretending a claim to the ground, when the wall was about a yard high, threw a part of it down. We bore this outrage, and proceeded in the work. This emboldened him to engage three masons, who came in the night, when the roof was on, wrested out the sides of both doors with the lintels, with a yard of the wall above. They broke the sides of the two large windows, near three feet on each side. They then made a large hole in the pillar between the two windows, intending to throw down the house. But suddenly such a panic seized them that first one and then the other stopped short and ran away. These returned no more. But their employer, with the third man, resolved to finish their work. Presently he was himself struck with a fear of being killed, and ran away, dragging his fellow with him.

44. Being averse to law, we bore this also. But we set a watch on the house every night till it was covered in and licensed, in hopes we should then be quiet. But on December the 21st, he brought two men at eleven in the forenoon, with a pickaxe and a crow, and directed them to begin at one of the doors, which was not quite repaired. The workmen stood amazed, but several of the townsmen quickly came to the place, two of whom were remarkably weak men, and one of them lame besides. One laid hold of the pickaxe, and one on the crow. They that held them were stout men, the terror of the country. Many took part on each side. I was in my room, and at first thought not to stir out. But fearing mischief might be done, I sent for a constable, and myself walked to the chapel. The young man was struggling with him that held the pickaxe, to whom I spoke, and he promised to be quiet. Meantime some took the crow from the other man, which their employer observing, struck a lad that helped them. He returned the blow. A battle ensued, wherein the gentleman was worsted and rolled in the dirt.

45. Finding there was no other way, I procured a warrant from Sergeant Aspinwall, for the chief rioters. This was served immediately. The next morning we waited upon him, at his house, and he bound them all over to the assizes. But I recollecting that Mr. W—n had said before the sergeant he was willing to refer the whole affair to him, I sent him word I was willing too; and desired him to name the time and place. But he would do neither. After preaching at Millend in the evening, I went to bed, but my sleep departed from me. However, I rose as usual. But before I went out of my room I heard a knocking at the door. It was one from Padiham, who mournfully cried out, 'Oh Sir, we are all ruined! Mr. W—n has got a warrant for seven-and-twenty of us, and you are the first in it. We must all be at the sergeant's by noon.' I told him, 'I would be there.' As soon as I came, I saw Mr. W—n just going into the yard. I followed him close, to the great joy of my friends. We were near forty in number. The sergeant coming to the door, I asked, 'Why I was summoned?' He answered, 'For a riot'. I said, 'Sir, you cannot but know that Mr. W—n has done this, out of mere litigiousness. But why should we trouble the whole country with our affairs? Cannot we settle it between ourselves?' To this Mr. W—n agreed. So as we had no bonds of arbitration

ready, we both signed a memorandum to the same effect. The poor people then went home in peace. After some difficulties the bonds were signed, and after hearing all parties, the sergeant's sentence was: 1) that the ground (part of which we had purchased) should be equally divided between us and Mr. W—; and 2) that he should pay us five pounds for the damage which he had done. Thus we were at length delivered out of our trouble, and peace re-established at Padiham.

46. What I may meet with hereafter, I know not. I can only say I find it in my heart to spend and be spent for God, in promoting his glory and the salvation of men. To that end I am determined still to preach the whole Methodist doctrine, and to see that the discipline, to which God has led us, be executed in all its branches. I see more and more that where it is not executed, little lasting good is done. I know this is not the way of ease, nor the way to popularity. But as I set out without a view to either, so I hope to continue, by the grace of God. I remain

Your affectionate and dutiful son in the gospel,

Alexander Mather

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 91–99, 144–60, 199–202.²²

²²This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 2:158–239; along with further testimonials by Joseph Benson, John Pawson, and others. See the continuation below, Jan. 5, 1780.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Bristol
December 1 [1779]

[[Dear Brother,]]

Surely you cannot still allow John Pawson,¹ or any other, to open your letters in your absence! You should revoke *this order at least*, or truth dares not approach you.

I breakfasted yesterday with Mr. [William] Pine. He said Mr. [Alexander] M'Nab had been with him and offered him his narrative to print, which he absolutely refused, and spoke much to dissuade him from publishing it, insisting that he ought to suffer in silence (however innocent or oppressed) rather than do so much mischief by a public vindication. This only confirmed him in his resolution. He bitterly complained of your taking too much upon you; of your interfering with the assistant, appointing him one week and displacing him the next; etc. He told him, 'The *ministers* were resolved to have a meeting shortly, and to settle among themselves the affairs of the church.' So it will not be a congress but a synod—if they can *agree* to choose a moderator. Mr. [Thomas] Carlill assures me they are determined to make a separation, for their patience can hold out no longer. One would think they took the Americans for their pattern.

By the time that their synod is opened, I hope your *sound* sons will be ready to meet you in a lawful assembly. God has suffered them thus to show themselves, before your death, that you may save a remnant, divide the prey with the mighty, and bequeath your children to faithful pastors.

Dined with Dr. [Thomas] Coke and brother Carlill at Mr. Stock's.² Mr. [John] Bristol invited himself, to prevent mischief. I took the Dr. and Carlill aside. He <rep>eated³ the words of M'Nab—your pious son!—who still *talks* of his love and obedien<ce> to you, declares he has never opposed you, and does not oppose you <now>.

I sent a kind message to <M'Nab> by brother Saunderson,⁴ and a second by Dr. Coke, that if he desired to speak with me <I> would meet him any time at Miss [Elizabeth] Johnson's. He refused to come, saying if I had anything to say to him, I might send my terms, and what concessions I expected on his part. I supposed he imputed my offer to a fear of his narrative.

I was much assisted to preach from John 17: 'that they all may be one,'⁵ Spent another hour with the leaders, preaching peace. Mr. Bristol and sister Grant spake in defence of Mr. M'Nab. All the rest against him. Brother [William] Dyer repeated the word of the Spirit to him, 'Obey those that have the rule over you.'⁶ Another said that word was thundered in his ear (when in danger of seduction), 'How were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?'⁷ We parted, all determined to labour for peace.

The preachers' zeal for Methodism is mere finesse, to gain your favour. Mrs. [Mary] Maddern tells me *they* (not I) are for destroying it. The early preaching would be universally dropped with you. The bands and classes also—as too much trouble. Mr. Davis's⁸ or the Scotch model would suit them much better. All your Scotch preachers will, I fear, be drawn into their whirlpool.

¹Pawson was currently stationed in London.

²Edward Stock (1738–96) was a carpenter, active in the Bristol society, who became a trustee of the new chapel built in Bristol in 1779; see Best, *Cradle of Methodism*, 461.

³A rip in the MS affects five lines, but the missing content is fairly clear.

⁴Hugh Saunderson (fl. 1770s), who had desisted from being a travelling elder and settled in Bristol in 1777 (see JW, *Works*, 10:465); CW spells 'Sanderson'.

⁵John 17:21.

⁶Heb. 13:17.

⁷Num. 12:8.

⁸Likely referring to Edward Davies; whose name CW regularly spelled "Davis."

I must meet the society once more, even though Mr. Bristol should again bring his brother [M'Nab] to oppose me there. On Monday I return to Bath. Mr. [John] Valton is sick at Mrs. Purnell's.⁹ I hope to visit him on Friday. Mr. Carlill, Joseph [Bradford],¹⁰ and the Dr. [Coke] supply the round.

Wednesday, December 1

Mr. Bristol continues as active as M'Nab in canvassing and prejudicing the people—who, many of them, pity poor Mr. M'Nab, condemned unheard and not permitted to speak a word in the society. I met Mr. Bristol this morning at Miss [Elizabeth] Johnson's and told him your reason for sending him into the Bradford round; namely, that he might be out of danger of more contention. His wife [Mary] must leave the [New] Room shortly for a lodging already taken for her. I lovingly advised him to leave the [New] Room himself. (By the way he denies his *bringing* Mr. M'Nab down to oppose me; he came a quarter of ^{<an¹¹>} hour before him.) Brother Lewis afterwards told him if Mr. Bristol took a lodging for them both, h^{<e would>} pay for it.¹² I told him he was still acknowledged by you as a preacher, although not in this round; and you could find him employment when his wife was got up again. He complained of our making fish of one and flesh of the other,¹³ by punishing them and not Mr. Valton. I answered that Mr. M'Nab, as the principal, was silenced; that he, as the accessory, suffered little; and that humble Mr. Valton, as drawn in and overborne by them, was at most guilty of a sin of ignorance, and therefore not punished at all.

He still justifies M'Nab, and does not condemn himself, though he owns the preachers did say you have no right to put away a preacher till the Conference, or to alter any round. He and his party are very angry at Joseph [Bradford] and [Thomas] Carlill for going into the round by your order.

The bitterest of all their partisans is Mr. Cross.¹⁴ Mr. Carlill makes a just remark, that the warmest Americans are the deepest in the independent preachers' schemes, as the greatest admirers of the Congress and Dr. Price.¹⁵

When you sent word you would send other preachers into their places, Mr. Bristol said, 'Whoever comes, I shall stand my ground, and no man shall remove me from this house.' I told him he had compelled you to maintain your authority, and give them a proof of your power to silence preachers, to alter rounds, and to claim your own house. That you had made him and M'Nab preachers, placed them here, opened all houses and hearts to them, and in return they had abused their power, betrayed their trust, and turned the hearts of your own children against you. For these reasons he was not *thrust*, but *put*, out of my brother's house; not by my brother, but by Mr. M'Nab and himself

⁹In Oct. 1763 James Purnell Esq. (1711–72, then widowed) married Judith Davis (1731–93). The couple remained supporters of the Methodist society. After her husband's death in 1772, Judith resided in their country home in Almondsbury, just outside Bristol. This is where Valton was staying. Out of this time a relationship would grow, and in Dec. 1786 Valton would marry Judith (Davis) Purnell.

¹⁰Joseph Bradford was currently assigned to travel with JW, but had apparently been sent down with CW to attend to the tensions in Bristol.

¹¹A rip in the MS affects two lines.

¹²Thomas Lewis was a General Steward in Bristol at this time (see *Works*, 10:873).

¹³*OED*: 'to make an invidious distinction; to show partiality'.

¹⁴A Thomas Cross appears in 1770 in a band for married men in the Bristol Society Register. He was likely the son by that name of Richard Cross (who joined the Bristol society in the early 1740s) baptized in 1734. But CW's comment may mean that this 'Mr. Cross' was an American by birth.

¹⁵Referring to Richard Price (1723–91), *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America* (London: T. Cadell, 1776); JW had replied to Price in *Some Observations on Liberty* (1776).

My counsel—i.e. Dr. Coke, Carlill, Thomas Lewis, and Betsy Johnson—are unanimous for the necessity of this removal; without which M'Nab can never be kept out, Mr. Bristol humbled, or peace restored.

I spent the day in walking from house to house with my faithful assistant and brother Carlill. Our labour was not in vain. I intended to preach tomorrow evening, but thought it better to desire Mr. Bristol to preach for me. I am now quite weary and faint through their contradiction, and glad shall I be to get out of this fire. Next week I hope for more quiet in Bath.

Ἔρρωσο ἐν Χριστῷ¹⁶

Wednesday Night

Write, to confirm what I have done. Lock up my letters if you approve. And again I say, keep your mind to yourself.

Endorsement: by JW, 'C[harles] of b[rother] McNab—! / Dec. 1, 1779 / a[nswe]red 5'.

Sources: holograph; Wesley's Chapel (London), LDWMM/2008/11610/2.¹⁷

¹⁶'Farewell in Christ.'

¹⁷A transcription was published previously in *WHS* 7 (1910): 132–35.

From Sarah (Ward) Nind

[Ramsbury Park]
December 5, 1779

Dear Sir,

I have long delayed writing, partly because I would not trouble you with my complaints, and partly because my spirits have been so depressed that I have had but little inclination to write. For many months I have been, in a great measure, deprived of the blessings of health and ease; the want of which I sometimes find very hard to bear, as it renders the hurry and fatigue of business (which even when I am well often weighs me down) far more burthensome. But my exercises of mind have been still harder. It seems as if I had indeed been wrestling with principalities and powers. Such temptations, I think, I never felt before. And I do not know but I should have utterly fainted, if the Lord had not frequently succoured me with strong consolations.

The dejection and burden of my mind is now in a great measure removed. But I still feel too much, for present pain and the anticipation of an approaching trial often distress me. And though I do not find such temptations to question the goodness and love of God towards me as I have done, yet I cannot so cast my care upon him as to be easy and tranquil while trouble and anguish are near at hand. I beg your prayers. I believe God heard you, in my behalf, on a like former occasion; for I was saved, beyond my expectation, and doubtless by faith superior to my own.

I wished to have had the pleasure of seeing you at M— in the spring but was disappointed; yet, if I live till the return of that season, I hope to see you here. With Mr. [James] Nind's joint respects, I am, dear sir,

Your unworthy

S. N.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 12 (1789): 668–69.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Bristol
December 6, 1779

Dear Brother,

Yesterday is past, but will not be soon forgotten. Mr. [Edward] Smyth assisting, I preached twice on 'Abound in hope',¹ and 'Come for all things are now ready'.² God gave testimony to his word, and met us at his table. When it is well with us we never forget you, or the Church of England.

I promised the leaders on Tuesday night to give them and the society our reasons for *so* dealing with Mr. [Alexander] M'Nab, which he calls 'condemning him unheard, and not suffering him to speak one word in the society'. My plain narrative lasted two hours. I told them we had resolved, if Mr. M'Nab confessed his fault (of which you had from himself the fullest proof), to have received him immediately, like humble Mr. [John] Valton. But it was necessary to make some trial of him first. That, for that end, you judged it best *peremptorily to silence him*, and then wait a short time to see what effect that would have on so proud and stubborn a spirit. That he might in that hour have sent my brother a message, or a line, that he saw his fault and repented, and then he would have been immediately restored. Instead of that, he flew out into complaints and threatenings, and has made it his business ever since to pervert our own children by the power with which you had entrusted him, yet still professing his great love and obedience to you. In proof of both, I read them his pious words to Mr. [Thomas] Carlill,³ 'I think it my duty to pray for the death of Mr. John Wesley (or that God would take him away), that he may do no more harm in the church. It would be a great mercy if he was dead.'

'Is this the voice of my son David',⁴ (I only added) 'or of Absolom rather? But I will leave you to your own reflections, and at present call upon you who love him to join me in prayer for his life, in the following hymn.'

- [1.] Jesus, thy hated servant own,
And send the glorious Spirit down,
In answer to our prayers,
While others curse, and wish him dead,
Do thou thy choicest blessings shed,
And crown his hoary hairs.
2. Not for his death, but life we pray,
In mercy lengthen out his day
Our venerable guide.
Long may he live, thy flock to keep,
Protect from wolves the lambs and sheep,
And in his bosom hide.
3. Long may he live, to serve thy cause,
To spread the victory of thy cross
To minister thy grace,
And late, t' increase the church in heaven
With all the children thou hast given
Appear before thy face.

¹Rom. 15:13.

²Luke 14:17.

³CW again spells the name 'Carlisle'.

⁴1 Sam. 26:17.

4. Thou God that answerest by fire,
With fervent faith and strong desire
Whom we present to thee,
Fill with pure love his ravish'd breast,
And let the Spirit of glory rest
On all thy church,—and me!
5. Me, me thy meanest messenger
Admit his happiness to share,
And intimately one
Thro' life, thro' death together guide,
To sing with all the sanctified
Around thy azure throne.

You may more easily imagine than I describe the effect. God bowed the hearts of all the people, as the heart of one man—towards himself, I trust, and towards his servant. They received a large increase of love for you, as their tears witnessed. I have heard of but one exception, Mrs. Saunderson, who cried out, 'It was all lies and Mr. M'Nab did not speak a word of those Carlill repeated.'⁵

I spoke largely of my attachment to the Church [of England] and you; of my 'hatred of Methodism'—not the gospel we preach; not the rules of our society, every one of which has its use; but of the *independent scheme*, the selfish spirit of separation and rebellion.

I showed them [that] nothing could save them from splitting into twenty sects but their keeping together as at the first, and continuing steadfast in the Church of England.

Some begged me (would you think it?) to print the hymn. But I told them it was only intended for *their* use at this time.⁶

We shall daily make farther discoveries of the designs of *our* Americans. *Hac illi spe hoc inceperunt* at Bath,⁷ depending on all the preachers that they would make it a common cause and shake off their "shackles", as they call their subordination. (By the way Mr. Carlill told me last night he never could comprehend what they meant by 'Mr. Wesley's shackling them'.)

Supposing you as good as dead, they begin to divide the spoils. Bristol and Bath are Mr. M'Nab's and [John] Bristol's share. The latter expected to reign a second year in this place, and surely you could not be so provokingly vivacious as to hold out beyond that time. Having the power in their own hands, they never suspected you *to rebel*, or to act with such vigour against them. In your second infancy⁸ they held your leading strings, and out of pure compassion they intended at the next Conference to spare your age the burden, and take upon themselves *the care of all the churches*.

Be open to the light, and you will clearly see all their hearts. Before the last Conference, one Mr. Barker⁹ came hither and said in Thomas Lewis's hearing, 'I don't understand what Mr. [John] Wesley means to debar any preacher of his right to meet in Conference. I am resolved (though unsummoned) to

⁵Hugh Saunderson married Elizabeth Hayward in 1775 (the reason he settled in Bristol). CW again spells the last name 'Sanderson'.

⁶CW's reticence soon dissipated, and this hymn (with an additional stanza) was published as a broadsheet—see *Hymn for John Wesley* (1779).

⁷Terence, *Adelphi*, II.ii.19: 'It was upon this hope they devised their project'.

⁸I.e., the declined abilities of old age.

⁹Apparently William Barker, who was admitted as an itinerant preacher at the 1766 Conference (see JW, *Works*, 10:315), and was appointed in Wiltshire the year mentioned (10:476). The dissatisfaction expressed here may explain why Barker desisted from travelling in 1780 (10:497).

be there whatever be the consequence.' Accordingly he came *Αυτόματος Μενέλαος*.¹⁰ Mr. Morgan threatened Thomas Lewis, if he had him before the Conference, to bring him down upon his knees.¹¹ Mr. Taylor wrote to Mr. Flower that you had only skinned over the matter there, but at the next Conference they should go to the bottom and do *themselves* justice.¹²

I am just come, with Thomas Lewis, from brother Colmer.¹³ He told me M'Nab had used to him these words, '*I have reason to hate Dr. [Thomas] Coke and Mr. [Edward] Smyth as I hate the devil.*' Perceiving brother Colmer shocked, he added, 'but I hope, I do not'.

Dolet tale bolum ereptum e faucibus,¹⁴ intending to hold Bath in commendam.¹⁵

Betsy Johnson admires the divine providence in removing two such costly gentlemen from the house, where they so squandered the bread of the poor. The stewards will tell you all.

*Divide et impera*¹⁶ was the means by which they gained their ascendance over you. Had you and I always stood together, they could never have got such advantage. *Divide et impera*—and you will recover your authority. John Valton you have already rescued. O that you could make John Atlay like-minded! Let us reason together in the spirit of love. His heart I would fain believe is still right, and still with us.

I have been with Nancy Stafford, to recover Sally Coole (now Page),¹⁷ who has been sorely hurt by M'Nab's party—but prepared for their bad impressions by [[sister Pawson¹⁸]], of whom more when we meet.

At the cratch¹⁹ brother [John] Henderson met me and said, "You have done the business now effectually, and given, last night, entire satisfaction to the whole society."

Bath

December 7, Tuesday morning

If you have now read all my journals, you see M'Nab is far enough from repentance. Yet he might own his fault in words rather than lose £50 a year.²⁰ *I have* dealt gently with the other [i.e., John Bristol]. *I have* told him deeds not words would prove his sincerity. I have set before him the examples of M'Nab and John Valton, and that we wait to see which he will follow. To support your authority, I have laid upon him that mark of your displeasure removing him from the house, but no other. That he is still owned by you as a son and a preacher. And if he continues quiet in Bristol, only preaching occasionally till his wife is up again, you may send him into some *other* round; i.e., again trust him with your children

¹⁰See Homer, *Iliad*, ii.408; on how Menelaus, king of Sparta came automatically, or "unbidden" to a gathering for a religious sacrifice.

¹¹The only travelling preacher with this name currently was John Morgan (d. 1782). He had not served in Bristol since appearing in the *Minutes* in 1765 (JW, *Works*, 10:304), and was currently stationed in York. But he had two sons at Kingswood school (see *ibid.*, 10:457).

¹²Joseph Flower (1721–85) was a potter and a member of the Methodist society in Bristol. If 'Mr. Taylor' is a travelling preacher, it was either Thomas Taylor (1738–1816) or Joseph Taylor (1752–1830).

¹³John Colmer (1726–1803), who ran a paper warehouse, appears in 1770 in a band for married men in the Bristol Society Register. The second time CW spells it 'Colemar'.

¹⁴'It hurts to have something snatched from your jaws.' Cf. Terence, *The Self-Tormentor*, IV.ii.673, '*crucior bolum tantum mi ereptum tam desubito e faucibus*'.

¹⁵I.e., in trust as a benefice until the proper incumbent is installed.

¹⁶'Divide and rule.'

¹⁷Sarah Coole married John Page on Mar. 11, 1779, in Bristol.

¹⁸John Pawson had married Grace Davis (1743–83) of Bristol in July 1773.

¹⁹*OED*: 'A movable rack for feeding beasts out of doors'.

²⁰The support give a married travelling preacher.

and power—which he may again abuse by setting your children's hearts against you. He has been full as much to blame as M'Nab, only he was not the ring-leader in the rebellion. He has never confessed his fault to me. Till I see him in Mr. Valton's spirit, I shall believe all his submission and smooth words are only to save £50 a year.

Write again. What hour at what place (except your own house) shall we meet on Wednesday morning, December 15?

You judge right, there is not as yet any regular plan. But there is a spirit of independency, a spirit of pride and self-seeking, which has more or less infected the body of preachers. Carlill has stood like a faithful Abdiel.²¹ Talk with him fully, and know all.

You cannot *in this matter* [[trust John Pawson]], or any preacher unproved. Have you received all my letters through Mr. [Richard] Kemp?

Lose not this precious, this last opportunity of establishing your authority for the rest of your days. You, single, are no match for near 200 smooth-tongued men. Rouse yourself, before they flay you alive for your skin. Begin proving your sons one by one. Pray for wisdom, resolution, and love. I would give up my wife and children, to cleave to you, if you stand firm and faithful to yourself, and the cause of God and the Church of England.

Ἔρρωσο ἐν Χριστῷ²²

Carlill deserves from you a word of encouragement: a 'Servant of God, well done!'

Address: 'To / The Revd. J[ohn] Wesley, care of / Mr Richard Kempe / Silk-stocking Weaver, in White / Cross Alley, Moorfields / London'.²³

Postmarks: '9/DE' and 'Bath'.

Endorsements: by JW, 'C[harles]'s Journal / Dec. 6, 1779 / a[nswere]d 10'; and by an unknown hand, 'Macnab L[ette]r / of the Preachers / at Bath / ~~Ordination~~ Disapproved'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 4/40.

²¹See 1 Chron. 5:15.

²²'Farewell in Christ.'

²³Orig., 'To / Mr Richard Kempe / Silk-stocking Weaver, in White / Cross Alley, Moorfields / London / J[ohn] W[esley]'.

From Hester Ann Roe

[Macclesfield]
December 11, 1779

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I should not have been silent thus long, had not my dearest Lord seen good to afflict my body. I have lately been confined with, and am just recovering from, a sore throat. It was not ulcerated, but attended with a fever. [A] few in this town, or neighbourhood, have been ill. And several have died, four in one family within a month. I applied hartshorn to my throat and found benefit from it. I am now, I bless God, much better. I have reason to praise him for every affliction, for all he permits does work together for my good. I do love my Lord with all my heart.

All my capacious powers can wish,
In him doth richly meet;
Nor to my eyes is light so dear,
Or friendship half so sweet.¹

No, no, all that creation can boast, is poor and mean compared with him I love. In him I feel a constant heaven, and my soul truly sits loose to all besides. I have victory through his grace over all things inward and outward that are contrary to his will. I have at times various temptations, but they find no place in me, nor at any time distress or bring me into bondage. I have (glory be to God) the inward testimony of his Spirit that I please him, and that he dwelleth in me. My body and soul are both the Lord's. And I earnestly desire that his whole will may be done in me and by me. I am a sacrifice offered up, through Jesus my adorable high-priest, and am determined, through grace divine, ever to remain so. I am a pilgrim in a strange country, and all my treasure is above.

I am travelling as fast as the wings of time will bear me forward to my celestial country. Though thorns and snares and gins sometimes beset my path, yet my feet are shod, my sandals on, and I trample on them. Though the arrows of the archer are flying, I have a shield that turns aside the fiery darts. I have a shadow from the heat, and a refuge from the storm. I live upon the food of angels, and drink largely of the fountain of the water of life. His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are perfect peace. How great is the love wherewith he hath loved me! O how large his grace to the most unworthy! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me bless his holy name.'² I have heard from cousin J[ohn] R[yle]³ and his soul prospers, blessed be God! I hope, dear sir, you ever do and ever will remember at the throne of grace,

Your most unworthy but truly affectionate child in a precious Jesus.

H. A. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 13 (1790): 48–49.

¹Philip Doddridge, 'Jesus I love thy charming name', st. 3.

²Ps. 103:1.

³John Ryle, former mayor of Macclesfield, and a supporter of JW.

From the Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke

Bristol
December 15, 1779

Honored and Dear Sir,

I was totally ignorant of your brother's spirit till very lately. He appeared to me to be a *proud man*; but I am now satisfied that he is a man of *genuine humility*. I thought him an *enemy* to Methodism; but I now find him its *real friend*, as far as Methodism is a friend to the Church of England. And on *your* plan the Church of England never had so great a friend. I looked upon the concerts which he allows his sons to have in his own house to be highly dishonourable to God, and himself to be criminal by reason of his situation in the church of Christ; but on mature consideration of all the circumstances appertaining to them, I cannot now blame him.

I labored during part of these two last years with some who saw your brother in the same light as I did. And no doubt their prejudices served to heighten mine. Whilst I thus viewed everything respecting him with a jaundiced eye, it is no wonder that I interpreted all he said, that would bear a double meaning, in the very worst sense. This, I apprehend, was the case in respect to those things which you mention in your last letter to him.¹

He and I were once conversing about the false fire which sometimes breaks out in our band-meetings; particularly the behavior of Wildman and Platt,² when he observed, 'I abominate those band-meetings'. Whether he meant the band-meetings at the Foundery *only*, or the *institution itself*, I cannot say (though I believe he meant the former). However at that time, I put the worst construction upon his words, and repeated them afterwards to others. He himself will be able (and you cannot doubt his word) to give you full satisfaction respecting this matter.

As to the other point, Mr. Charles Wesley's words are misrepresented: Mr. C— told me that his wife, when in company one day with your brother, expressed some disinclination to meet in class; and he said to her, 'I would not have you meet in class if you don't like it'; in consequence of which she never met afterward. What was the full meaning of his heart when he spoke those words, he alone can satisfy you. As to myself, I have such sincere and unfeigned attachment to the Methodist discipline that, highly as I love and respect your brother, I would rather withdraw myself from that friendship with which he has lately honoured me, than to sacrifice or abandon that discipline.

I am endeavouring to bring matters respecting the Bath chapel to a conclusion.³ I find it very difficult to get money. Yet I hope, though the divine blessing, it will be raised, and settled upon the plan prescribed in the Minutes. Brother B— shall be appointed steward, if you do not object to him.⁴ He is a man of peace, loves you, loves the Church of England, and is beloved by all the people.

Pardon, dear sir, the freedom I have taken in writing thus freely to you, and believe me to be

Your most faithful, and dutiful son in the gospel,

T. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 13 (1790): 50–51.

¹JW wrote CW on Dec. 10; see endorsement on CW to JW, Dec. 6–7, 1779. It is not known to survive.

²Possibly Randle Platt (1710–90), buried at City Road Chapel (Stevenson, *City Road*, 467).

³Coke was soliciting funds to pay off the debt on the King Street Chapel opened earlier that year. See Crofts, *Satan's Throne*, 43–44.

⁴Likely Thomas Ball (d. 1786), a collector of excise in Bath, whom JW had entrusted in 1772 to audit the book room records in London; see JW to Ball, Feb. 27, 1772 (*Works*, 28:470), and Ball's report to JW in a letter dated Sept. 21, 1773.

From Thomas Austen¹

Rochester
December 18, 1779

I have sent you, by way of loan, St. Austin's *Confessions* Englished.²

N. B. my mss. short specimens of poems from printed books consist of 8 volumes in quarto, besides 12 volumes of quarto mss in form of a dictionary of English poetry from the most scarce books and pamphlets, all of my own handwriting, and all except four contain one quire and a half each. So that I believe I have read more English poetry than any man my age. Mr. Dethick is witness of it.

[...³] have not so plentifully yielded fish as they did before. Whereby it comes to pass that where before there dwelt many a good yeoman able to do the king and realm good service, there is no body now dwelling but a shepherd with his dog, and all by the suppression of abbeyes. Whereas men were wont to eat sheep, now sheep eat up houses, whole towns, yea men and all. [true enough as to the swarm of lawyers and their parchments, T.A.] What is the decay of tillage but from this suppression? Hence all the decay of woods, and high price of wood, for abbeyes carefully nourished, supplied, and husbanded the same. Hence too the people being more charged now with subsidies, loans, and other payments; for from the abbeyes the Prince was furnished with money at a sudden and weighty call. Hence also the great poverty and beggary of the common people, as these multiplied by marrying, and no farms or merchandise sufficiently found to maintain them.

Hence rose the defacing, destruction, and loss of the old worthy chronicles and other rare monuments (yet unprinted) kept carefully in abbeyes. The great Abbot first winked at the matter, and gave consent to suppressing the lesser houses, hoping to preserve themselves, and by some means got promises of the continuance of their abbeyes under the great seal. But they like Poliphemus's promise to Ulysses, were only devoured last. All houses under yearly value of 200£, or not above, were given the King by act of Parliament. But the residue came by one means or other to the King, without any at of Parliament at all. Hugh Farindon, Abbot of Reading, for not surrendering, being hanged, drawn, and quartered. Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury, hanged on Torr Hill. John Beche, Abbot of Colchester, hanged. These sad sights made all sore afraid and to think they escaped fair when they saved themselves by surrender.

See then (gentle reader) the just hand and plague of God upon these great rich abbots, and their marvellous overthrow, which so lightly and unadvisedly gave their consents to the overthrowing of the houses of their poor brethren.

So far Dr. Harpsfield

¹Rev. Thomas Austen (1721–90), was vicar of Allhallows, Rochester, 1751–90. JW had written him, consulting about materials for the *Arminian Magazine*.

²He may mean *St. Augustine's Confessions ... Newly translated into English from the original Latin* ([London:] T. Meighan, 1739

³Pages 1–4 of the manuscript are now missing. When page 5 starts, Austen is in the middle of giving JW an extract from Nicholas Harpsfield's manuscript, 'A Treatise on the Pretended Divorce Between Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon'. The immediate preceding material in the original by Harpsfield that leads into the material beginning on page 5 is as follows: "Yet were there some ignorant people that would talk, and some fond foolish preachers that would preach, before the suppression of the said abbeyes, eggs then being at twelve or more a penny and fish at a very reasonable [p. 140] price, that the religious people by reason of their fasting in Advent and at other times made these victuals dear. But since, we have been fain and glad to buy three or four eggs a penny and to pay three times or four times so much for fish as we did before; yea, I have credibly heard that our sea and our waters in many places have not so ..."

Account of the Reverend and learned Mr. Thomas Baker, author of *The Reflections on Learning*, by me, Thomas Austen, M.A., written as a note to the said book belonging to a reverend friend, with which note he was well pleased, as follows:

The Reverend Mr. Thomas Baker, B.D., the famous author of *Reflections upon Learning*, died about July 1741 at St. John's College, Cambridge (he having been formerly a Fellow thereof, but afterward ejected as a non-juror) and was buried just at the foot of the stone step ascending to the master's lodge from the ante-chapel of the said college. Mr. Clark (a layman and Fellow here, afterward a counsellor in London, attending the assizes at Rochester, bidding fair to become a great man had he lived) spoke a most elegant and eloquent Latin eulogium in the chapel, by way of funeral memorial of this most learned man. His death was occasioned (like Sophocles's) by overjoy at the sight of a nephew then admitted fellow-commoner of his college, whom he had not beheld from a child, though now become a very fine and remarkably handsome young gentleman, George Baker, Esq., by name.

The very old gentleman Thomas Baker bequeathed his own private library (chiefly antiquarian books) to St. John's College; on the inside of which books I have seen written by his own hand (before they were deposited in the library) thus in each of them: "Liber Thomae Baker, Collegii Dei Johan, Cantab. quondam socii, nunc eject." And he bequeathed also to St John and the University libraries about 20 volumes of his own antiquarian works in manuscript—part folio, part quarto, chiefly relating to the history of that college and university (For so) I find a note in his preface to Bishop Fischer's funeral sermon on Margaret, Countess of Buchan and the Derby, mother to King Henry VII, small octavo of 47 pages, with preface, of 63 pages; and the catalogue and short characters of her divinity professors at Cambridge and Oxford of 75 pages. Wherein he says: "Having opened my account of the foundation of St. John's College, I shall reserve the account of its growth and progress to a larger desire (under title of *History of St. John's College from the Foundation of old St. John's House to the Present Time, with some occasional and incidental accounts of the affairs of the University, and of such private colleges as held communication or intercourse with the old House or College; collected principally from manuscript*), which design possibly may one day see the light (though it never did), or if it should not (as there are some *arcana collegii* in every society, not so proper to be made public) I will either *leave it to the society*, or in such hands as being above mean and little ends, I am well assured will never prostitute it to mercenary designs.

For in the study of antiquities he most eminently excelled and was a great correspondent with and assistant to Mr. Thomas Hearne, the Oxford antiquary, Bishop Tanner, and Mr. Masters in his history of Bennet College, by whom he was esteemed and highly extolled. He even procured for Mr Hearne (from Bennet College manuscripts) some important papers containing the first outlines of the statutes of the Bodleian Library at Oxford and other valuable information inserted in Hearne's publications from time to time. He was consulted by all the learned men of the age, and I have seen a letter of his to the publisher of Stackhouse's *Body of Divinity* (Stephen Austen, in St. Paul's Church Yard, deceased), excusing himself, at his then great advancement in age, from carefully perusing and giving a character of that work (Austen however ventured on it, and gained vast profit by it). I have seen also catalogues of famous libraries (The Harlejan? and the Duplicate? in Cambridge University Library) where Mr. Baker's judgment of the merit and scarceness of the most distinguished books have been inserted by way of notes, and looked upon as an oracle. The discovery of his having been author of *Reflection on Learning* was extorted by some means from his bedmaker, he having in himself been so modest a man as to decline the glory of so learned a work, a man naturally so humble and pious, and one who constantly attended our chapel prayers at a quarter after 6:00 every morning, and at 5:00 at night, in all seasons of the weather, unto his last days.

He was in person tall, black complexioned, moderately fleshed, grave, upright, pale, but venerable port and aspect.

I had reason to lament the loss of so worthy a person within a year after my admission at that college, as he died in the summer vacation of 1740 or 1741. There being but few resident students then in college, we were all invited to his burial, and I remember, according to ancient custom, I had a pair for fine, white kid-gloves, a glass of wine, and a sprig of rosemary, wrapped at the end in white paper,

presented to me in the hall before we went in procession to the chapel to inter him. (He died somewhat before Dr. Bentley did, on 14th July 1742, as *Biographia Britannica* hints of Bentley, though I am most apt to think was rather in 1741. I am surprised that neither *Biographia Britannica* nor *Biogr. Dictionary*⁴ give any account of him. Dr. Middleton, in his account of Cambridge Library, mentions Mr. Baker in some sort or other. Ballard promises a farther account in his intended remarks on books and persons printed for Cade) I wish Mr. Wesley would print all the account of him he can get.

The Reverend Mr. William Law

Mr. Austen wants to know if there be any printed memorials of the life and character of the famous Mr. 'Christian Perfection' Law. He was tutor formerly at Emanuel College Cambridge, and spoke the most witty and humorous (*Terrae fiblius* or) Tripas speech as ever was heard (Because, if he lived up to what he wrote, he must have been *an angel*; just as what Bishop Burnet relates of Bishop Jeremy Taylor). Ballard, author of the life of Jonathan Bunde, vol. 4, page 295, duodecimo, mentions him as an extraordinary man, and a most amazing compound of good sense than the wildest enthusiasm.

[p. 10] There is the life of Lady Brooke, and one or two more pious lives of Ladies of quality, which I have often sent for from catalogues of books for sale, but could never get them. These Mr. Wesley should give us an abstract of. And also as rare and costly, an abstract of Knight's Life of Dean Colet, etc. (his contemporary). Erasmus's by Dr. Grotius, printed in quarto.

An Account of Sir Thomas More

For this I send Mr. Wesley my 2nd nos. of abstracts from Mr. Hearne, which he may copy (but for the whole account, not transcribed by me at all, I refer him to Mr. Hearne's book under this title: *Quil Roper vita Thomae Mori, lingua anglicana contexta, accedunt more epistola de scholasticis, quibus dam Trojanos lese appel Cantibus, academiae oxoniensis epistolae et orationes aliquam multae, anonymi Chronicon God stovianum et Fenestrarum depictarum ecclesiae parochialis de Fairford in agro Blocestriensi explicatio.* octavo, Oxford, 1716. The account is so faithful, by Sir Thomas's son-in-law Mr. Roper, that I am now vexed I did not transcribe the whole. T.A.

Also Mr. Wesley may copy the first account of Mr. Farrar's family in my manuscript No. 2nd.

Some Farther Account of Mr. Farrar
(which I find in my manuscript No. 6th from Hearne)

On Ash Wednesday and at other time, for the better suiting their bodies to their hearts, and their hearts to the meditation of the day, forbearing the refreshment of corporal food, the maiden sisters at Gidding Hall in Huntingdonshire, meeting at an appointed time and place together, other company which were always auditors and sometimes partner-actors in these exercises, conferred together of some such subject as should tend either to the informing of the understanding or the exciting of the affections to the more ready prosecution of virtue. They began about the end of May and their business was to relate some passages of history and stories they had read, among which was the follow one.

A great Lady, high born in blood and riches, but much more high and happy in the virtues of her son, by dignity a bishop, and in holy conversation a saint, being oft-times pressed by him to the exercise of charity in full measure, she still put him off with what she intended to leave in her will when she should die; which she imagined would please God and serve the end of a present distribution. He son, perceiving that so solid arguments would not prevail with her, bethought himself of a more convincing proof. One night therefore, having invited her to supper at his palace, which he studiously protracted (or

⁴Likely referring to *A New and General Biographical Dictionary*, 12 vols. (London: T. Osborne, 1761–67).

made late), at her getting into the coach to return home (it being very late and dark) she called for torches to attend and guide the way. The bishop (who had purposely commanded there should be none ready) desired her to let the coachman drive on easily; to which she made answer that all the way being bad, needed light, but especially the passage of the bridge, which was very dangerous. The bishop counselled her to proceed, saying that he would send the lights after, which should overtake her by that time she came to the bridge. Whereunto, in a rage, she replied, '*That* will I not hazard by any means. For suppose' (said she) 'we should be on it before we are aware, there would then perhaps need more lights to help us out again, and to remedy the hurt that might befall us. I will not therefore stir, until I have the torches before me.' The bishop, seeing that it turned out as he wished, with great humility besought her to consider whether it were not fit to observe the same course in that which was of far more importance, sending her good works and alms-deeds before her, by the performance of them in her lifetime, rather than leave them till the last hour, which might haply, as it did many others, by sudden approach prevent her expectation; 'Which if it should, madam' (said he) 'I cannot say how certainly you might promise yourself to accomplish what you intend. Many more and greater hazards of disappointment must needs be undergone than that which you now fear from me.'

[...⁵] for Bishop Patrick's *Reflections on the Devotions of the Roman Church*, octavo, printed 1674, p. 4, has these words quoted from the aforesaid ritual (not that I at all justify Brown's profaneness, but only as it at present happens somewhat similar as countenanced by the Pope etc.

The antiphona for St. Joseph says thus:

Cum seri, Faber sancte, excide
in me vitium
Ut sim Lignum adoptivum ad
coeli palatium

i.e. A holy carpenter, hew down with axe
all vice in me
That I for heaven's palace may
adopted timber be

T. A.

Bishop Patrick, in this book is all the way, is most shrewdly and ingeniously witty and truly laughable.

A Farther Note Concerning Mr. Farrar

Which I take from the Prefatory View of the Life and Virtues of Mr. George Herbert, in the 2nd edn. duodecimo, 1671. of Mr. Herbert's book called *A Priest to the Temple*, which 2nd edn. I never saw before, though till I had the 1st, Mr. Fisher, bookseller of Rochester (of Mr. Whitefield's class) very freely gave me leave to consult it and any other book at any time, for the use of Mr. John Wesley. T.A.

A Word or Two on Mr. Farrar

Speaking of former times, and what need there was for every Christian to humble himself before God, confessing their degeneracy, the editor adds thus: "I hope no man will think, though I speak thus, that I give him leave to construe my words mathematically, as if there was not an atom or hair of a good man, or a man of god in our church. There were diverse *primitive* (and are at this day) *holy and heavenly souls*, vessels chosen and fitted for the service of the sanctuary. I shall be bold to instance in three, who died in peace. Few considering (some did) that they were taken away from the evil to come, lest their eyes should see (what their spirits foresaw) what is come on us, on whom the days, not of visitation only but of vengeance, even the end of the world, are come. The first of these was Thomas Jackson, D.D., late president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and vicar of Newcastle. The second was Mr. Nicholas Ferrer

⁵Pages 13–16 of the manuscript are now missing; the transcription resumes at top of p. 17.

of Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire, sometimes Fellow commoner and Fellow of Clair Hall in Cambridge. The third was Mr. George Herbert, Fellow of Trinity College, orator, etc., and rector of Bemmerton in Wiltshire. All three holy in their lives, eminent in their gifts, signal Protestants for their religion, painful in their several stations, precious in their deaths, and sweet in their memories. They all the the inseparable lot and sign of Christ and Christians; to be signs of contradiction or spoken against, wondered at, and railed at by the world. etc. ... As for Mr. Ferrer, he was so exercised with contradictions as no man that lived so private as he desired to do could possibly be more. I have heard him say, valuing (not resenting his own) sufferings in this kind, "That to fry a faggot was not more martyrdom than continual obloquy." He was torn asunder as with mad horses, or crushed betwixt the upper and under millstone of contrary reports (the invective pamphlets printed against him I have but just touched upon in my abstracts, and I refer farther for them to Mr. Hearne. T.A.), that he was a papist, and a puritan. That is, if this be not to be sawn asunder as Esau, stoned as Jeremy, made a drum or tympanized as other saints of God were? And after his death, when by injunction (which he laid upon his friends when he lay on his death bed) a great company of comedies, tragedies, love-hymns, heroical poems, etc. were burned upon his grave, as utter enemies to Christian principles and practices (that was his brand). Some poor people said he was a conjurer ... etc. The second thing wherein all three agreed was a singular sincerity in embracing a transcendent dexterity in defending the Protestant religion established in the Church of England ... as also by what I have seen in manuscripts of Mr. Ferrar's, and heard by relation of his travels over the western part of Christendom; in which his exquisite carriage, his rare parts and abilities of understanding and languages, his morals more perfect than the best, did tempt the adversaries for the prize, if they could compass him. And opportunity he had to do this, in a sickness that seized on him at Padua, where mighty care was had by physicians and others to recover his bodily health, with design to infect his soul. But neither did their physic nor poison work any change in his religion; but rather inflamed him with a holy zeal to revenge their charity, by transplanting their wasted and misplaced zeal (as they were all three admirable in separating from the vile, what was precious in every sect or person under heaven) to adorn our Protestant religion by a right renouncing the world, with all its profits and honours, in a true crucifying the flesh, with all its pleasures, by continued temperance, fasting, and watching unto prayers. In all which exercise, as he far outwent the choicest of their retired men, so did he far undervalue the deeds, rating them much below such prices as they set upon them. Upon this design he helped to put out Lessius, and to stir up us ministers to be painful in that excellent labour of the Lord – catechizing, feeding the lambs of Christ. He translated a piece of Lud. Carbo, wherein Carbo confesseth that the heretics (i.e., Protestants) had got much advantage by catechizing. But the authority at Cambridge suffered not that Egyptian jewel to be published [N.B. in the Bodleian catalogue I find *Lud. Carbo a Costiro seu Costraccia De praeceptis Ecclesiae: Expositio orationis Dominicae. summ: Cas. Introdt. in Theologium de Candibus Hominis Christiani. Inroductio ad Cathechismium seu Doctrinam Christianam.* Ven. 1596. octavo. I find also a book with this title: *The Arminian Nunnery at Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire.* 1641 quarto. T.A. Leonardo Lessius. *De Perfectionibus moribus que Divinis.* 1620, etc.]

When some farmer near the place where Mr. Ferrar lived, somewhat before these (troublesome) times, desired longer leases to be made them, he intimated that seven years would be long enough. Troublous times were coming, they might thank God if they enjoyed them so long in peace.

Mr. Herbert, besides his rectory, had also a prebend in the Church of Lincoln, which I think (because he lived far from, and so could not attend the duty of that place) he would fain have resigned to Mr. Ferrar, and often earnestly sued to him to discharge him of it. But Master Ferrar wholly refused, and diverted or directed his charity (as I take it) to the re-edifying of the ruined church of Leighton, where the corps of the prebend lay.

As to Christian friendship, this may be maintained in vigour and height without ceremony of visits and compliments; yea, without any trade of secular courtesies, merely in view of spiritual edification of one another in love. I know they (Mr. Herbert and Ferrar) loved each other most entirely, and their very souls cleaved together intimately, and drove a large stock of Christian intelligence together

long before their deaths. Yet saw they not each other in many years. I think scarce ever but as members of one university, in their whole lives.

Master Ferrar was master of the western tongues, yet cared not for criticisms and curiosities. He was also very modest in point of controversy, would scarce venture to opine, even in points wherein the world censured him possessed. Mr. Herbert was of a middle temper betwixt, or a compound of, both of these; yet having rather more of Master Ferrar in him.

In sum, to distinguish them [all 3] by better resemblances out of the Old and New Testaments and antiquity, methinks Dr. Jackson has somewhat like the spirit of Jeremiah, St James, and Salvian; Mr. Herbert, like David and other psalmist, St. John, and Prudentius; Master Ferrar, like Isaiah, St. Luke, and St. Chrysostom. Yet in this diversity had they such a harmony of souls as was admirable. For instance, in one who differed in some points from them all, as that Master Ferrar, out of great liking of the many translated him into English, Mr. Herbert commented on him, and commended him to us, and Dr. Jackson allowed him for the press. It was Valdesso's 110 Considerations [in Bodleian catalogue vid. Jean de Val D'esso, seu Valdesso's Cent et dix Considerations Divines. Lyon, 1563. octavo et Italice. Bas x5.50 octavo same into Engl. Oxf. 1638. quarto]

Abstracts from the Life of John Hacket, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, prefixed to his sermons. published by Dr. Thomas Plume, Archdeacon of Rochester. folio. 1675.

pag. xliii. "In the quinquarticular controversy, Bishop Hacket was ever very moderate. But being bred under Bishop Devenant and Dr. Ward in Cambridge, was addicted to their sentiments. Bishop Ussher would say Davenant understood those controversies better than ever any man did since St. Austin. But he used to say he was sure he had three excellent men of his mind in this controversy: 1) Padre Paulo, whose letter is extant to Heinsius anno 1604; 2) Thomas Aquinas; 3) St. Austin. But besides and above them all, he believed in his conscience St. Paul was of the same mind likewise. Yet would profess withal he disliked no Arminian, but such a one as reviled and defamed everyone that was *not so*, and would often commend Arminius himself for his excellent wit and parts, but only tax his want of reading and knowledge in antiquity, and ever held it was the foolishhest thing in the world to say the Arminians were papists, when so many Dominicans and Jansenists were no Arminians; and so again to say the anti-Arminians were Puritans or Presbyterians, when Ward, Devanant, Prideaux, and Browning were anti-Arminians, and also stout for episcopacy; and Arminius himself was ever a presbyterian, and therefore much commended the moderation of our Church, which made not any of these nice and doubtful opinions *the resolved doctrine* of the Church. This he judged was the great fault of the Tridentine and late Westminster assemblies. But our Church was more ingenuous and left these dark matters to the several apprehensions of learned men, and extended equal communion to both."

This is all I can find in Bishop Hacket's Life relating to the Arminians, and not a single word do I find concerning Mr. Ferrar. I have consulted Hacket's Life also in Biographical Dictionary, but can find nothing to our purpose. There is an edition of Hacket's Sermons in folio, without the Life. I have also applied to my two large octavo manuscript notes, which I transcribed from the first six volumes of Biographia Britannica, but meet with no account of Mr. Ferrar.

T. A.

Finis

N.B. I should think the *Life* of Bishop Latimer, together with the most remarkable passages in his *Sermons* would be very acceptable to the public in your magazines. I greatly value the original letters from religious persons as to their spiritual conversion. I wish they may hold out long. Your poem were, I believe, originals at first. But I begin to *trace* them, if not much mistaken, in my readings in days of yore; though well chosen, I own. If you want any fresh supply at any time, I can help you in my manuscript collection many I gleaned from a thousand authors in English; particularly two vols. in quarto, each 1

quire and a half, under title of “Small Pieces of Poetry on Winter, its opposites, and concomitants.”
(vastly picturesque and all fine harmonious versifications, chiefly from moderns.

Excuse my writing a formal letter in answer to yours of Dec. 11, 1779.⁶ And can assure you,
without ceremony, that I am, good and worthy sir,

Your sincere friend

Thomas Austen

Excuse my unmeaning audacity.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, file 21.

⁶This letter is not known to survive.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
December 21, 1779

Many thanks to my dear and reverend father for his last kind favour.¹ In spirit I am often with you, and a few nights ago in my sleep was by my indulgent Lord permitted to hear you preach a sweet sermon from, 'O that I had the wings of a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest'.² It was food to my soul. I thought you first showed the rest the true followers of our Jesus enjoy here in his pure love, amidst all their various trials to which they are exposed. His will is their constant rest, and a sense of his approbation their delight. But when you in the second place described the glorious rest beyond the grave which remains for the persevering believer, my soul was ready to join with the holy psalm and cry, 'O that I had the wings of a dove, then would I fly away and plunge into the full fruition of my God'. But dull mortality still pinioned down my mounting spirit, and I awoke with a lively impression of eternal things on my mind. How good is the Lord! O my dear sir, he deals bountifully with me. He keeps me night and day, and waters me every moment.

Since I last wrote it has pleased my dear Lord to call me to much exercise, both of body and mind. My dear mother [Beatrix] was hardly raised from her illness before my dear father [John] was so much worse that we expected his hourly dissolution. He appeared to suffer so much from constant sickness, added to his other infirmities, that though I felt the loss of a tender parent would affect me more than I have sometimes (when at a distance) thought it would, yet I could not ask his life, but only cried, 'Lord fully prepare him for thy kingdom and let thy will be done.' It has pleased the Lord a little to restore him, and for some time he has not had any of the strangling fits. I do not remember he ever had one while sitting up, and chose rather to omit lying down at all than have an issue set. He sleeps almost all the time, but has not attempted to go to bed for some week last past. For this fortnight my dear mother has again been very ill. I am daily called to administer to their wants. And blessed be my dear Lord, though I have not all the time I used to have for religious exercises, yet I experience 'obedience is better than sacrifice'.³ And my gracious Lord favours me with a constant sense of his approbation. At all times I enjoy a peace which nothing interrupts; and glory be unto my Jesus, still fresh streams of living joy descend into my happy breast, while by faith I behold every attribute of my God, [who] conspires to make me blessed. I feel he does all things well. His every act respecting me, 'pure blessing is, his path unsullied light'.⁴ And though, at times, dark prospects of what lies before me are presented to my mind, yet I feel a power immediately to look to the Lord, and he graciously keeps my heart in such a state of sweet resignation to his will that I dwell entirely free from all anxious cares or distressing fears from what lies before me. He has said, 'As thy day so thy strength shall be',⁵ and on his faithful word my soul relies. But oh my dear, dear sir, pray for me, for I am all weakness, and help me all you can still with greater confidence to trust in Israel's God.

I suppose by this time you have heard of the death of dear Mr. [Thomas] Colbeck. To me who asked the state of his mind a little before he died, he said, 'As to my soul, I have not one doubt. Life or death, the will of the Lord be done. As to my dear wife and children, I commit them into the hand of a faithful God, who I know will give them what he sees best'. After this his constant business was to thank those that attended him for their kindness toward him and to pray that God would reward them, now and

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Ps. 55:6. JW preached on this text frequently in the early years of the revival.

³1 Sam. 15:22.

⁴Cf. JW, 'Trust in Providence' (translated from the German of Paul Gerhardt), st. 7, *HSP* (1739), 142.

⁵Deut. 33:25.

then intermixing a petition for himself that God would endue him with patience. Which he did in a wonderful manner, for though he was exercised with excruciating pain, yet no complaining was found in his streets, and the last words he was heard to say were, 'God bless you all'. Mrs. Colbeck is left with five children; the eldest an entire idiot.⁶ And except his affairs turn out better than is expected, she will be rather straitened, as much of his effects are out in book debts, and some of them who are debtors behave very ill. I have not seen Mrs. Colbeck since her husband's death, but last Thursday one of her sisters desired me, if I could, to get a few of her friends who are known to you to petition you would be kind enough to take her eldest little boy, who is about twelve years old, to Kingswood for two years. She is at present at a loss what to do with him, and until her affairs are settled cannot think of sending him from home, lest she should not be able to afford it. She would think herself greatly obliged to you could you do her this favour without hurting the mind of any of our brethren, and she would take care of the clothes for him during the time.

About a month ago I had a sweet letter from dear Miss [Hester] Roe. She has, I think, fully regained all she had lost, and my spirit feels just the same nearness to her it used to do. I have also had one truly spiritual letter from Lady [Darcy] Maxwell. She has not answered my last, but I expect a feast when it comes. I sometimes think of Mr. Parker, who used to talk of writing you a letter of thanks for the many spiritual friends you brought him acquainted with. If anyone does this, sure I have most need.

May every blessing a thousand fold be returned into your own breast that you have been instrumental of conferring on, my ever dear and honoured sir,

Your unworthy, though affectionate, child,

E. Ritchie

Annotation: another hand, '26th'.

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* 13 (1790): 51–53.

⁶Sarah Flesher, a native of Otley, married Samuel Sharp in 1757 (with Thomas Colbeck as a witness). She married Thomas Colbeck in 1765.

From Thomas Hanby

c. December 30, 1779

The following melancholy account was given me by a very worthy man, Mr. Thomas Marshall of Edale in Derbyshire, December 17, 1778.

Twenty years ago a young gentleman and lady came out of Scotland, as is supposed, upon a matrimonial affair. As they were travelling through that county they were robbed and murdered at a place called the Winnets, near Castleton. Their bones were found about ten years ago by some miners who were sinking an engine pit at the place.

One James Ashton of Castleton, who died about a fortnight ago, and who was one of the murderers, was most miserably afflicted and tormented in his conscience. He had been dying, it was thought, for ten weeks; but could not die till he had confessed the whole affair. But when he had done this, he died immediately.

He said Nicholas Cock, Thomas Hall, John Bradshaw, Francis Butler, and himself, meeting the above gentleman and lady in the Winnets, pulled them off their horses and dragged them into a barn belonging to one of them, and took from them two hundred pounds. Then seizing on the young gentleman, the young lady (whom Ashton said was the fairest woman he ever saw) entreated them, in the most piteous manner, not to kill him, as she was the cause of his coming into that country. But notwithstanding all her entreaties, they cut his throat from ear to ear! They then seized the young lady herself, and though she entreated them on her knees to spare her life and turn her out naked! yet one of the wretches drove a miner's pick into her head, when she dropped down dead at his feet. Having thus dispatched them both, they left their bodies in the barn, and went away with their booty.

At night they returned to the barn, in order to take them away. But they were so terrified with a frightful noise that they durst not move them. And so it was the second night. But the third night, Ashton said it was only the devil, who would not hurt him, so they took the bodies away and buried them.

They then divided the money, and as Ashton was a coal carrier to a smelt-mill on the Sheffield Road, he bought horses with his share. But they all died in a little time. Nicholas Cock fell from a precipice, near the place where they had committed the murder, and was killed. Thomas Hall hanged himself. John Bradshaw was walking near the place where they had buried the bodies, when a stone fell from the hill and killed him on the spot, to the astonishment of everyone who knew it. Francis Butler attempted many times to hang himself, but was prevented; however he went mad, and died in a most miserable manner.

Thus, though they escaped the hand of human justice (which seldom happens in such a case) yet the hand of God found them out, even in this world. How true then is it that thou, O Lord, art about our path, and about our bed, and spiest out all our ways!

Thomas Hanby

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 213–14.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

c. January 1780

William Adams was born in Fairfax county, in Virginia, on the 23rd of July, in the year 1759. From his infancy he was inclined to passion and other evil tempers.

At times the Holy Spirit showed him all was not well, and caused him to feel great uneasiness concerning the salvation of his soul. When he was about fourteen years of age, he had frequent opportunities of hearing the Methodists preach. For some time it made no lasting impression on his mind, though from his first hearing he believed their doctrine to be true.

I am not sure how the Lord was pleased to awaken him to a sense of his wretchedness. But this I know, I have seen but very few so broken to pieces before the Lord, under a most piercing sense of their danger. For two years I have often heard him say he went bowed down under a sense of the wrath of God, while his countenance, his tears, his frequent groans, his gestures, as well as the whole of his behaviour, showed the hell he felt within. During this time he missed no opportunity of hearing God's word. Many a tear did he shed while Christ Jesus was set forth as crucified before his eyes. Early and late has he been known to be pouring out his soul to God in private. It was not uncommon for him to go into the fields and woods, and to rise at midnight, to seek rest to his soul.

During this time he had power over all outward sin, and walked in all the ordinances of God blameless. Yet he knew that this would not do, unless his sins were blotted out and his dead soul made alive to God. He was frequently tempted to think all his prayers and tears were in vain; that he was a hypocrite, and that God would never have mercy on him. But notwithstanding all his attempts had hitherto proved fruitless, he determined to lie at the feet of Jesus, and, if he perished, to perish crying out for mercy. He knew that if he was damned, it would be just in God, because he had abused his mercies.

In this time of his sore travail it was a rare thing to see him smile. And if he saw any who professed to know Christ light or trifling, it was easy to observe the effect it had on him. Indeed such was his concern that he seemed unfit for any business but that of his salvation. He was afraid of nothing so much as of deceiving his soul, or that his convictions would wear off without ending in a sound conversion. He likewise groaned in earnest prayer to God for his relations and neighbours, longing for the success of the gospel among them and all people.

About the 1st of March, in the year 1775, he felt such a blessed change that his weeping and mourning were turned into joy. This was matter of great consolation to all his Christian friends. His countenance, his behaviour, his prayers, his praises, all agreed to testify what the Lord had done for him. Now he could say, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he separated my sins from me.'¹ From this time forward he doubled his diligence in waiting upon God.

Few spent more time in private prayer, and few were more fond of God's word. For several years he was seldom without his Bible in his pocket or his hands. Indeed there was so much of the meek and lowly Jesus to be seen in him, that the servants of God could not but take particular notice of him, as though God intended him for something extraordinary. Therefore, after a short time, he was appointed to watch over a few souls not far from his father's house, in order to assist them in working out their salvation. And it pleased God to bless his labour amongst them, while they were under his care. O how often did he feel his mind grieved for any who made a profession of knowing Christ, but followed him afar off!

In the summer 1777 there was a great appearance of God's people suffering. This made him more particularly examine into the state of his soul. And so he began to labour for that perfect love which casts out fear, that he might be able to withstand every storm that God might permit to arise for the trial of his faith. For it was just about this time that a cousin of his was cast into prison, and one of the preachers who rode that circuit was driven from it, because his conscience would not conform to what was required of him by one of the ruling men. But the Lord had prepared the heart of this young man by a previous

¹Cf. Ps. 103:12.

conviction of his wants, and wrought such a mighty change in him that he believed he was saved from all inbred sin—on which he rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. For sometime he had no doubt of this blessed work. And none who had an intimate acquaintance with him could see any reason to disbelieve him. Many an hour, both by day and by night, has he wrestled Jacob-like, that he might not deceive his soul in a matter of so great importance, and that the devil might not be permitted to transform himself into an angel of light to deceive him. But his confidence of these things was such that at times he scarcely had a doubt left but that the Lord had enabled him to love him, and all mankind, in a manner superior to what he ever had experienced before. But as he had few to converse with who had experienced these deep things, the enemy of souls, in a measure, robbed him of his confidence. So that he sunk beneath his privilege; though without slackening his diligence, or ever losing the blessed effects of his experience.

Thus he went on, aiming at the mark for the prize of his high calling. In the winter (1778) he got under a great concern about preaching the word of God, desiring only to live to his glory in all things and to be useful to his fellow creatures. While under this concern he opened his mind to a preacher, and after consulting together it was thought best that he should continue in the station he was in, until the following Conference. And then, if God should permit, to give himself up to the work. But it pleased providence to make a way for him sooner. And after many a struggle in his own breast, and some little outward opposition, he left father and mother, with the rest of his friends—trusting that if he never met them here again, he should meet them in his heavenly Father's kingdom.

Many in the neighbourhood, as well as in the family he left, felt the loss of so dear a friend, and many prayers were put up to God for his success. But how sensibly was he missed by his friends, who were now deprived of his loving exhortations, his earnest wrestlings with God for them. The people where he went received him kindly, and the Lord graciously blessed his labours to the good of many souls.

After this he met the preachers in Conference, amongst whom he was willingly received on trial, as a travelling preacher. He found this meeting much blessed to his soul, and often expressed his love and attachment to the *old* Methodist plan, and was much grieved for any who seemed inclinable to deviate from it in the least degree. Here he was appointed to labour with two others of his brethren in Baltimore circuit.

He had not been long there before he found some whose souls were on full stretch for all the mind that was in Christ, and not a few who could testify that the blood of Christ cleansed them from all unrighteousness. It was not long before he found the work revived in his soul, and from this he got so established in the grace of God that he seemed to have the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Now he was convinced more than ever that rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, was the will of God, concerning him.

Few there were in that large circuit but soon saw what spirit he was of. Many old Christians will confess to this day that when they have seen his pious behaviour in private, and heard his preaching in public, they have been made to blush before the Lord to see how far they were left behind by such a stripling. In this circuit he spent near six months with much satisfaction, rejoicing to see the work of God spreading amongst sinners and deepening in the hearts of his children.

At the last quarterly meeting he attended, the confidence he expressed in God exceeded anything that ever I heard drop from his lips till then. His words seemed like fire that flowed from a heart glowing with the love of Jesus, and ran through many a happy soul then present. Here he declared that the Lord had taken away every doubt of his being perfect in love, and had given him that confidence which was stronger than death, and all the powers of darkness. He well knew the blessedness of being with those who had experienced a deliverance from indwelling sin, and who are daily pressing after a growth in every grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he would fain have continued where he was a little longer, but as that did not seem convenient, he had not the least objection to go to any place where God in his providence should appoint him. I have seen but few, in their first setting out, who appeared more devoted to the work than he was. His soul never said, 'It is enough.' The more he received, the more he wished

for; and the more Christ's gospel spread, the more he prayed it might spread, believing that Christ tasted death for every man, and that everyone might come to God and be eternally saved.

Thursday, the 11th of November, 1779, he was taken ill of an ague. On the Sunday following, he was at a funeral sermon preached over one that died in the Lord. He exhorted at the grave, but complained of being much out of order, so that it was with some difficulty he spoke. He told the people he could view himself as dead and lying in his grave, and his soul taking its flight into eternity. On Monday he rose early, complained of being much out of order, but happy in his soul. He rode home to his father's, though with some difficulty. As he had been absent from his relations for a considerable time, he felt his heart filled with gratitude to his Maker, who had still preserved them in being and had not suffered them to depart wickedly from the ways of God.

Tuesday, the 16th, he seemed much concerned on account of his brothers and sisters, who were still in an unconverted state; and who, if dying in that state, he knew must eternally perish.

Wednesday he still seemed to retain his usual composure of mind, and was very earnest with the Lord in private. He rode out a little, but in the afternoon was much out of order. There being a prayer meeting hard by, he was so much out of order that he felt a struggle whether it would be prudent for him to go or not. But after pausing awhile, he said, perhaps it may be the last time. So he went, to the joy of his brethren, who received him gladly. After he and several others had prayed, he gave an exhortation, in which he begged of all that knew the pardoning love of God not to cease crying to God till they knew he had blest them with that love which casts out slavish fear; that they might be enabled to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks; assuring them that this was the will of God concerning them. He then warned sinners to flee from the wrath to come. O how did he plead with them to escape for their lives! assuring them that the arms of the bleeding Jesus were extended to receive them.

Thursday the 18th he went to prayer with the family, but was not able to sit up much. Friday and Saturday his disorder seemed to increase, and he appeared not insensible of the great need of being always ready.

Sunday the 21st he came downstairs, sung and prayed with the family with a considerable degree of warmth, intending to preach in the evening, but was not able. At night several of the friends came to see him, to some of whom he said that for the last six months he had enjoyed more of the life of God than he could express with his lips.

Monday and Tuesday, talking with one of his sisters, he related to her some sore conflicts of soul he had had since his illness, the enemy of souls thrusting sore at him. But the Lord so bruised Satan under his feet as not to suffer him to give place to the accuser of the brethren; no, not for a moment.

Wednesday the 24th, the class meeting at night where he was, several of the friends asked him how he was. He replied, poorly in body, but blessed God, that he felt the fullness of love in his soul.

Thursday the 25th he was confined entirely to his bed. One of the friends conversing with him on the goodness of God, he said, 'I trust I shall be more than a conqueror through Jesus'.² Being very ill all night, he said in the morning, 'I thought I should have died; and I trust, if I had, that angels would have conveyed my soul away.'

Friday the 26th he said but little, unless when spoken to; but frequently groaned, saying, 'O my Lord'!

Saturday the 27th his sickness seemed unto death. He said to his mother, 'I want that my whole heart may be love.' In the afternoon, seeing an old woman in the room, he exhorted her to seek the Lord, telling her that eternity was at hand. At night, seeing some smile, he said, 'Take care; Satan is always near.' At family prayer his voice was heard above the rest in singing the praises of God.

On Sunday, November 28th, he put up his hands and blessed God for bringing him to see the light of another day. A little after, he said, "'The tall, the wise, the reverend head, must lie as low as ours.'"³ So I often told sinners' (meaning, in his preaching). At night many of his Christian friends came to see him. He knew them perfectly well, and rejoiced to see them once more in the land of the living. One

²Cf. Rom. 8:37.

³Isaa Watts, 'A Funeral Thought', st. 2, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, Bk. II, #63.

of them said, 'I hope you are not afraid to die.' He answered, 'No; blessed be God, if I know anything of my heart, I am not! I trust ere long to be gathered into Abraham's bosom.'

After prayers on Monday morning, he asked for his Bible, and soon after asked what text he should speak from. He then laid down many weighty reasons why sinners should seek the Lord in earnest, telling them they must shortly stand before the tribunal of Christ, and what the consequence will be if they should be unprepared. He spoke for the space of eight or nine minutes, as sensibly and as much to the purpose as ever I heard him when in health. Before he had done, the greater part of the family was gathered around his bed, to hear the awful truths that dropped from his lips. He concluded by praying that he and his hearers might be prepared for the solemn hour. And two or three times that day he acted in the same manner. Being asked if he was not very ill, he said, 'I cannot tell how I feel.'

On Tuesday morning he returned thanks to God for preserving him the night past, and asked his sister to pray with him. She gave out,

Corruption, earth and worms,
Shall but refine this flesh;
Till my triumphant spirit comes,
To put it on afresh. ...⁴

He sang aloud, and with great devotion. And while she was praying, he frequently cried, 'Amen'! with a tone and solemnity that bespoke the happy state of his soul. His mother asked him if he was not very ill. He replied, 'I do not feel much pain or sickness, For it seems as if the Lord bore all my afflictions for me.'

Soon after, he looked up in his sister's face and said, 'Sister, help me to sing.' She told him she was afraid it would hurt his throat, which was very bad during his whole illness. This circumstance made it appear the more admirable to hear him speak, pray, and sing as he did. Though it seemed difficult at times for him to swallow a drop of water! And even when light-headed, his discourse was chiefly about having his clothes and horse brought, that he might go to preach.

At night he gave an affectionate exhortation, which caused those who sat by to weep. He then repeated, 'For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.'⁵

On Wednesday, December 1st, after praying in his bed, as if in family prayer, he said, 'Such a light shone around me, I thought I was out of doors. And at the same time I felt so happy that I thought the Lord was going to take me away that moment.' As one of the friends was going home, he took her by the hand and said, 'Farewell, sister! Remember me. Be engaged for your own soul. So that if we never meet here again, we may meet before the dazzling throne, to praise God and the Lamb forever and ever.' Another inquiring how he was, he said, 'I bless God for the measure of health I enjoy.' At night he sung:

Ashamed I sigh, and inly mourn;
That I so late to thee did turn.⁶

Then [he] added, 'I cannot tell half the happiness I have had, since I have been lying here.'

On Thursday, he seemed considerably worse, and sighed as though he knew what he had to go through; but said with great composure of mind, 'I do not value it. I know that I love Jesus:'

⁴Isaac Watts, 'Triumph Over Death', st. 2, *CPH* (1737), 25.

⁵Cf. 2 Cor. 4:17–18.

⁶Johann Scheffler, 'Gratitude for Our Conversion', st. 2, in *HSP* (1739), 198.

Jesus the name that charms my fears,
That bids my sorrows cease,
'Tis music in the sinner's ears;
'Tis life, and health, and peace.⁷

Being desirous to comfort his mother, as well as to encourage her in bearing the loss of him, he said, 'God will be better to you than sons and daughters.' At night, after asking what night of the week it was, he said, 'This night three weeks, and about this hour, I was taken ill. And this night I expect to die. But what a blessing to die without one fear of hell!'

On Friday his feet were cold, and he appeared to have all the symptoms of death upon him. The family standing round him, expected every breath to be his last. Four or five friends then went to prayer. And although they expected him to take his everlasting flight from this vale of tears and misery before they rose from their knee, yet he continued to say 'Amen' to the last. One who had been sitting up with him, came to take her leave of him. He asked her, 'Do you know that God for Christ's sake had blotted out your sins?' She told him she hoped so. He then said, 'Do not deceive your soul, but cry to God till you know it.' To another he said, 'Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.'⁸ When he was asked if he knew a religious Negro who was come to see him, he said 'Yes, and I trust I shall know him in Abraham's bosom.' His sister then asked him if he believed he was dying? He said, 'I do not know.' On her asking him if he had a greater desire to live than to die, he said, 'I am so happy at times that I think I had rather die.' He then added, 'But are you willing to part with me?' His mother said, 'I trust God will make us willing.' As his little brother stood by, weeping, he looked at him and said, 'I do not know but you will be the next that will follow me, and you are not prepared. Therefore pray to God. Say, Lord have mercy upon me, a poor, young stripling! Save me from lightness and laughter here, and bring me to reign with thee in glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord!' When he was asked again if he was willing to die, he said, 'I have no will in it. The will of the Lord be done.' His sister said, 'I hope my dear, you see now that you have not followed a cunningly-devised fable?' He said, 'Yes, I see it. But the devil would once have persuaded me that I had deceived myself. But since then I have been so happy that all the devils in hell could not make me doubt.'

Mrs. B—n coming to his bedside said, 'I trust, my dear, you are going to your promised rest!' He said, 'Yes, glory be to God! And do you make haste, and live to God. For the widow and fatherless shall not be forgotten before the Most High.' Observing a young woman to sit weeping, he fixed his eyes upon her; and when she was called to the bedside, he said, 'Be not frightened. But seek the faith that sweetly works by love, and purifies the heart.' His father asking him if he knew him, he said, 'Yes'; and putting his arms round his neck, kissed him and said, 'Live near to God.' He also kissed his mother and said, 'Farewell mother! Ere long we shall meet, to part no more.' While he lay still they could see his lips move, but could not understand much that he said. Sometimes he said, 'Come, Lord!' Sometimes, 'Welcome!' At others, 'Hallelujah!' (which some took for huzza). All who were present allowed that his triumphs exceeded everything of the kind they ever heard before, and that they could not have had any tolerable idea of them by any description drawn by the pen of man. And I believe saints and sinners formed many resolutions to seek God more earnestly than ever. At last, with his soul lifted up to God in praises rather than prayer, he resigned it up to him, without a sigh or groan, on the 3rd day of December, 1779; being twenty years, four months, and ten days old—having experienced the love of God about three years and nine months; and having preached the gospel of Christ about three quarters of a year.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 83–85, 138–43, 190–94.⁹

⁷CW, 'For the Anniversary Day of One's Conversion', st. 9, 121; likely taken from shortened form beginning 'O for a Thousand Tongues' published in *Hymns and Sacred Songs* (1753).

⁸Cf. Isa. 55:6.

⁹A much revised version of this account appears in Jackson, *EMP*, 6:273–82.

From John Haime (autobiography)

c. January 1780

1. I was born at Shaftesbury, Dorsetshire, in 1710. My father followed gardening, and brought me up to the same employment for several years. But I did not like it, and longed for some business that would allow me more liberty. In the meantime I was very undutiful to my parents, and much given to cursing, swearing, lying, and Sabbath-breaking. But I was not easy in this way, being often afraid that the devil would carry me away.

2. I was then placed with my uncle to learn to make buttons. I liked this well at first, but was soon tired of it. However, I stayed out the year. But my uncle then removing to Blandford, I was out of business. I wrought in many places, but stayed in none, being like the troubled sea that cannot rest. After some time I went to my uncle at Blandford, and wrought with him about a quarter of a year. But still I found no satisfaction in anything, neither in working, eating, drinking, nor even in sleeping; though neither I myself nor any of my acquaintance could imagine what was the matter with me.

3. Some time after, as I was working alone, the devil broke in upon me with reasonings concerning the being of a God, till my senses were almost gone. He then so strongly tempted me to blaspheme God that I could not withstand. He then told me, 'Thou art inevitably damned.' And I readily believed him. For I thought, though I have not cursed God outwardly, yet he looketh to the heart. This consideration made me sink into despair, as a stone into the mighty waters.

4. I now began to wander about by the riverside, and through woods and solitary places, many times looking up to heaven with a heart ready to break, thinking I had no part there. I thought everyone happy but myself; the devil continually telling me there was no mercy for me. Yet I thought it was hard, to be banished forever from the presence of a merciful God. I cried to him for help, but I found no relief. It seemed to be all in vain. So I said, like the men of Judah, 'There is no hope'.¹⁰ And then gave the reins to my evil desires, not caring which end went foremost, but giving myself up again to wicked company and all their evil ways.

5. If at any time I grew uneasy again, I stifled it by drinking, swearing, card-playing, lewdness, and the like works of darkness, which I then pursued with all greediness. And I was hastening on when the great, tremendous God met me as a lion in the way, and his Holy Spirit, whom I had been so long grieving, returned with greater force than ever. I had no rest day or night. I was afraid to go to bed, lest the devil should fetch me away before morning. I was afraid to shut my eyes, lest I should awake in hell. I was terrified when asleep. Sometimes dreaming that many devils were in the room, ready to take me away; sometimes that the world was at an end, and I was not ready to appear before the Judge of quick and dead. At other times I thought I saw the world on fire, and the wicked left to burn therein, with myself among them, and when I awoke my senses were almost gone.

6. I was often on the point of destroying myself, and was stopped I know not how. Then did I weep bitterly. I moaned like a dove. I chattered like a swallow. But I thought, though my anguish is very great, it is not like those who are lifting up their eyes in torments. Then, for a few moments, I felt thankfulness to God. But still the thoughts of death and judgment followed me close for upwards of two years, till all my bodily strength was gone. Returning home one day, and sitting down in a chair, my mother observing my pale look and low voice, asked, 'What is the matter with you?' But I durst not tell her, so I turned it off.

7. One night, as I was going to bed, I durst not lie down without prayer. So falling upon my knees, I began to consider, 'What can I pray for?' I have neither the will nor the power to do anything good. Then it darted into my mind, 'I will not pray. Neither will I be beholden to God for mercy.' I arose from my knees, without prayer; and laid me down; but not in peace. I never had such a night before. I was as if my very body had been in a fire, and I had a hell in my conscience. I was thoroughly persuaded the devil was in the room. And I fully expected every moment that he would be let loose upon me. I judged

¹⁰Jer. 18:12.

myself to be one of the worst creatures that God ever made. I thought I had sinned beyond the reach of mercy. Yet all this time I kept to the church, though I was often afraid to go, lest the church or the tower should fall upon me.

8. In spring I was employed by a tanner, to go with his carriage and fetch dried bark. As I was returning by myself, I was violently tempted to blaspheme; yea, and hate God. Till at length, having a stick in my hand, I threw it towards heaven against God, with the utmost enmity. Immediately I saw in the clear element a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black, part brown. It flew at me, and went just over my head. Then it went about forty yards, lighted on the ground and stood staring upon me. This was in a clear day, about twelve o'clock. I strove to pray, but I could not. At length God opened my mouth. I hastened home, praying all the way, and earnestly resolving to sin no more. But I soon forgot my resolution, and multiplied my sins, as the sands on the seashore.

9. To complete all, I enlisted myself a soldier, in the Queen's regiment of dragoons. When we marched for Gloucester, on Christmas day in the morning, 1739, the thoughts of parting with all my friends, my wife, and children, were ready to break my heart. My sins likewise came all to my remembrance, and my troubles increased night and day. Nevertheless, when I came acquainted with my comrades, I soon returned as a dog to the vomit. Yet God soon renewed my good desires. I began to read, and pray, and go to church every day. But frequently I was so tempted there that it was as much as I could do to avoid blaspheming aloud. Satan suggested, 'Curse him, curse him!' perhaps an hundred times. My heart as often replied, 'No! No! No!' Then he suggested, 'Thou hast sinned against the Holy Ghost.' But I still cried unto God, though the deep waters flowed over me, and despair closed me in on every side.

10. Soon after we marched to camp at Kingsclere in Hampshire. Thence we removed to winter quarters at Farringdon. I was still deeply miserable through sin, but not conqueror over it. This was still my language,

Here I repent, and sin again:
Now I revive, and now am slain!
Slain with the same unhappy dart,
Which Oh! too often wounds my heart!¹¹

11. After this I quartered at Highworth in Wiltshire. Among many old books which were here I found one entitled *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.¹² I read it with the utmost attention, and found his case nearly resembled my own. Having soon after orders to march for Scotland, we marched the first day to Banbury, where I found again, in a bookseller's shop, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. I bought it and thought it the best book I ever saw, and again I felt some hope of mercy. In every town where we stayed, I went to church. But I did not hear what I wanted, 'Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!'¹³

12. Being come to Alnwick, Satan desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat. And the hand of the Lord came upon me with such weight as made me roar for very anguish of spirit. I could truly say, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me; the poison whereof drinketh up my spirits.'¹⁴ Many times I stopped in the street, afraid to go one step farther, lest I should step into hell. Then I cried unto the Lord and said, 'Why hast thou set me as a mark?'¹⁵ Let loose thy hand and cut me off,¹⁶ that I sin no more

¹¹John Austin, *Devotions in the Ancient Way of Offices*, 'Hymn for Sunday Compline', st. 2.

¹²By John Bunyan.

¹³John 1:29.

¹⁴Cf. Job 6:4.

¹⁵Cf. Job 7:20.

¹⁶See Job 6:9.

against thee.' I said, 'Is thy mercy clean gone forever?'¹⁷ And must I perish at the last? 'Save, Lord, or I perish!'¹⁸ But there was no answer. So all hope was cut off.

13. I now read, and fasted, and went to church, and prayed seven times a day. One day as I walked by the Tweed side, I cried out aloud, being all athirst for God, 'Oh that thou wouldst hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before thee!'¹⁹ The Lord heard. He sent a gracious answer. He lifted me up out of the dungeon. He took away all my sorrow and fear, and filled my soul with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The stream glided sweetly along, and all nature seemed to rejoice with me. I was truly free; and had I had any to guide me, I need never more have come into bondage. But I was so ignorant I thought I should know war no more. I began to be at ease in Sion, and forgot to watch and pray, till God laid his hand upon me again. I then again went mourning all the day long. Till one Sunday, as I was going to church, I stood still, like a condemned criminal before his judge and said, 'Lord what am I going to church for? I have nothing to bring or offer thee but sin and a deceitful heart.' I had no sooner spoke than my heart melted within me, and I cried earnestly to him for mercy. But suddenly something ran through my veins, cold as ice. I was afraid to stay, arose and left the room. But reflecting that God is above the devil, I went in again. I fell down before the Lord, with bitter cries and tears, till my strength failed me, and it was with difficulty I could walk out of the room.

14. The next morning as I was going to water my horse, just as²⁰ he entered the river, in a moment I felt the love of God flowing into my soul. Instantly all pain and sorrow fled away. No fear of hell or the devil was left; but love to God and all mankind now filled my ravished soul. As the people with whom I quartered had often the Bible and other good books in their hands, I told them what God had done for my soul. But they understood me not. However I doubted not but my comrade would rejoice with me, being counted a religious man. But I was disappointed again. His answer was, 'Take care; for Satan can transform himself into an angel of light.'²¹ Thus finding none who was able to give me any instruction or direction, I soon got into unprofitable reasonings, which damped my fervour, so that in a little time I was again in heaviness.

15. Soon after I was sent with the camp equipage to London. The next day I marched for Leith. I had scarce set out when God was pleased to reveal himself in a most comfortable manner to my soul. And my comfort increased all the day, so that I hardly knew how I went. We waited for the ship seven days. During this time I was off my watch again. So that before we sailed I was weak, and like another man. For two days we had pleasant weather. But on the third the wind suddenly rose, attended with furious rain. The seas frequently covered the ship, and in the midst of our distress, broke in the main hatches. I was not (as Jonah) 'asleep in the sides of the ship',²² but was just at my wits' end. I uttered a lifeless prayer with many tears, expecting every moment the sea to be my grave. I was grieved that I had so abused the goodness of God, and troubled beyond expression. The storm lasted two days and two nights. Then God was pleased to still the winds and seas.

16. At our arrival in London I was somewhat refreshed in spirit, being truly thankful that I was out of hell. But I was soon in the depth of despair again, afraid of dropping into hell every moment. Soon after I went to hear Mr. [John] Cennick (then one of Mr. [George] Whitefield's preachers) at Deptford. Coming back, I told him the distress of my soul. He said, 'The work of the devil is upon you,' and rode away! It was of the tender mercies of God that I did not put an end to my life. I cried, O 'Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear!'

¹⁷Ps. 77:8.

¹⁸Matt. 8:25.

¹⁹Cf. Ps. 102:1.

²⁰Orig., 'has'; a misprint.

²¹Cf. 2 Cor. 11:14.

²²Cf. Jon. 1:5.

17. Yet I thought, if I must be damned myself, I will do what I can that others may be saved. So I began to reprove open sin, whenever I saw or heard it, and to warn the ungodly that if they did not repent they would surely perish. But if I found any that were weary and heavy-laden, I told them to wait upon the Lord, and he would renew their strength. Yet I found no strength myself, till reading one day in what manner God manifested himself to Mr. Cennick.²³ I cried out, 'Lord, if there be any mercy for *me*, reveal it to me!' I was answered by so strong an impression on my heart as left me without a doubt, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.'²⁴ Immediately my soul melted within me, and I was filled with joy unspeakable.

18. Having joined my regiment again, we marched to Colchester. Here I found much peace and communion with God, which humbled me to the dust. Our next remove was to Brentford, where I had the happiness of hearing Mr. Charles Wesley preach. When the service was over, I had a great desire of speaking to him, but knew not how to be so bold. Yet taking courage, I ventured to tell him my situation of mind. He gave me much encouragement, and bid me go on and not fear, neither be dismayed at any temptation. His words sunk deep, and were a great blessing to me for several years after.

19. Soon after we had an order to march for Flanders. This threw me into fresh reasoning. The thought of leaving my country, and the dangers ensuing by sea and by land, sat heavy upon my spirit. I soon lost my peace, nay, and my hope too. I know I had 'tasted of the good word, and of the powers of the world to come'.²⁵ Yet this gave me no comfort. Nay, it aggravated my sorrow to think of losing all that God had done for me. But the more I struggled, the deeper I sunk, till I was quite swallowed up of sorrow. And though I called upon God, yea, with strong cries and tears, yet for a long time I had no comfortable answer.

20. For a long time I was so dejected and confused, that I had no heart to keep a regular account of anything. In this state I was, when we embarked for Flanders in June 1742, and as long as we stayed there. It was on February the 18th, 1743, that we began our march from Ghent to Germany. When I came to my quarters, my heart was ready to break, thinking I was upon the very brink of hell. We halted six days, and then marched again. The day following, as soon as I had mounted my horse, the love of God was shed abroad in my heart. I knew God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven all my sins, and felt 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'.²⁶ This I enjoyed about three weeks, but then lost it by grieving the Holy Spirit of God. I then walked about, much cast down, and knew not what to do. But April 22 the Lord showed me that I did not live as became the gospel of Christ. I was greatly ashamed before God. In the evening as I was walking in the fields with an heavy heart, I prayed earnestly to God that he would smite the rock, and cause the waters to flow. He answered my prayer. My head was as waters, and my eyes as a fountain of tears. I wept. I sung. I had such a sense of the love of God, as surpasses all description. Well might Solomon say, 'Love is strong as death.'²⁷ Now I saw I had 'a right to the tree of life',²⁸ and knew if I then put off the body I should enter into life eternal.

21. Feeling I wanted help both from God and man, I wrote to Mr. [John] Wesley, who sent me a speedy answer as follows:

It is a great blessing whereof God has already made you a partaker. But if you continue waiting upon him, you shall see greater things than these. This is only the beginning of the kingdom of heaven which he will set up in your heart. There is yet behind, the fullness of the

²³John Cennick prefaced *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God* (London: B. Milles, 1741) with his spiritual autobiography.

²⁴Jer. 31:3.

²⁵Cf. Heb. 6:5.

²⁶2 Cor. 3:17.

²⁷Song of Sol. 8:6.

²⁸Cf. Rev. 22:14.

mind that was in Christ, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is but a little thing that men should be against you, while you know God is on your side. If he gives you any companion in the narrow way it is well. And it is well if he does not. So much the more will he teach, and strengthen you by himself. He will instruct you in the secret of your heart. And by and by, he will raise up, as it were, out of the dust, those who shall say, 'Come and let us magnify his name together.'²⁹ But by all means miss no opportunity. Speak and spare not; declare what God has done for your soul: regard not worldly prudence. Be not ashamed of Christ, or of his word, or of his work, or of his servants. Speak the truth in love, even in the midst of a crooked generation; and all things shall work together for good, until the work of God is perfect in your soul.³⁰

22. We now marched on through a pleasant country, and my soul was full of peace. I did speak, and not spare, with little interruption. Only at one time, when I was speaking of the goodness of God, one of our officers (and one that was accounted a very religious man!) told me I 'deserved to be cut in pieces, and to be given to the devil'. But I was enabled (blessed be God!) to love, pity, and pray for him.

23. After a long and tiresome march, we arrived at Dettingen. Here we lay in camp for some time, very near the French: only the river Mayne ran between us. June 16, I was ordered out on the grand guard with all expedition. When we came to the place appointed, I saw many of the French army marching on the other side the river. It was not long before I heard the report of a French cannon. I said, 'We shall have a battle today.' But my comrades did not believe me. Presently I heard another, and then a third. The ball came along by us. Many of the French had crossed the river, and many more were in full march toward it. We had orders to return with all speed. The firing increased very fast, and several were killed or wounded—some by the cannonballs, some by the limbs of the trees which the balls cut off. Meantime we marched on one side of the river; part of the French army on the other. The battle was soon joined with small arms, as well as cannon, on both sides. It was very bloody. Thousands on each side were sent to their long home. I had no sooner joined the regiment than my left-hand man was shot dead. I cried to God and said, 'In thee have I trusted! Let me never be confounded!'³¹ My heart was filled with love, peace, and joy, more than tongue can express. I was in a new world! I could truly say, 'Unto you that believe he is precious.'³² I stood the fire of the enemy seven hours. And when the battle was over, I was sent out with a party of men to find the baggage wagons, but returned without success. In the meanwhile the army was gone and I knew not which way. I went to the field where the battle was fought, but such a scene of human misery did I never behold! It was enough to melt the most obdurate heart. I knew not now which way to take, being afraid of falling into the hands of the enemy. But as it began to rain hard, I set out, though not knowing where to go. Till hearing the beat of the drum, I went toward it, and soon rejoined the army. But I could not find the tent which I belonged to, nor persuade them to take me in at any other. So being very wet and much fatigued, I wrapped me up in my cloak, and lay down and fell asleep. And though it still rained hard upon me, and the water ran under me, I had as sweet a night's rest as ever in my life.

24. We had now to return from Germany to Flanders, to take up our winter quarters. In our march we were some time near the river Mayne, twenty miles from the field of battle. We saw the dead men lie in the river, and on the bank 'as dung for the earth'.³³ Many of the French, attempting to pass the river after we had broken down the bridge, were drowned, and many cast upon the banks where there was none to bury them.

²⁹Cf. Ps. 34:3.

³⁰This is the only surviving record of this letter.

³¹Cf. Ps. 22:5.

³²Cf. 1 Pet. 2:7.

³³Ps. 83:10.

25. Being in Ghent, I went one Sunday morning to the English church at the usual time. But neither minister nor people came. As I was walking in the church, two men belonging to the train came in, John Evans and Pitman Stag. One of them said, 'The people are long in coming.' I said, 'Yet they think, however they live, of going to heaven when they die. But most of them, I fear, will be sadly disappointed.' They stared at me, and asked me what I meant? I told them, 'Nothing unholy can dwell with a holy God.' We had a little more talk, and appointed to meet in the evening. I found John Evans a strict Pharisee, 'doing justly', and 'loving mercy', but knowing nothing of 'walking humbly with his God'.³⁴ But the cry of Pitman Stag was, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'³⁵ We took a room without delay, and met every night, to pray and read the holy Scriptures. In a little time we were as speckled birds, as 'men wondered at'.³⁶ But some began to listen under the window, and soon after desired to meet with us. Our meetings were soon sweeter than our food, and I found therein such an enlargement of soul, and such an increase in spiritual knowledge, that I resolved to go, come life, come death.

26. We had now twelve joined together, several of whom had already found peace with God. The others were earnestly following after it, and it was not long before they attained. Hereby new love and zeal were kindled in us all. And although Satan assaulted us various ways, yet were we enabled to discern all his wiles, and to withstand all his power. Several of them are now safely landed on the blissful shore of a glorious immortality—where, as a weather-beaten bark, worn out with storms, may I at last happily arrive, and find the children whom God has been graciously pleased to give me through the word of his power.

27. One night after our meeting I told the people we should have the room full before we left the city. We soon increased to about twenty members. And love increased so that shame and fear vanished away. Our singing was heard afar off, and we regarded not those who made no account of our labours. Such was the increase of our faith, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost that we had no barren meetings. Such our love to each other that even the sight of each other filled our hearts with divine consolation. And as love increased among us, so did convictions among others; and in a little time we had a society. So that now (as I had told them before) the room was too small to hold the people.

28. May 1, 1744, we marched from Ghent and encamped near Brussels. Our camp lay on the side of a hill. We set up our standing on a hill just opposite. We were easily heard by the soldiers in the camp, who soon began to 'fly as a cloud' and 'as doves to their windows'.³⁷ Here I gathered together my scattered sheep and lambs. They were the joy of my heart, and I trust to find them again among that 'great multitude that no man can number'.³⁸ Oh what a work did God put into my hands! And who is sufficient for these things? But God had given me such faith that had I continued steadfast in the grace of God, neither things present, nor things to come, nor any creature could have hindered my growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, unto my dying hour.

29. I took great delight in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. I read it over and over, and prayed much for faith. This was first in the day, and last at night in my mind. And I had no more doubt of the promises contained therein than if God had called to me from heaven, and said, 'This is my word, and it shall stand forever.'³⁹ When I began preaching, I did not understand one text in the Bible, so as to speak from it in (what is called) a regular manner, yet I never wanted either matter or words. So hath God in all ages, 'chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty'.⁴⁰ I usually had a thousand hearers, officers, common soldiers and others. Was there ever so great a work before, in so

³⁴Cf. Mic. 6:8.

³⁵Luke 18:13.

³⁶Zech. 3:8.

³⁷Cf. Isa. 60:8.

³⁸Cf. Rev. 7:9.

³⁹Cf. Isa. 40:8.

⁴⁰Cf. 1 Cor. 1:27.

abandoned an army! But we can only say, there is nothing too hard for God! He worketh what, and by whom he pleaseth.

30. I was now put to a stand. I had so much duty to do, the society to take care of, and to preach four or five times a day, that it was more than I could well perform. But God soon took care for this also. I looked for no favour from man. I wanted nothing from man. I feared nothing. God so increased my love and zeal. Light and heat filled my soul, and it was my meat and drink to do the will of my heavenly Father. I cried earnestly to him, to clear my way and remove all hindrances. Glory be to his name, he did so. For two years after this time I was entirely at my liberty. I found means of hiring others to do my duty, which proved an unspeakable advantage. The work was great before, but we soon found a greater increase of it than ever. If Christianity consists in love and obedience to God, and love to all men, friends and enemies, we had now got a Christian society. We had the good land in possession. But this was not enough. Still there was as earnest a cry in our souls for all the mind which was in Christ, as there was in David for 'the water of the well of Bethlehem'.⁴¹

31. Our general method was, as soon as we were settled in any camp, to build a tabernacle, containing two, three, or four rooms, as we saw convenient. One day three officers came to see our chapel, as they called it. They asked many questions. One in particular asked me what I preached? I answered, 'I preach against swearing, whoring and drunkenness; and exhort men to repent of all their sins, that they may not perish.' He began swearing horribly, and said, if it was in his power he would have me whipped to death. I told him, 'Sir, you have a commission over men. But I have a commission from God to tell you, you must either repent of your sins or perish everlastingly.' He went away, and I went on, being never better than when I was preaching or at prayer. For the Lord gave such a blessing to his word that I thought every discourse lost under which no one was either convinced or converted to God.

32. We had now three hundred in the society, and six preachers besides myself. It was therefore no wonder that many of the officers and chaplains endeavoured to stop the work. But it was altogether lost labour. He that sitteth in heaven laughed them to scorn. And I doubt not but he would have given me strength to have suffered death, rather than have given them up.

33. It was reported by many that I was utterly distracted. Others endeavoured to incense the field marshal against me. I was examined several times. But, blessed be God, he 'stood by me',⁴² and encouraged me to go on, to 'speak' and 'not hold my peace'.⁴³ Neither did he suffer 'any man to set upon me to hurt me'.⁴⁴ And so great was my love and joy in believing that it carried me above all those things which would otherwise have been grievous to flesh and blood, so that all was pleasant to me:

The winter's night, and summer's day,
Fled imperceptibly away.⁴⁵

[34.⁴⁶] I frequently walked between twenty and thirty miles a day; and preached five-and-thirty times in the space of seven days. So great was my love to God, and to the souls which he hath purchased with his own blood. Many times I have forgotten to take any refreshment for ten hours together. I had at this time three armies against me: the French army, the wicked English army, and an army of devils. But I feared them not, for my 'life' was 'hid with Christ in God'.⁴⁷ He supported me through all, and I trust will be my God and my guide even unto death.

⁴¹2 Sam. 23:15; 1 Chron. 11:17.

⁴²Cf. Acts 27:23.

⁴³Cf. Job 13:13.

⁴⁴Cf. Acts 18:10.

⁴⁵Cf. CW, 'Hymns for the Watchnight, XIII', st. 3, *HSP* (1749), 2:136.

⁴⁶This paragraph was unnumbered. Following paragraphs are renumbered accordingly.

⁴⁷Cf. Col. 3:3.

35. While the work of God thus flourished among the English, he visited also the Hanoverian army. A few of them began to meet together, and their number daily increased. But they were quickly ordered to meet no more. They were very unwilling to desist. But some of them being severely punished, the rest did not dare to disobey. It is clear the devil and the world will suffer any man to be anything but a real Christian!

36. My present comrade was an extremely wicked man. He came home one day, cursing and swearing, that he had lost his money. He searched for it, and after some time found it. He threw it on the table and said, 'There is my ducat. But no thanks to God, any more than to the devil.' I wrote down the words, and complained to our commanding officer. After a few days he was tried by a court martial. The officer asked what I had to say against him? I gave him the words in writing. When he had read them, he asked me if I was not ashamed to take account of such matters as this? I answered, 'No sir. If I had heard such words spoken against His Majesty King George, would not you have counted me a villain if I had concealed them?' His mouth was stopped, and the man cried for pardon. The captain told him he was worthy of death, by the law of God and man; and asked me what I desired to have done. I answered I desired only to be parted from him, and I hoped he would repent. Orders were given that we should be parted. This also was matter of great thankfulness.

37. From camp we removed to our winter quarters at Bruges. Here we had a lively society. But our preaching room was far too small to contain the congregation. There was a very spacious place appointed for the public worship of our army, commonly called the English church. General Sinclair was now our commanding officer.⁴⁸ I went to his house and begged leave to speak to him. He told me if I had business with him I should have sent my captain, and not come to him myself. I told him I had the liberty of speaking to the Duke of Cumberland. He then asked me what I wanted. I said, 'Please your honour, I come to beg a great favour; that I may have the use of the English church to pray in, and exhort my comrades to flee from the wrath to come.' He was very angry, and told me I should not preach or pray anywhere but in the barracks. He asked, 'But how came *you* to preach.' I said, 'The Spirit of God constrains me to call my fellow sinners to repentance.' He said, 'Then you must restrain that Spirit.' I told him, 'I would die first.' He said, 'You are in *my* hand,' and turned away in a great rage.

38. I cried to the Lord for more faith, that I might never deny him, whatsoever I was called to suffer; but might own him before men and devils: and very soon after, God removed this hindrance out of the way: General Sinclair was removed from Bruges, and General Ponsonby took his place.⁴⁹ I went to his house, and was without difficulty admitted to his presence. Upon his asking what I wanted, I said, 'I come to beg your honour will grant us the use of the English church, that we may meet together and worship God.' He asked, 'What religion are you of?' I answered, 'Of the Church of England'. 'Then', said he, 'You shall have it.' I went to the clerk for the keys, but he said the chaplains forbade it, and I should not have them. The general then gave me an order under his hand. So they were delivered. I fixed up advertisements in several parts of the town: 'Preaching every day at two o'clock, in the English church.' And we had every day a numerous congregation, both of soldiers and townfolk.

39. We had some good singers among us, and one in particular who was a master of music. It pleased God to make this one great means of drawing many to hear his word. One Sunday, the clerk gave out a psalm. It was sung in a hymn tune, and sung so well that the officers and their wives were quite delighted with it. The society then agreed to go all together to church every Sunday. On the next Sunday we began. And when the clerk gave out the first line of the psalm, one of us set the tune, and the rest followed him. It was a resemblance of heaven upon earth. Such a company of Christian soldiers singing together, with the spirit and the understanding also, gave such life to the ordinance that none but the most vicious and abandoned could remain entirely unaffected.

40. The spring following, we took the field again. And on May 11, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith, at Fontenoy. Some days before one of our brethren standing at his tent door broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand. And when he went into the battle declared, 'I am going to rest

⁴⁸James St. Clair (1688–1762).

⁴⁹Henry Ponsonby (1685–1745).

in the bosom of Jesus.' Indeed this day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to show them his mighty power. They showed such courage and boldness in the fight as made the officers, as well as soldiers amazed. When wounded, some cried out, 'I am going to my beloved.' Others, 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.' And many that were not wounded earnestly desired to be dissolved and to be with Christ. When William Clements had his arm broke by a musket ball, they would have carried him out of the battle. But he said, 'No, I have an arm left to hold my sword. I will not go yet.' When a second shot broke his other arm he said, 'I am as happy as I can be out of paradise.' John Evans having both his legs taken off by a cannonball, was laid across a cannon to die—where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God and blessing him with joyful lips.

41. For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for about seven hours. But I told my comrades, 'The French have no ball made that will kill me this day.' After about seven hours, a cannonball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, 'Haime, where is your God now?' I answered, 'Sir, he is here with me, and he will bring me out of this battle.' Presently a cannonball took off his head. My horse fell upon me, and some cried out, 'Haime is gone!' But I replied, 'He is not gone yet.' I soon disengaged myself, and walked on praising God. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse; but that did not discourage me at all, for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. And all the way, multitudes lay bleeding, groaning, dying, or just dead. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace, but it did not singe a hair of my head. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me. I was as full of joy as I could contain. As I was quitting the field I met one of our brethren, with a little dish in his hand, seeking water. I did not know him at first, being covered with blood. He smiled and said, 'Brother Haime, I have got a sore wound.' I asked, 'Have you got Christ in your heart?' He said, 'I have. And I have had him all this day.' I have seen many good and glorious days, with much of the power of God. But I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all his mercies! Among the dead, there was great plenty of watches, and of gold and silver. One asked me, will not you get something? I answered, 'No, I have got Christ. I will have no plunder.'

42. But the greatest loss I sustained was that of my fellow labourers. William Clements was sent to the hospital. John Evans, brothers Bishop, and [John] Greenwood, were killed in the battle. Two others, who used to speak boldly, fell into antinomianism. So I was left alone. But I was persuaded this also was for my good. And seeing iniquity so much abound, and the love of many waxing cold, it added wings to my devotion. And my faith grew daily, as a tree planted by the waterside.

43. One of those antinomian preachers professed to be always happy, but was frequently drunk twice a day. One Sunday, when I was five or six miles off, he took an opportunity of venting his devilish opinions. One hasted after me, and begged me to return. I did so, but the mischief was done. He had convinced many that we have nothing to do with the law, either before or after our conversion. When I came in, the people looked greatly confused. I perceived there was a great rent in the society, and after preaching and prayer said, 'You that are for the old doctrine, which you have heard from the beginning, follow me.' Out of the three hundred I lost about fifty. But the Lord soon gave me fifty more. The two antinomians set up for themselves, until lying, drunkenness, and many other sins destroyed both preachers and people, all but a few that came back to their brethren.

44. We had no sacrament administered in the army for a long season. I was greatly troubled, and complained aloud in the open camp of the neglect. The chaplains were exceedingly displeased. But the Duke of Cumberland,⁵⁰ hearing of it, ordered that it should be administered every Lord's day to one regiment or the other.

45. The Duke, hearing many complaints of me, inquired: Who I was? If I did my duty? If I would fight? And if I prayed for a blessing on the King and his arms? They told his Royal Highness I did all this, as well as any man in the regiment. He asked, 'Then what have you to say against him?' They said, 'Why, he prays and preaches so much that there is no rest for him.' Afterwards the Duke talked with me

⁵⁰Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1721–65).

himself, and asked me many questions. He seemed so well satisfied with my answers that he bade me, 'Go on'. And gave out a general order that I might preach anywhere, and no man should molest me.

46. I was preaching one day when the Duke, unknown to me, came to hear me. I that day desired the soldiers never to come there, or to any place of public worship, so as to neglect any duty. I exhorted them to be ready at all calls, and to obey those who had the rule over them; and if called out to battle, to stand fast, yea if needful, fight up to the knees in blood. I said, 'You fight for a good cause, and for a good king, and in defence of your country. And this is no ways contrary to the tenderest conscience, as many of you found at the battle of Fontenoy, when both you and I did our duty, and yet were all the time filled with love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'

47. I had now for some years endeavoured to keep a conscience void of offence, toward God and toward man. And for near three years I had known that God for Christ's sake had forgiven all my sins. I had enjoyed the full assurance of faith, which made me rejoice in all condition. Wet and weary, cold and hungry, I was happy; finding a daily increase in faith and love. I had constant communion with the Father and the Son. It was my delight to do his blessed will, to do good to them that hated me, and to call all sinners to 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world'.⁵¹ But O 'how did the mighty fall, and the weapons of war perish!'⁵² April 6, 1746, I was off my watch, and fell by a grievous temptation. It came as quick as lightning. I knew not if I was in my senses, but I fell and the Spirit of God departed from me. It was a great mercy that I did not fall into hell! Blessed be God for that word, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.'⁵³ But it was twenty years before I found him to be an advocate for *me* with the Father again.

48. My fall was both gradual and instantaneous. I first grew negligent in watching and prayer, and in reading the Scriptures. I then indulged myself more and more, laying out upon my own appetite, what I before gave to my poor brethren. I next began to indulge the lust of the eyes, to look at and covet pleasing things, till by little and little I became shorn of my strength, 'having left my former love'.⁵⁴ For many years I had scrupled buying or selling the least thing on the Lord's day. The sixth of April was on a Sunday. That day I was sent to Antwerp for forage. Several of my comrades desired me to buy them some things, which accordingly I did. I had an inward check, but I overruled it, and quickly after became a prey to the enemy. Instantly my condemnation was so great that I was on the point of destroying myself. God restrained me from this, but Satan was let loose and followed me by day and by night. The agony of my mind weighed down my body, and threw me into a bloody flux. I was carried to a hospital, just dropping into hell. But the Lord upheld me with an unseen hand, quivering over the great gulf.

49. Before my fall, my sight was so strong that I could look steadfastly on the sun at noonday. But after it, I could not look a man in the face, nor bear to be in any company. Indeed I thought myself far more fit for the society of devils than of men. Everything was a burden to me, and grievous to be borne. The roads, the hedges, the trees, everything seemed cursed of God. Nature appeared void of God, and in the possession of the devil. The fowls of the air and the beasts of the field all appeared in a league against me. I had not one ray of hope, but a fearful looking for of fiery indignation. Very frequently Judas was represented to me, as hanging just before me. Had I been cut with knives from head to foot, I could not have been more sore in my flesh than I was in my spirit. How true is it, 'the spirit of a man may sustain his infirmities: but a wounded spirit who can bear?'⁵⁵

50. I clearly saw the unshaken faith, the peace, joy, and love which I had cast away; and felt the return of pride, anger, self-will, and every other devilish temper. And I knew by melancholy experience that my last state was worse than the first. I was one day drawn out into the woods, lamenting my forlorn

⁵¹John 1:29.

⁵²Cf. 2 Sam. 1:27.

⁵³1 John 2:1.

⁵⁴Cf. Rev. 2:4.

⁵⁵Cf. Prov. 18:14.

state, and on a sudden I began to weep bitterly. From weeping, I fell to howling like a wild beast, so that the woods resounded. Yet could I say, notwithstanding my bitter cry, 'My stroke is heavier than my groaning.'⁵⁶ Nevertheless, I could not say, 'Lord have mercy upon me,' if I could have purchased heaven thereby.

51. So great was the displeasure of God against me that he in great measure took away the sight of my eyes. I could not see the sun for more than eight months. Even in the clearest summer day it always appeared to me like a mass of blood. At the same time I lost the use of my knees. I cannot describe what I felt. I could truly say, 'Thou hast sent fire into my bones.'⁵⁷ I was often as hot as if I was burning to death. Many times I looked, to see if my clothes were not on fire. I have gone into a river to cool myself, but it was all the same. For what could quench the wrath of his indignation that was let loose upon me? At other times, in the midst of summer, I have been so cold that I knew not how to bear it. All the clothes I could put on had no effect, but my flesh shivered and my very bones quaked. God grant, reader, that thou and I may never feel how hot or cold it is in hell!

52. I was afraid to pray, for I thought the die was cast and my damnation sealed. So I thought it availed not, if all the saints upon earth and all the angels in heaven should intercede for me. I was angry at God, angry at myself, and angry at the devil. I thought I was possessed with more devils than Mary Magdalene. I cannot remember that I had one comfortable hope, for seven years together. Only while I was preaching to others, my distress was a little abated. But some may inquire, what could move me to preach while I was in such a forlorn condition? They must ask of God, for I cannot tell. *His* ways herein are past my finding out.

53. In all my trials I have, by the grace of God, invariably kept to one point, preaching 'repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ'.⁵⁸ Testifying that 'by grace ye are saved through faith',⁵⁹ that 'now is the day of salvation',⁶⁰ and that this salvation is for all. That Christ 'tasted death for everyone'.⁶¹ I always testified, that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord'.⁶² And that if any, though ever so holy, 'draw back',⁶³ they will perish everlastingly. I continually expected this would be my lot. Yet after some years I attempted again to pray. With this Satan was not well-pleased. For one day as I was walking alone, and faintly crying for mercy, suddenly such a hot blast of brimstone flashed in my face as almost took away my breath. And presently after, as I was walking along, an invisible power struck up my heels, and threw me violently upon my face.

54. When we came back to Holland, I had now and then a spark of hope. One Sunday I went to church, where the Lord's supper was to be administered. I had a great desire to partake of it. But the enemy came in like a flood to hinder me, pouring in temptations of every kind. I resisted him with my might, till through the agony of my mind the blood gushed out at my mouth and nose. However, I was enabled to conquer, and to partake of the blessed elements. So I still waited on God in the way of his judgments, and he led me in a way I had not known.

55. Whatever my inward distress was, I always endeavoured to appear free among the people. And it pleased God to make me fruitful in the land of my affliction. He gave me favour in their sight, and many children were born unto the Lord. Indeed, I could speak but very little Dutch, with regard to common things. But when we came to talk of the things of God, I could speak a great deal. And after I

⁵⁶Job 23:2.

⁵⁷Cf. Lam. 1:13.

⁵⁸Cf. Acts 20:21.

⁵⁹Cf. Eph. 2:8.

⁶⁰2 Cor. 6:2.

⁶¹Cf. Heb. 2:9.

⁶²Cf. Heb. 12:14.

⁶³Cf. Heb. 10:38–39.

had been at prayer, many have told me they could understand almost every word I said. But what was this to me? I was miserable still, having no comfortable sense of the presence and favour of God.

56. I had heard of an old, experienced Christian at Rotterdam. I went to see him, and found him in an upper room furnished like that which the Shunammite prepared for Elisha.⁶⁴ He looked at me, but did not speak one word. However I told him a little of my experience. He looked earnestly at me, and soon began to speak and tell me all his heart. He said, he had lived for several years in the favour and love of God, when thinking himself stronger than he was, Satan got an advantage over him. The Spirit departed from him. His strength was gone, and he knew not where to fly for refuge. For ten years sin held him in its iron bondage, and in inexpressible anguish and despair. But one day, as he was making his complaint to God, on a sudden light broke in. Sorrow fled away, and his soul was like the chariots of Amminadab.⁶⁵ The change was so great that he was utterly lost in wonder, love, and praise. He knew God had 'created a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him'.⁶⁶ And he had now lived thirty years without one doubt of what God had wrought. This gave me a considerable satisfaction. But it lasted only a short time.

57. When we were going, for winter quarters, into a town in Holland, I was sent thither before our troop. A gentleman sent for me, and asked if I knew John Haime. I said, 'I am the man.' He said, 'A gentlewoman in the town wants to speak with you.' I went to her house and she bade me welcome. After a little conversation she asked me, 'Do you believe that Christ died for all the world?' Upon my answering 'I do', she replied, 'I do not believe one word of it. But as you know he died for *you*, and I know he died for *me*, we will only talk of his love to poor sinners.' We were soon as well acquainted as if we had lived together many years, and her house became my home. I asked how many she had in family? She said seven beside herself. I asked, 'What is to become of all these, that you are so easy about them?' She said, 'The Lord will call them in his due time, if they belong to him.' I asked, 'Shall we pray for them?' She said, 'Yes.' So I began that evening. In a few days the servant maid was cut to the heart. Next one of her sons was convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. And before we left the town, the whole family were athirst for salvation. When the time of our marching drew near, she was in great trouble. But there was no help. So we took our leave of each other, to meet no more till the morning of the resurrection.

58. At another time I was quartered at Meerkerk, in Holland, at a young woman's whose father and mother were lately dead. She had many cattle, some of which died daily of the distemper. But she never murmured. I never before met with a woman that was so ready in the Scriptures; I could not mention any text, but she would readily tell the meaning of it. So that it was no wonder she was thought by others, as well as by herself, to be a prime Christian. I was almost of the same mind at first. But when I had narrowly observed her, I was thoroughly convinced she was deceived, and judged it my duty to undeceive her. I told her, 'You are not born of God, you have not living faith.' She heard me with much composure of mind, but she did not believe me. I continued for three weeks pressing it upon her, at all opportunities. And one evening the Lord made a few words which I spoke sharper than a two-edged sword. Conviction so fastened upon her heart that she was soon obliged to take her bed. She lay about seven days in deep distress. She had then a comfortable hope. And this strengthened her body for a few days. But then her convictions returned so heavy that she was obliged to take her bed again, in great agony of mind. The townspeople were alarmed, and ran in crowds to inquire what was the matter. 'What could distress *her*, who had enough of this world's wealth, and was so good a woman?' But they gave her no satisfaction. As soon as they were gone, she immediately called for *me*, and cried out, 'Oh John! I shall go to hell. The devil will carry me away.' I said, 'No! You shall not go to hell! The Lord died for poor sinners.' She lay in this distress about ten days, and was brought to the gates of death. But the Good Samaritan then passed by, poured wine and oil into her wounds, and healed both soul and body. So that

⁶⁴See 2 Kings 4.

⁶⁵See Song of Sol. 6:12.

⁶⁶Cf. Ps. 51:10.

she broke out, 'Jehovah is my strength and my song. He is my salvation!⁶⁷ Come all that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul.'⁶⁸

59. I now thought it would be a blessing both to herself and her neighbours if she would pray with them. She agreed so to do. I commonly prayed first, and she afterwards. Sometimes she prayed half an hour together, and often with such demonstration of the Spirit, as well as such understanding, that the whole house seemed full of the presence of the Lord. At other times she wept like a child, and said, 'Lord what is this that thou hast done? Thou hast sent a man from another nation, as an instrument of saving me from ruin! I was rich before, and increased in goods, and knew not that I was blind and naked.' Many of her friends and neighbours were concerned for her. But not so much as she was concerned for *them*, as well-knowing they were seeking death in the error of their life. This she declared to them without reserve. And the publishing this strange doctrine spread our names far and near, not only through the town but through the adjacent country. This brought many from distant towns to see her, who usually returned blessing God for the consolation. Some came upwards of twenty miles in a morning. After breakfast, I used to pray first, and she went on. Many of our visitants were much affected and wept bitterly. And the impression did not soon wear off. By this means we became much acquainted with many of the Christians in Holland. They were a free-loving people. So we found them, and so did many of the Methodist soldiers. For they gave them houseroom and firing freely. And is not the promise of our Lord sure? 'Whosoever shall give unto one of these a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward.'⁶⁹

60. All this time I was still buffeted with sore temptations. I thought that I was worse than Cain; that I had 'crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame'.⁷⁰ In rough weather it was often suggested to me, 'This is on *your* account! See, the earth is cursed for *your* sake. And it will be no better till you are in hell.' I expected soon to be a prey for devils, as I was driven from all the happiness I once enjoyed. Frequently the trouble of my mind made me so weak in body that it was with the greatest difficulty I performed my exercise. The Lord had indeed given me 'a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And my life did hang in doubt before me, and I feared day and night, having no assurance of my life.'⁷¹ Often did I wish I had never been converted; often, that I had never been born. Sometimes I could not bear the sight of a good man without pain, much less be in his company. Yet I preached every day, and endeavoured to appear open and free to my brethren. I encouraged them that were tempted, 'Not to fear. The Lord would soon appear for himself.' Meantime I continued to thunder out the terrors of the law against the ungodly: although some said I was *too positive*. Too positive! What? In declaring the promises and threatenings of God? Nay, if I cannot be sure of these, I will say to the Bible, as the devil did to our Lord, 'What have I to do with thee?'

61. At one time I cannot remember that I had any particular temptation for some weeks. Now, I thought, God had forsaken me and the devil had no need to trouble himself about me. He then set the case of Francis Spira before me, so that I sunk into black despair.⁷² Everything seemed to make against me. I could not open the Bible anywhere but it condemned me. I was much distressed with dreams and visions of the night. I dreamed one night that I was in hell. Another, that I was on Mount Etna—that on a sudden, it shook and trembled exceedingly; and that at last, it split asunder in several places and sunk into the

⁶⁷Cf. Isa. 12:2.

⁶⁸Cf. Ps. 66:16.

⁶⁹Cf. Matt. 10:42.

⁷⁰Cf. Heb. 6:6.

⁷¹Cf. Deut. 28:65–66.

⁷²Refers to an account of an Italian Protestant who recanted his faith, and then died in despair; as told in Nathaniel Bacon, *A Relation of the Fearful Estate of Francis Spira, in the year 1548*. (London: Legat, 1638).

burning lake, all but that little spot on which I stood. Oh how thankful was I for my preservation! And this continued for awhile, even after I awoke. But then it fled away, as a dream.

62. I was often violently tempted to curse, and swear, and blaspheme, before, and after, and even while I was preaching. Sometimes when I was in the midst of the congregation, I could hardly refrain from laughing aloud; yea, from uttering all kinds of ribaldry and filthy conversation. I thought there was none that loved me now, none that had any concern for my soul, but that God had taken away from everybody the affection which they once had. I cried out, 'I have sinned! What shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?'⁷³ I said, 'I am the man that hath seen affliction, by the rod of his wrath.'⁷⁴ Frequently as I was going to preach, the devil has set upon me as a lion, telling me he would have me just then, so that it has thrown me into a cold sweat. In this agony I have caught hold of the Bible and read, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.'⁷⁵ I have said to the enemy, 'This is the word of God, and thou canst not deny it.' Hereat he would be like a man that shrunk back from the thrust of a sword. But he would be at me again. I again met him in the same way, till at last (blessed be God!) he fled from me. And even in the midst of his sharpest assaults, God gave me just strength enough to bear them. He fulfilled his word, 'My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in *thy* weakness.'⁷⁶ When he has strongly suggested, just as I was going to preach, 'I will have thee at last', I have answered (sometimes with too much anger), 'I will have another out of thy hand first.' And many, while I was myself in the deep, were truly convinced and converted to God.

63. When I returned to England, and was discharged from the army, I went to Mr. [John] Wesley and asked if he would permit me to labour with him as a travelling preacher. He was willing, so I immediately went into a circuit. But this was far from delivering me from that inexpressible burden of soul under which I still laboured. Hence it was that I could neither be satisfied with preaching, nor without. And that wherever I went, I was not able to stay long in one place; but was continually wandering to and fro, seeking rest, but finding none. On this account many thought me very unstable, and looked very coldly upon me, as they were wholly unacquainted with the exercises of soul which I laboured under. I thought if David or Peter had been living, they would have pitied me. But many of my friends had not even tasted of that bread or water of affliction which had been my meat and drink for many years. May they walk so humbly and closely with God, that they may never taste it!

64. After I had continued some time as a travelling preacher, Mr. Wesley took me to travel with him. He knew I was fallen from my steadfastness, but he knew likewise how to bear with me. And when I was absent, he comforted me by his letters, which were a means, under God, of saving me from utter despair. One of them was as follows:

London
June 21, 1748

My Dear Brother,

Think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which God hath seen good to try you with. Indeed the chastisement, for the present, is not joyous but grievous; nevertheless it will by and by bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It is good for you to be in the fiery furnace. Though the flesh be weary to bear it, you shall be purified therein, but not consumed. For there is one with you, whose form is as the Son of God. Oh look up! Take knowledge of him who spreads underneath you his everlasting arms! Lean upon him with the whole weight of your soul. He is yours; lay hold upon him!

⁷³Job 7:20.

⁷⁴Lam. 3:1.

⁷⁵1 John 2:1.

⁷⁶Cf. 2 Cor. 12:9.

Away let grief, and sighing flee,
Jesus hath died for thee, for thee.⁷⁷

Mercy and peace shall not forsake you. Through every threatening cloud look up, and wait for happy days.⁷⁸

65. In this miserable condition I went to Shaftesbury, to see my friends, and spent several days. When one and another came and asked me, what news? I told them, 'Good news! Christ died to save sinners.' But it seemed to them as an idle tale. They cared for none of these things. One day, being half asleep, I was, as it were, thunderstruck with an inward voice saying, 'What dost thou here?' I cried to the Lord for mercy, and gave notice that on the Sunday following I would preach in a place at the end of the town, where four ways meet. The town and villages round were soon alarmed, and at the time appointed, I believe there were three or four thousand people. My inward trouble seemed suspended. I got upon a wall about seven feet high, and began with prayer. I then gave out my text, 'Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven. And all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble. And the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.' (Malachi 4:1). Surely I preached that sermon with the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Twelve, if not fourteen were then convinced of sin, some of whom are, I trust, long ago safely lodged in Abraham's bosom. In a few weeks fifty persons were joined together in society. I now preached in a large room several times a week. But the people were eager to build a house, and appointed a time of meeting, to consider of the means. But on the same day I was taken up and put into prison, two men having sworn flatly against me that I had made a riot. After I had been in prison a night and part of a day, I was taken to a public house. It was soon full of people. I immediately began preaching to them, and the lions quickly became lambs. A messenger then came in, to let me know that I must appear before the mayor and aldermen. I did so. The town clerk told me they would not send me to Dorchester jail, 'if I would work a miracle'. I told them, 'That is done already. Many swearers and drunkards are become sober, God-fearing men.' A lawyer said, 'Well, if you will take my advice, you shall not go to prison.' I replied, 'I suppose you mean, if I will give over preaching. But that I dare not do.' I was then without any more ado hurried away to Dorchester.

66. My body was now in prison. But that had been a thing of little consequence, had not my soul remained in prison also, in the dungeon of despair. The jailor soon came and fell into conversation with me. But when I began to preach Jesus, as the only Saviour of sinners, he quickly left me to preach to my fellow prisoners. Many of these, having no righteousness of their own to bring to God, were willing to hear of being saved *by grace*. So I preached to them several times while I was in prison, and they seemed greatly affected. Meantime God raised up two Quakers at Shaftesbury, who became bound for my appearance at the quarter sessions. I had been in prison but eight days when one of these came to fetch me out, and brought money to pay the prison fees and all other expenses. Had I not been put in prison, it is likely some of those prisoners would never have heard the gospel. I saw therefore that God did all things well. Being come back, I began preaching again, and God was present with the people. I soon received a letter from a gentleman at London, bidding me employ two counsellors and an attorney, and to draw upon him for whatever money I wanted. I carried this letter to the postmaster, and asked if he was willing to let me have money upon it? He said, 'Yes, as much as you please.' This was soon noised about the town, so the magistrates were glad to make up the matter. And the work of God so increased that in a little time we had eighty in society.

67. During my great distress of mind, I went twice into Ireland as a travelling preacher. And in each passage over the sea, I was very near being cast away. October 27, 1751, I preached at Mountmellick. The next morning, after I had travelled about two miles, suddenly my senses failed me. I was soon insensible where I was, and where I came from. I supported myself a considerable time by a

⁷⁷CW, 'Congratulations to a Friend, upon Believing in Christ', st. 4, *HSP* (1739), 204.

⁷⁸This is the only surviving record of this letter.

gate in the road; as I did not know which way to go, nor what place to ask for. At length my understanding returned, and I began to weep. But what I passed through I cannot express, so unspeakable was my anguish. But the tender mercy of God supported me therein, that my spirit might not fail before him.

68. In the beginning of September 1766, I was living at Shaftesbury, when Mr. Wesley passing through in his way to Cornwall, I asked if it would be agreeable for me to be at his house in London a few days? He said, 'Yes, as long as you please.' But before I set out, I received the following letter.

St. Ives, Cornwall
September 16, 1766

My Dear Brother,

I think you have no need to go to London. God has, it seems, provided a place for you here. Mr. Hosken⁷⁹ wants a worn-out preacher to live with him, to take care of his family, and to pray with them morning and evening.⁸⁰

I went down. As soon as Mr. Hosken saw me, he said, 'You are welcome to stay here as long as you live.' But no sooner did I fix there than I was, if possible, ten times worse than before. In vain I strove to make myself easy. The more I strove, the more miserable I was. Not that I wanted anything which this world can afford. But can this world satisfy a soul, that was made for God? The distress of my mind soon became intolerable. It was a burden too heavy for me to bear. It seemed to me that unless I got some relief, I must die in despair. One day I retired into the hall, fell on my face, and cried for mercy; but got no answer. I got up, and walked up and down the room, wringing my hands and crying like to break my heart; begging of God for Christ's sake, if there was any mercy for me, to help me. And blessed be his name, all on a sudden, I found such a change through my soul and body as is past description. I was afraid I should alarm the whole house with the expressions of my joy. I had a full witness from the Spirit of God that I should not find that bondage any more. Nor have I ever found it to this day. Glory be to God for all his mercy.

69. But notwithstanding this wonderful change, I had not the faith which I had once. But I found a very great alteration by reading the Scriptures. The promises opened to me more and more. And I expected to find some great thing wrought upon me all at once. But God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. He led me by a way I had not known. He greatly deepened his work in my soul, and drove out his enemies by little and little, till I could clearly say, 'Thy will be done.'⁸¹ The lion became a lamb, and I found the truth of that word by happy experience, 'Thou wilt keep his soul in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee!'⁸²

70. I now thought I would stay with Mr. Hosken, for he was very kind to me. But I soon began to be so bound in spirit that I could hardly pray in the family. Nay, I could not ask a blessing on our food without much hesitation and stammering. And all the comforts of life, which were then in great plenty, became altogether comfortless. Mr. [George] Story being then in the round, I made my complaint to him. He told me he would take my place for a month, if I would spend that time in the circuit. This I gladly undertook. And although for the space of three weeks my coat was not once dry upon my back, yet I was warmer within, and far more comfortable than in the warm parlour.

71. When Mr. Story was gone, I thought I would stay here a few days, and then travel. But the first night I was as restless as ever. So in the morning I took my leave, and in January 1767 went into the

⁷⁹Orig., 'Hoskins'. Joseph Hosken (1698–1780) was a wealthy farmer and supporter of Methodist work in the area of Cubert (St. Cuthberts).

⁸⁰This is the only surviving record of this letter.

⁸¹Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2.

⁸²Cf. Isa. 26:3.

east of Cornwall. I found it was good for me to be there. My faith increased daily. And, blessed be God, I found love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost springing up in my soul. I trust God will continue them to my dying day, and then receive me to himself.

72. I had long been travelling in the wilderness, in 'a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death'.⁸³ This had been my lot for twenty years, a just judgment of the Almighty for my sin. Blessed be his name that he did not wholly cast me off! But I saw clearly nothing would avail but a fresh application of the Saviour's blood to my wounded soul. I had now a happy sense of this—which with the thoughts of his forbearing me twenty years before my conversion, his filling me with his love for three years, his dealings with me in my fallen condition, and my present deliverance, caused my soul to overflow with wonder and praise for his long-suffering goodness. I saw nothing was too hard for God! I could cast myself on the Lord Jesus! All the promises in the Scriptures were full of comfort; particularly that; 'I have known thee in the furnace of affliction.'⁸⁴ The Scriptures were all precious to my soul, as the rain to the thirsty land. And when Satan assaulted me afresh, I did not stand to reason with him, but fled to the Lord Jesus for refuge. Hereby the snare was soon broken, and I found an increase both of faith, hope, and love. I could now truly say, 'The Lord is my shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.'⁸⁵

73. It was not my intention ever to write any account of these things, had not some of my friends greatly pressed me thereto. Nevertheless I put it off from time to time, being conscious I had no talent for writing, until my peace was well-nigh lost. At last I was prevailed upon to begin. I had not wrote many lines before I found my soul in perfect peace. I found myself likewise greatly assisted to recollect the manifold dealings of God with me. So that I have the greatest reason to believe it is his will I should make known, even by these instances of his goodness, that he is 'long-suffering, not willing that *any* should perish, but that all should come to repentance'.⁸⁶ May he bless the feeble attempt to the good of many! May they learn wisdom by the things that I have suffered! And be all the glory ascribed unto him that 'sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever'!⁸⁷

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 207–17, 255–73, 307–13.⁸⁸

⁸³Cf. Jer. 2:6.

⁸⁴Cf. Isa. 48:10.

⁸⁵Cf. Ps. 23:1–3.

⁸⁶Cf. 2 Pet. 3:9.

⁸⁷Cf. Rev. 5:13.

⁸⁸This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 1:269–311; along with the description of Haime's death in a letter from George Story dated Sept. 1, 1784 (elsewhere in this collection).

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Otley
January 4, 1780

Many thanks for your kind letter.¹ It humbled me in the dust before my dear Lord. I am utterly unworthy of the peculiar degree of friendship wherewith you have (ever since I knew the Lord) favoured me. O that I may be enabled to love and serve my gracious Lord ten thousand times better the ensuing year than heretofore. Yet still to his mere mercy alone shall my soul ascribe this and every other blessing he, in infinite love, bestoweth on me. I cannot easily express what a disposition my soul has lately had to praise, adore, and love; it has been almost my constant employ. The last year my Lord crowned with his mercy. And this hitherto has been replete with blessings when, glory be to my God, never did the flame of pure love burn on the altar of my heart with greater warmth than at present. In communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit, I profess unutterable delights. And before me such an unbounded prospect opens to my view as quite exhilarates my soul and sets the springs of desire in motion toward all that conformity to the divine image humanity will admit of. 'Happy in his love I live; mightier joys ordained [to] know.'² For the eternal God himself my father is, and Jesus is my friend! O what sweet and familiar converse I have lately been permitted to enjoy with my dearest Lord. O praise him, my ever dear father, for his goodness to your unworthiest child and

Closer and closer let us cleave
To his beloved embrace;
Expect his fullness to receive,
And grace to answer grace.³

Perhaps, my dear sir, you may be surprised at my so soon answering your last favour, but I have need to endeavour to rectify the mistake I have inadvertently led you into. I ought to have begun with asking your pardon for it (but out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, and the praises of my dearest Lord and his love are uppermost in my heart). If I said what implied that Mrs. Colbeck⁴ wished you to take the child, that's an idea I did not intend. She means her son Tommy,⁵ who is a very fine quick boy. She tells me (for she has been at Otley since I wrote last) he is only eleven years old but she wants him breaking from home, and her situation is such she cannot well afford to send him to any school that she would like for him. And would you be kind enough to favour her in this respect, I believe you would make a distressed widow's heart rejoice. I need say no more on this head for I believe the compassionate feelings of your own heart will plead her cause so powerfully that, if without hurting the minds of our brethren you can help her, you will do it.

Both our preachers are well received⁶ and upon the whole the work of God does go forward. Several out of our society have lately been called to their eternal home and, glory be unto God, they are safely landed. Three more seem just about to take their flight to Abraham's bosom. But still fresh ones are added, [so] that I think our number is near the same this quarter as the last. The organ has been a means of increasing our congregations, and as yet we have not had complicated tunes. The organist being but a

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Cf. CW, 'Funeral Hymn', st. 6, *HSP* (1742), 127; revised closer to above by JW in *Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, Pt. III, I.5, *Works*, 11:275.

³CW, 'At Parting', st. 4, *HSP* (1742), 160.

⁴Thomas Colbeck married Sarah Sharp, in Otley, on Jan. 31, 1765.

⁵Thomas Colbeck Jr. was baptized in Keighley on Oct. 27, 1769.

⁶James Hindmarsh and George Hudson were assigned to the Keighley circuit for this year.

learner, we have had simple tunes and the same over again more than usual. I read them that part of your letter which concerned them and I believe it will be of use to the music folks among us.

Wishing you the ensuing year every grace purchased and promised blessing I remain, my dear sir,
Your ever affectionate, though unworthy, daughter,

E. Ritchie

Annotation: another hand, '27th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

From Alexander Mather (autobiography addendum)¹

City Road, London
January 5, 1780

I answer first, with regard to the time and place, it was at Rotherham, in the year 1757, that I enjoyed it [i.e. sanctification] in a far larger degree than I ever did before, or do now. And although my situation the next year laid many hindrances in the way, yet I both preached it plainly and strongly encouraged those that had before experienced it, and such as professed to receive it at that time, either at Sunderland or elsewhere. This I continued to do in 1759 and 1760, in which time many were made partakers of it in York, at and near Pocklington, in Hull, and various other places. It was the enjoyment of this which supported me in the trials I met with at Wednesbury in the two following years, during which many were added to the witnesses of it in Birmingham, Dudley, Darlaston, Wolverhampton and Wednesbury. It was my own experience which emboldened me to assert it, even where it was opposed by our chief members—partly because of the faults of some that professed it, but chiefly because of the natural enmity of their hearts to God.

What I had experienced in my own soul was an instantaneous deliverance from all those wrong tempers and affections which I had long and sensibly groaned under. An entire disengagement from every creature, with an entire devotedness to God. And from that moment I found an unspeakable pleasure in doing the will of God in all things. I had also a power to do it, and the constant approbation both of my own conscience and of God. I had simplicity of heart, and a single eye to God, at all times and in all places; with such a fervent zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls as swallowed up every other care and consideration. Above all, I had uninterrupted communion with God, whether sleeping or waking. Oh that it were with me as when the candle of the Lord thus shone upon my head! While I call it to mind, my soul begins to wing its way toward that immediate enjoyment of God. May it never be retarded, but press into the glorious liberty, which is equally free for all the sons of God.

As to the manner wherein this work was wrought: 1. After I was clearly justified, I was soon made sensible of my want of it. For although I was enabled to be very circumspect, and had a continual power over outward and inward sin, yet I felt in me what I knew was contrary to the mind which was in Christ, and what hindered me from enjoying and glorifying him as I saw it was the privilege of a child of God to do. And such I knew myself to be, both from the fruit and the witness of his Spirit, which I felt in a strong degree, supporting me in conflicts of a very close and particular nature. 2. My conviction of the need of a farther change was abundantly increased by the searching preaching of Mr. [Thomas] Walsh, of blessed memory. This kept my conscience very tender, even to a degree of scrupulosity; and helped me to be much in private prayer, and kept me watching thereunto. 3. When I saw my call to preach, the difficulties attending that office showed me more and more the need of such a change, that I might 'bear all things'.² And by searching the Scriptures I saw the possibility of it more clearly, and was stirred up to seek it more earnestly. 4. When I began travelling, I had no end, aim, or design, but to spend and be spent for God. Not counting my life, or anything dear, so I might finish my course with joy—which indeed I expected would be very short, as 'I dealt my life at every blow'. I saw as clearly, as I do now, that nothing furthers that end so much as a heart and life wholly devoted to God.

This made me neglect the advantage I had in my youth of a tolerable acquaintance with Latin, which I could easily have recovered. But this and every other gain I counted but loss, that I might win that intimacy with God which I still think to be the life of preaching. Therefore I husbanded all the time that I could save from company, eating, or sleeping, to lay out in wrestling with God, for myself and the flock.

¹When JW published Mather's initial biographical account of Dec. 1779 (above), he added the comment: 'After reading and considering the foregoing account, I observed to Mr. Mather that he had wholly omitted one considerable branch of his experience touching what is properly termed "the great salvation". He wrote me a full and particular answer, the substance of which I have subjoined.'

²Cf. 1 Cor. 13:7.

So I devoted to God some part of every leisure hour, over and above the hour from eleven to twelve in the forenoon, and from four to five in the afternoon. Herein I was sweetly drawn after God, and had many and large views of that salvation which I wanted, and which he had provided in his Son. The exceeding great and precious promises were clearly opened to me. And having a full assurance of the power and faithfulness of the Promiser, my soul often tasted of their sweetness. And though unbelief prevented my immediate possession, yet I had a blessed foretaste of them. This made me desire full enjoyment more and more. I abhorred whatever seemed to keep me from it. I sought out every obstruction. I was willing to offer up every Isaac, and inflamed with great ardour in wrestling with God. Determined not to let him go, till he emptied me of all sin, and filled me with himself.

This I believe he did, when I ventured upon Jesus as sufficient to save to the uttermost. He wrought in me what I cannot express, what I judge it is impossible to utter. Yet I was not long without reasoning—not concerning the work, of this I was absolutely sure; but whether such and such things as I soon discovered in myself were consistent with it? And this had its use, as it qualified me to advise others who, though saved from sin, were tried in the same way.

Upon this head I consulted Mr. Walsh, and his advice helped me in some degree. But God helped me much more in private prayer: herein I was clearly satisfied: 1. That deliverance from sin does not imply deliverance from human infirmities. 2. That neither is it inconsistent with feeling our natural appetites, or with the regular gratification of them. And, 3. That salvation from sin is not inconsistent with temptations of various kinds. And all this you have clearly and fully declared in the *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*.

I have only to observe that while my soul was following hard after God I had frequent temptations to resume my Latin and learn the other languages—especially when I observed some of my brethren who had made some progress therein, though they had not the same advantages with me. But the comfort I found in spending all my time as above, and the thought that however this might recommend them to some hearers, yet they were not hereby more instrumental than before either in *awakening*, *converting*, or *building up* souls, made me quite easy about it. This I have considered as the only business, and peculiar glory of a Methodist preacher. Not that I think our brethren who have made this progress, have not been useful in all these respects. But I think they are not more useful than they were when they were strangers to these things. And I doubt whether they are so useful as they might have been, had they employed the same time, the same diligence, and the same intenseness of thought in the several branches of that work for which they willingly gave up all. For my own part, I want to feel the same principle ever actuating me which I felt the moment I set out.

Upon the whole, I find abundant cause to praise God for the support he has given me under various trials, and the wonderful deliverance from them. I praise him for so preserving me from impatience in them that the enemy had no room to speak reproachfully. In all, he has given me free access to the throne of grace, often with a strong confidence of deliverance. I bless God that the trials I have met with, even from my brethren, have never given me an inclination to decline the work. Nor for any time together, to be less active in any branch of it. I always considered I had nothing which I had not received, and that the design of the Giver was that all should be used with singleness of heart, to please God and not man. I praise him that though some of the affairs I have been engaged in, being quite new to me, so deeply employed my thought as sometimes to divert me from that degree of communion with God in which is my only happiness, and without which my soul can never be at rest, yet he gives me always to see that the fullness of the promise is every Christian's privilege. And that this and every branch of salvation is to be received *now*, by *faith* alone. And it can only be retained by the same means, by believing every moment. We cannot rest on anything that has been done, or that may be done hereafter. This would keep us from living a life of faith, which I conceive to be no other than the *now* deriving virtue from Jesus, by which we enjoy and live to God. My soul is often on the stretch for the full enjoyment of this, without interruption. Nor can I discharge my conscience without urging it upon all believers now to 'come' unto him 'who is able to save unto the uttermost'!³

³Cf. Heb. 7:25.

At the end of Mather's additional response JW added the comment: 'I earnestly desire that all our preachers would seriously consider the preceding account. And let them not be content never to speak against "the great salvation", either in public or private; and never to discourage either by word or deed any that think they have attained it. No, but prudently encourage them to "hold fast whereunto they have attained",⁴ and strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to "go on to perfection";⁵ yea, to expect full salvation from sin every moment, by mere grace, through simple faith.'

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 203–07.⁶

⁴Cf. Phil. 3:16.

⁵Heb. 6:1.

⁶These additional comments by Mather are included in Jackson, *EMP*, 2:158–239.

From Thomas Mitchell (autobiography)

c. February 1780

1. I was born in the parish of Bingley, Yorkshire, December 3, 1726. My parents both died in the faith. I lived with them seven years, and seven years more with an uncle who was in the same parish. From five years old I had strong convictions at times, and put up many prayers for mercy. And though I had no one to teach me, yet I had the fear of God in my heart. If I was overtaken in any sin, I was much troubled till I had said my prayers, which I thought would make all up.

2. At fourteen, I was put apprentice to be a mason. While I lived with my master, I had little concern for my soul. But after six years, at the time of the [Jacobite] Rebellion, I enlisted among the Yorkshire Blues. I continued with them about a year. There was one man among us who had the fear of God before his eyes. He gave me good advice, which one time in particular took great effect upon me and my comrade. We both of us were under deep convictions, but knew not what to do to be saved. I began to fear death exceedingly, knowing I was not fit to die. These words followed me continually; 'Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.'¹ I thought I must fulfil the law, or be damned. I strove all I could to fulfil it. But I thought I grew worse and worse, till my load was many times heavier than I could bear.

3. In the year 1746, the Rebellion being over, we were discharged. I then sought for a people that feared God, and soon joined the society. I heard John Nelson several times, and began to have some hope of finding mercy. Some time after I went to hear Mr. [William] Grimshaw, and was convinced that we are to be saved by faith. Yea, that the very worst of sinners might be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Soon after, I heard Mr. Charles Wesley preach from these words, 'I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.'² He showed clearly, that Christ is able and willing to save the greatest sinners. I was much refreshed under the sermon, and much more so, in singing these words:

Whither should a sinner go?
His wounds for me stand open'd wide:
Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified.³

4. But when he told us we might know our sins forgiven in this life—yea, this very moment—it seemed to me new doctrine, and I could not believe it at all. But I continued in prayer, and in a few days I was convinced of it to my great joy. The love of Christ broke into my soul, and drove away all guilt and fear. And at the same time he filled my heart with love both to God and man. I saw that God was my salvation, and now could trust him, and praise him with joyful lips. I could sing with all my heart,

O what shall I do, my Saviour to praise?
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace?
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,
The weakest believer that hangs upon him?⁴

¹Cf. Gal. 3:10.

²Cf. 1 Cor. 2:2.

³CW, 'Hymn on 1 Cor. 2:2', st. 4, *HSP* (1742), 257

⁴CW, 'A Thanksgiving', st. 1, *HSP* (1742), 118.

5. Soon after this, Mr. John Wesley came to Bradford and preached on, 'This one thing I do.'⁵ He joined several of us together in a class, which met about a mile from the town. But all of them fell back and left me alone; yet afterward some of them returned. Before this, I thought my hill was so strong that I could never be moved. But seeing so many fall into sin, I began to see danger in my way. I began to feel an evil heart of unbelief, and was fully convinced that there must be a farther change in my heart before I could be established in grace. Afterward I removed to Keighley, and had many opportunities of hearing, and profiting by Mr. Grimshaw. But feeling my corruptions, with strong temptations, I fell into great doubtings. I was almost in despair, full of unbelief. I could scarce pray at all. I was in this state near half a year, finding no comfort in anything. But one evening, one of our friends prayed in the society and my soul was set at liberty. All my doubts fled away, and faith and love once more sprung up in my heart. I afterward saw that God had a farther end in these trials and deliverances.

6. Not long after this I felt a great desire to tell others what God had done for my soul. I wanted my fellow creatures to turn to the Lord, but saw myself utterly unfit to speak for him. I saw the neighbourhood in which I lived abounding with all manner of wickedness. And no man caring for their souls, or warning them to flee from the wrath to come. I began to reprove sin wherever I was, though many hated me for so doing. I did not regard that, for God gave me an invincible courage. But still I did not see clearly whether I was called to speak in public or no. After many reasonings in my mind, I ventured to give notice of a meeting. When the time came, my soul was bowed down within me, my bones shook, and one knee smote against the other. I had many to hear me. Some of them heard me with pain, and advised me to speak no more in public. But one young woman was convinced of her lost condition, and never rested till she found redemption.

7. But this did not satisfy my friends. So, as they were not willing to receive me, I went to those that would, and God began to bless my weak endeavours. Yet I was not satisfied myself. For several weeks I had great trouble in my mind. I thought no man's case was like mine. Sometimes I wished I had never been born. Most of my friends were against me. I was full of fears within, and had a persecuting world without. But all this time my heart was drawn out in prayer, that God would show me the way wherein I should go. Being now employed at Sir Walter Coverley's, in the parish of Guiseley, I met with a few serious people at Yeadon. They were just setting out in the ways of God, and desired me to give a word of exhortation among them. I did so a few times, and God was pleased to bless it to their souls. The little society increased, and they all dearly loved one another. But Satan was not idle. Every time we met, a riotous mob gathered round the house and disturbed us much.

8. One evening, while William Darney was preaching, the curate of Guiseley⁶ came at the head of a large mob, who threw eggs in his face, pulled him down, dragged him out of the house on the ground, and stamped upon him. The curate himself then thought it was enough, and bade them let him alone and go their way. Sometime after, Jonathan Maskew came. As soon as he began to speak the same mob came, pulled him down, and dragged him out of the house. They then tore off his clothes, and dragged him along upon his naked back over the gravel and pavement. When they thought they had sufficiently bruised him, they let him go and went away. With much difficulty he crept to a friend's house, where they dressed his wounds, and got him some clothes. It was my turn to go next. No sooner was I at the town then the mob came, like so many roaring lions. My friends advised me not to preach that night, and undertook to carry me out of the town. But the mob followed me in a great rage, and stoned me for near two miles, so that it was several weeks before I got well of the bruises I then received.

9. About this time a carpenter was swearing horribly, whom I calmly reproved. He immediately flew in a violent passion, and having an axe in his hand, lifted it up and swore he would cleave my head in a moment. But just as he was going to strike, a man that stood by snatched hold of his arm and held him, till his passion cooled. At first I felt a little fear, but it soon vanished away.

10. While I was working at Sir Walter's, some one informed him that I was a Methodist. He was much displeased, saying, 'I like him for a workman; but I hate his religion.' This was chiefly owing to his

⁵Phil. 3:13.

⁶James Reyner was curate of Guiseley, 1745–1755.

steward, whom I had often reproved for swearing. He mortally hated me on that account. But in a little time he was taken ill. Perceiving himself worse, he sent a message to *me*, earnestly desiring I would come and pray with him. I went, and found him in an agony of conviction, crying aloud for mercy. I showed him where mercy was to be found, and then went to prayer with him. While I was praying, his heart seemed broken and he was bathed in tears. He owned he had been a grievous sinner. But he cried to God with his latest breath, and I believe, not in vain.

11. I stayed some time after in these parts, and was fully employed. All the day I wrought diligently at my business. In the evenings I called sinners to repentance. And now the mobs were not so furious, so that we had no considerable interruption. In the meantime, I waited to see whether the Lord had anything for me to do? I made it matter of continual prayer, that he would make my way plain before me. And in a little while, I had much more of the best work upon my hands. I was desired to give an exhortation at a village called Hartwith. I went thither several times. Several here were deeply convinced of sin, and two or three soon found redemption in the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins. Afterwards I was invited to Thirsk. Here I found a few hungry souls. But they were as sheep without a shepherd, seldom hearing anything like the gospel. I spent two nights among them. The serious people were much refreshed. Some were awakened and saw their danger, and cried out for mercy.

12. After this I went to Stockton, where I found a lively people, who had been joined in society for some time. I preached several times among them with great liberty of soul and freedom of speech, and to all appearance the word had much effect on the hearers. Here I met with Mr. [Samuel] Larwood, who behaved very kindly to me, and told me he hoped I should be very useful if I kept humble. He then sent me before him to York and Leeds, where I preached and gave notice of his coming. From Leeds I went to Birstall. It happened to be their preaching night. John Nelson was sick in bed, so the people desired me to preach or give them a word of exhortation. Accordingly I preached in the best manner I could, and the people seemed well-satisfied. The next day I went to Hightown and preached to a large congregation in the evening. I had much liberty in speaking, and found a great blessing to my own soul. And I have reason to believe that the people were well-satisfied.

13. From Birstall I went to Heptonstall. Here I met with a lively people who received me very kindly. I gave several exhortations among them, and the word went with power to many hearts. I continued some time in these parts, and went to several places in Lancashire. Here also I found many were awakened, and several found peace with God, while I was among them. I endeavoured to form a regular circuit in these parts, and in a little time gained my point.

14. I continued in these parts some time, and have reason to hope that I was useful among them. In one place I met with a mob of women, who put me into a pond of water, which took me nearly over my head. But by the blessing of God, I got out safe, and walked about three miles in my wet clothes but I caught no cold. I continued some time in these parts, encouraged by the example and advice of good Mr. Grimshaw.

15. One time, Paul Greenwood and I called at his house together, and he gave us a very warm exhortation, which I shall not soon forget. He said, 'If you are sent of God to preach the gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. Indeed you must not expect to gain much of this world's goods by preaching the gospel. What you get must come through the devil's teeth, and he will hold it as fast as he can. I count every covetous man to be one of the devil's teeth. And he will let nothing go for God and his cause, but what is forced from him.'

16. In the year 1751 I was stationed in Lincolnshire. I found a serious people and an open door. But there were many adversaries. This was far the most trying year which I had ever known. But in every temptation God made a way to escape, that I might be able to bear it.

[17.⁷] On Sunday, August the 7th, I came to Wrangle⁸ very early in the morning. I preached, as usual, at 5:00. About 6:00, two constables came, at the head of a large mob. They violently broke in upon the people, seized upon me, pulled me down, and took me to a public house, where they kept me till 4:00

⁷Paragraph numbered in increased by one from this point.

⁸Mitchell spelled 'Rangdale'.

in the afternoon. Then one of the constables seemed to relent, and said, 'I will go to the minister,⁹ and inquire of him whether we may not now let the poor man go?' When he came back, he said, 'They were not to let me go yet.' So he took me out to the mob, who presently hurried me away, and threw me into a pool of standing water. It took me up to the neck. Several times I strove to get out, but they pitched me in again. They told me I must go through it seven times. I did so, and then they let me come out. When I had got upon dry ground, a man stood ready with a pot full of white paint. He painted me all over from head to foot, and then they carried me into the public house again. Here I was kept till they had put five more of our friends into the water. Then they came and took me out again, and carried me to a great pond, which was railed in on every side, being ten or twelve feet deep. Here four men took me by my legs and arms and swung me backward and forward. For a moment I felt the flesh shrink. But it was quickly gone. I gave myself up to the Lord, and was content his will should be done. They swung me two or three times, and then threw me as far as they could into the water. The fall and the water soon took away my senses, so that I felt nothing more. But some of them were not willing to have me drowned. So they watched till I came above water, and then catching hold of my clothes with a long pole, made shift to drag me out.

18. I lay senseless for some time. When I came to myself, I saw only two men standing by me. One of them helped me up and desired me to go with him. He brought me to a little house, where they quickly put me to bed. But I had not lain long before the mob came again, pulled me out of bed, carried me into the street, and swore they would take away one of my limbs if I would not promise to come there no more. I told them, 'I can promise no such thing.' But the man that had hold of me promised for me, and took me back into the house and put me to bed again.

[19.¹⁰] Some of the mob then went to the minister again, to know what they must do with me? He told them, 'You must take him out of the parish.' So they came and took me out of bed a second time. But I had no clothes to put on; my own being wet, and also covered with paint. But they put an old coat about me, took me about a mile, and set me upon a little hill. They then shouted three times, 'God save the king, and the devil take the preacher', and left me.

20. Here they left me penniless and friendless, for no one durst come near me. And my strength was nearly gone, so that I had much ado to walk, or even to stand. But from the beginning to the end my mind was in perfect peace. I found no anger or resentment, but could heartily pray for my persecutors. But I knew not what to do, or where to go. Indeed one of our friends lived three or four miles off. But I was so weak and ill, that it did not seem possible for me to get so far. However, I trusted in God and set out, and at length I got to the house. The family did everything for me that was in their power. They got me clothes, and whatever else was needful. I rested four days with them, in which time my strength was tolerably restored. Then I went into the circuit, and (blessed be God!) saw much fruit of my labour. In the midst of persecution, many were brought to the saving knowledge of God. And as the sufferings of Christ abounded, so our consolations by Christ abounded also. As to the lions at Wrangle, an appeal to the court of King's Bench made both them and the minister quiet as lambs.

21. Coming in December into Lancashire, I found trials of quite another kind. The poor people were in the utmost confusion, like a flock of frightened sheep. John Bennet, who before loved and revered Mr. Wesley for his work's sake, since he got into his new opinions, hated him cordially and laboured to set all the people against him. He told them in the open congregation that Mr. Wesley was a pope, and that he preached nothing but popery. December the 30th, I met him at Bolton. I desired him to preach, but he would not. So I got up and spoke as well as I could, though with a heavy heart. After I had done, he met the society and said many bitter things of Mr. Wesley. He then spread out his hands and cried, 'Popery, Popery! I will not be in connection with him any more.' I could not help telling him, 'The spirit in which you now speak is not of God. Neither are you fit for the pulpit while you are of such a spirit.' While I was speaking, a woman that stood by me struck me in the face with all her might. Immediately all the congregation was in an uproar. So I thought it best to retire. After, I believed it was

⁹Richard Baily was vicar of Wrangle, 1747–76. See JW's letter to Baily about this matter, dated Aug. 15, 1751, in *Works*, 26:474–75.

¹⁰Paragraph numbering is again increased from this point.

my duty to expostulate with him. But it did not avail. It seemed to me that all love was departed from him. His mind was wholly set against Mr. Wesley, and against the whole Methodist doctrine and discipline. And he had infused his own spirit into the people in many places. So that I had hard work among them. But the Lord kept *my* soul in peace and love. Glory be unto his holy name!

22. In May 1752 I came to Newcastle upon Tyne, where, after all the storms I had gone through, I was greatly refreshed among a loving, peaceable people, with whom I laboured with much satisfaction. And it pleased the Lord to prosper my labour in Berwick-upon-Tweed, Gateshead Fell, and many other places, where many sinners were both convinced and converted to God.

23. On May 8, 1753 I came with Mr. Wesley from Newcastle to York. On the 12th, he preached to a large congregation; and the next morning, from 'Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find mercy, and grace to help in time of need.'¹¹ I never saw a congregation so affected. Most of the people were in tears, some for joy and some from a sense of their sins. He had designed to go on to Lincolnshire. But through the importunity of the people he consented to stay a little at York, and desired *me* to go in his place.

24. From the following Conference (at which fourteen preachers were present, beside Mr. Wesley and his brother), I went into Wiltshire, where Mr. [Richard] Pearce, of Bradford[-on-Avon], was as a father to me. Here I formed a firm resolution of cleaving more closely to God than ever I had done before. I longed to be wholly freed from the enemies which I carried in my own bosom. I saw no other could possibly hurt me, if I could but conquer myself. I read the Bible much, and prayed much, and found many blessings from the Lord. And I found in particular an entire disengagement from all earthly things. My soul was even as a weaned child. I was willing to be anything or nothing. I had no desire for anything in this world, but to live unto the glory of God. Oh how easy does it make everything, when we can give up all for Christ!

25. After I had spent some time in Devonshire and Cornwall, I was sent for up to London. Here I had a fever for some time. When I was pretty well recovered Mr. Wesley desired me to go down to Norwich. I was not well upon the road, but was abundantly worse when I came thither. But following the advice of a skilful man, I was in a while restored to health and strength. Here I found much comfort among a poor, but a very loving, people. I was here (putting the first and the second time together) about four years. But in the latter part of this time, I had many trials from James Wheatley's people. Mr. Wesley had been prevailed upon to take the Tabernacle, and to receive his people under his care. Wheatley used to call them 'his dear lambs', but such lion-like lambs did I never see. Discipline they knew nothing of: everyone would do what was right in his own eyes. And our doctrine was an abomination to them. Great part of them were grounded in antinomianism. The very sound of 'perfection' they abhorred. They could hardly bear the word 'holiness'. Nothing was pleasing to them, but 'faith, faith'; without a word either of its inward or outward fruits.

26. Between the first and second time of my being at Norwich, I spent some time in Sussex. The first place that I preached at was Rye, where no Methodist had ever preached before. Yet there was no opposition, but they received the word with joy and readiness of mind. And many soon felt the burden of their sins, several of whom quickly found peace with God. Most of these very willingly joined together in a little society. Some of these are lodged in Abraham's bosom, and others still remain walking in the way to Sion.

27. Hence I went to several country places. But they were not all so peaceable as Rye. At the desire of a serious man I went to Hawkhurst. He had requested me to preach at his house. About 6:00 in the evening I began. But I had not spoke many words before a numerous mob broke in, pulled me down from the place where I stood, and forced me out of the house. Then they struck up my heels, and dragged me upon my back about half a mile, to a public house called Highgate, where I found many gentlemen, with the minister of the parish.¹² They asked, by what authority do you preach? I answered, 'By the authority of King George', and showed them my licence. They spoke a little together, and said, 'You may

¹¹Cf. Heb. 4:16.

¹²Rev. John Chawner was curate of Hawkhurst, 1751–97.

go about your business.' But observing the house was filled with a drunken mob, I said, 'Gentlemen, I will not go, unless I have a constable to guard me.' They immediately sent for a constable, who guarded me to the house from whence I came. But as it was winter time, and the road very dirty, I was in a poor condition—being a good deal bruised, and all my clothes plastered over with dirt. However, after I had got some dry clothes, and taken a little refreshment, I prayed with the family, and then God gave me quiet and refreshing sleep. When I came to London, I applied to a lawyer, who sent down writs for five of the ringleaders. But they quickly came to an agreement. They readily paid all the charges. And here ended our persecution in Sussex. I found a thankful heart for a good king, good laws, and liberty of conscience. And about this time I had much of the presence of the Lord. He was good to me, both as to my body and soul. I prayed much, and the Lord heard me and delivered me from all my fears.

28. In August 1778 I was stationed in Staffordshire, where I spent the year with much satisfaction. I now look back on the labour of three-and-thirty years, and I do not repent of it. I am not grown weary, either of my Master or the work I am engaged in. Though I am weak in body, and in the decline of life, my heart is still engaged in the cause of God. I am never more happy than when I feel the love of Christ in my heart, and am declaring his praise to others. There is nothing like the love of Christ in the heart, to make us holy and happy. It is love alone that expels all sin out of the heart. Wherever love is wanting, there is hell; and where love fills the heart, there is heaven. This has been a medicine to me, ever since I set out. When I was low, it was this that raised me up. When sin and Satan beset me on every side, it was this that drove them all away.

O love, how cheering is thy ray?
All pain before thy presence flies:
Care, anguish, sorrow melt away,
Where'er thy healing beams arise,
O Jesus, nothing may I see,
Nothing hear, feel, or think but thee.¹³

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 314–25.¹⁴

¹³Paul Gerhardt, 'Living by Christ', st. 3, as translated by JW in *HSP* (1739), 156.

¹⁴A revised version of this account is present in Jackson, *EMP*, 1:240–59; along with a short description of Mitchell's later life.

From Rev. Joseph Berington¹

c. February 1, 1780

There never was a decision made at Constance tending to show that ‘no faith is to be kept with heretics’.² The words of the canon are not susceptible of such a comment, unless tortured to it. At all events, no council, pope, bishop, priest, or layman of our church *ever* understood them in the sense of your interpretation. But *every* Catholic divine has *at all times*, in writing on the subject, utterly reprobated the idea of breaking faith with *heretics*, as contrary to every dictate of reason and religion.

Source: published excerpt; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:389.

¹Joseph Berington (1743–1827), native of Winsley, Herefordshire, was trained at Douai and ordained as a priest in the Church of Rome. His inclination toward liberal opinions led him to return to England. From 1776 to 1782 he was chaplain to Thomas Stapleton, of Carlton, Yorkshire. His first publication came in 1780: *The State and Behaviour of English Catholics from the Restoration to the year 1780* (London: R. Faulder 1780). He eventually became chaplain to Sir John Courtney Throckmorton of Buckland, Berkshire, where he continued to produce several literary works.

²Berington is contesting JW's assertion to this effect in *Popery Calmly Considered* (1779), V.2.e, *Works*, 14:236–37.

From an Unidentified Correspondent¹

February 26, 1780

Lewis Andrews was the son of Lewis Andrews, of Saffron Walden, Essex. When above two years and nine months old his mother observed him remarkably affected with hearing the hymn 'Salvation, Oh the joyful sound'² He soon learned several of the lines, and would often repeat them to himself, though it does not appear that any attempt was made by father or mother, or others, to impress the seriousness of the words upon him. One day, with a kind of rapture in his countenance, he came to his mother and addressed her thus: 'Salvation, oh the joyful sound. What pleasure with our ears! What pleasure, what pleasure! Is it not to *you*, mommy? It is to *my* ears.' His mother saying, 'You do not know what you are talking about', with great earnestness he replied, 'Yes, mommy, I do. I feel it. It is pleasure to me.' He then added, 'Salvation, oh thou bleeding lamb! O mommy, that bleeding lamb! That bleeding lamb!' His mother again saying 'You don't know what you are speaking of', he replied, 'Yes mommy, I do; that bleeding lamb is Jesus Christ. "Salvation shall inspire our hearts, and dwell upon our tongues." Yes mommy, it will inspire our hearts.' His mother still saying 'You know nothing about it', he replied, 'Yes mommy, I do. Salvation will dwell forever on my tongue.'

He would often after this repeat the above lines, much in the same manner, with application to himself. Frequently he would complain to his mother: 'I am a naughty boy. I am wicked. And would add, I am sorry for my sins.' He was much in prayer, and it was a common thing for his mother, when she awoke in the morning, to find him upon his knees on the bed in prayer.

Being taken one day into a neighbour's house, where a chimney was sweeping, the child not being apprized of it, and the sweep's suddenly coming from behind the cloth, he was greatly affrighted. And after, as soon as he heard their cry 'Sweep' in the street it would renew his terror, and he would come running to his mother in great distress, crying, 'Mommy hide me from the black man.' The mother, hearing the cry one day in the street, expected the child would have been affected as usual. But just as they were passing before the house he came to his mother and desired she would lift him up to the window, that he might see the black men. She told him he would be affrighted. He replied, 'No mommy, I am not afraid of them now. The black men will not hurt me. Jesus Christ will save me. I shall go to heaven to Jesus Christ.'

As it was his custom to be often in the day on his knees in prayer, a little sister of his would with her play be frequently diverting him. And when he could not get rid of her he would come to his mother in distress saying, 'Pray, mommy, take her away from me. She vexes me. She won't let me pray. My sister is a naughty girl. She won't be in heaven so soon as I shall.'

He seemed to have a remarkable assurance of his death, having been sickly some time. The Lord's day before he died, sitting upon his mother's lap, he enquired where his daddy was. The mother saying 'Your daddy, my dear, is gone to meeting, and he would have taken you if you had been well', he said, 'I shall go next Sabbath day mommy.' The mother saying 'I wish you may be well enough, my dear', he replied, 'Yes, mommy, I shall go. We shall all go next Sabbath day, and I shall be in heaven. I shall be carried there, and it will be all dark, dark. I shall never come back no more. But I shall be in heaven. I shall then be quite well. His mother chiding him and saying that he did not know what he said, he replied, "Yes, mommy, I do, and you will know too." A little space after, trying to take a book out of his mother's hand in which she was reading, she said, 'You disturb me, my dear.' He put it back again, and added, 'I shall disturb you no more, mommy.'

He died on the Thursday morning after. All the day before (Wednesday) he would be trying to repeat the above lines of the hymn 'Salvation ...', frequently calling on his mother to sing—and so

¹Likely one of JW's lay preachers. The wife of Rev. Joseph Gwennap (1731–1813), pastor of a Baptist Church in Saffron Walden, wrote a poem about this death, dated 1777.

²Isaac Watts, 'Salvation', *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (London: John Lawrence, 1709), 210.

continued until 2:00 and 3:00 in the morning, when, fixing his eyes with great earnestness, he cried, 'Mommy, mammy, sing hallelujah', and turning, breathed his last. Aged three years and five weeks.

This account is wrote down just as the mother narrated it. She seems greatly stirred up to a concern for her soul since the child's death. The parents for years attendants on the gospel, their life morally serous, but before this circumstance no evidence of anything more.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Acct. of Lewis Andrews, / Feb. 26. 1780

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, box 5, folder 25.

From the Rev. Arthur O'Leary¹

Mary's Lane, Dublin,
February 28, 1780

[p. 12]

Gentlemen,²

I know that it is loss of time and a loss to the public, impatient for a paper in which they have clearly discovered the outlines of their country's rights, and from whence they daily expect new illustrations on the most important subjects, to take up the *Freeman's Journal* with idle controversy.³ Were controversy the subject, I should be the last to enter the list. In your paper, which has already made its way to the continent on account of the late exertions of the Irish, and which should contain nothing unworthy the nervous eloquence and liberal principles of your numerous and learned [p. 13] correspondents, Mr. Wesley, in a syllogistical method and the jargon of the schools, has arraigned the Catholics all over the world, with their kings and subjects, their prelates and doctors, as liars, perjurers, patentees of guile and perjury, authorised by their priests to violate the sacred rules of order and justice; and unworthy of being tolerated even by Turks and pagans.⁴ Such a charge carries with it its own confrontation. But are there not prejudiced people still in the world? The nine skins of parchment, filled with the names of petitioners against the English Catholics, owe the variety of their signatures to pulpit declamations, and inflammatory pamphlets, teeming with Mr. Wesley's false assertions. And to the disgrace of the peerage, in this variety of signatures is not the lord's hand writing stretched near the

¹Arthur O'Leary (1729–1802) was an Irish Capuchin priest and writer in Cork in 1780, who advocated and defended an 'enlightened' form of Roman Catholicism. He is here responding to JW's defence of the Protestant Association in a public letter in various London papers date Jan. 21, 1780 (see *Works*, vol. 16). When O'Leary and JW met personally a few years after their polemical interchange, JW commended his 'genteel carriage', his 'sense', and his 'learning'; see JW, *Journal*, May 12, 1787 (*Works*, 24:25). O'Leary's Enlightenment emphases made his position in Ireland uncertain, and in 1789 he left to take employment at the Spanish embassy in London. See Peter Guilday, 'Arthur O'Leary', *Catholic Historical Review* 9 (1924): 530–451.

²The letter is described as 'Addressed to the Committee for Conducting the Free Press, and taken from the *Freeman's Journal*'.

³While Roman Catholics were officially tolerated, or allowed to hold their own worship, after the Elizabethan settlement, they suffered under a number of economic and political restrictions. These were based on the fear that Catholics were bound to follow the direction of the Pope in civil matters, as well as the connection of Catholicism to the deposed Stuart line and to France and Spain, long-time enemies of England.

The Catholic Relief Act of 1778 was one of the first moves to set aside these restrictions. It allowed Roman Catholics to purchase and inherit land, and to join the army, if they swore an oath against the Stuart claim to the throne and the papal claim to civil jurisdiction. This came as Britain was enmeshed in battle with their colonists in North America, who were supported by the French. There were also growing strains with Spain. The British army was stretched thin and one purpose of the act was to provide a new source for recruits.

Many Protestants had misgivings about the Catholic Relief Act, which were heightened when Spain declared war on Britain in June 1779 and began to plan a naval invasion. Lord George Gordon (1751–93) took the lead in organizing this concern, forming the "Protestant Association" in late 1779, with the explicit purpose of repealing the Relief Act.

⁴Referring to JW's letter to the *Public Advertiser* of Jan. 21, 1780, which appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* (Feb. 15–17, 1780), p. 2.

scratch of the cobbler's awl? For the parchment would be profaned, if the man who does not know how to write, made the sign of the x.

I am a member of that communion which Mr. Wesley aspersed in so cruel a manner. I disclaimed upon oath, in presence of Judge Henn,⁵ the creed which Mr. Wesley attributes to me. I have been the first to unravel the intricacies of that very oath of allegiance proposed to the Roman Catholics, as it is worded in a manner which, at first sight, seems abstruse. And, far from believing it lawful to 'violate faith with [p. 14] heretics',⁶ I solemnly swear, without *equivocation* or the danger of perjury, that in a Catholic country where I was chaplain of war, I thought it a crime to engage the king of England's soldiers or sailors into the service of a Catholic monarch, against their Protestant sovereign.⁷ I resisted the solicitations, and ran the risk of incurring the displeasure of a minister of state, and losing my pension. And my conduct was approved of by all the divines in a monastery to which I then belonged, who all unanimously declared that in conscience I could not have behaved otherwise. Mr. Wesley may consider me as a fictitious character. But should he follow his *precursor* (I mean his letter wafted to us over the British channel) and on his mission from Dublin to Bandon make Cork his way, Doctor Berkeley,⁸ parish minister near Midleton, Captains Stanner, French, and others, who were prisoners of war in the same place and at the same time, can fully satisfy him as to the reality of my existence in the line already described. And that in the beard which I then wore (and which, like that of Sir Thomas More, *never committed any treason*⁹) I never concealed either poison or dagger to destroy my Protestant neighbour; though it was long enough to set all Scotland in a blaze, and to deprive Lord George Gordon of his *senses*.

Should any of the Scotch missionaries attend Mr. Wesley into this kingdom, and bring with them any of the stumps of the faggots with which Henry the Eighth, his daughters Mary and [p. 15] Elizabeth, and the learned James the First, roasted the heretics of their times in Smithfield; or some of the faggots with which the Scotch saints, of whose proceedings Mr. Wesley is become the apologist, have burnt the houses of their inoffensive Catholic neighbours; we will convert them to their proper use. In Ireland the revolution of the great Platonic year is almost completed. Things are re-instated in their primitive order. And the faggot, which, without any mission from Christ, preached the gospel by orders of Catholic and Protestant kings, is confined to the kitchen. Thus, what formerly roasted the man at the stake now helps to feed him. And nothing but the severity of winter, and the coldness of the climate in Scotland, could justify Mr. Wesley in urging the rabble to light it. This is a bad time to introduce it amongst us, when we begin to be formidable to our foes, and united among ourselves. And to the glory of Ireland be it said, we never condemned but murderers, and perpetrators of unnatural crimes, to the faggot.

By a statute of Henry the Sixth, every Englishman of the Pale¹⁰ was bound to shave his upper lip, or clip his whiskers, in order to distinguish himself from all Irishman.¹¹ By this mark of distinction it seems that what Campien calls in his old English 'glib', and what we call 'the beard', as well as the complexion and size of both [p. 16] people, were much the same. In my opinion it had tended more to their mutual interest, and the glory of that monarch's reign, not to go to the nicety of *splitting a hair*, but encourage the growth of their *fleeces*, and inspire them with such mutual love for each other, as to induce

⁵William Henn (c.1720–96) was made a justice of the Court of King's Bench (Ireland) in 1768 and remained on the Bench until 1791.

⁶JW had asserted that the Council of Constance taught that 'no faith is to be kept with heretics'.

⁷O'Leary was in the Capuchin monastery at St. Malo in northern France during the Seven Years' War, where he ministered to British prisoners of war.

⁸Dr. Robert Berkeley (c. 1698–1787) was vicar of Whitechurch, but lived in Midleton, Co. Cork.

⁹Thomas More was executed for treason because he refused to accept the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. He is described as having a long beard at the time of his death.

¹⁰The area of Ireland under English jurisdiction.

¹¹Note in original: 'See the statutes of that king, and lament the effects of divisions fomented by sovereigns.'

them to kiss one another's beards, as brothers salute each other at Constantinople after a few days absence.

I am likewise of opinion that Mr. Wesley, who prefaces his letter with 'the interest of the Protestant religion', would reflect more honour on his ministry in promoting the happiness of the people, by preaching love and union, than in widening the breach and increasing their calamities by division. The English and Irish were at that time of the same religion; but, divided in their affections, were miserable. Though divided in speculative opinions, if united in sentiment, we should be happy. The English settlers breathed the vital air in England, before they inhaled the soft breezes of our temperate climate. The present generation can say, 'Our fathers and grandfathers have been born, bred, and buried here. We are Irishmen, as the descendants of the Normans, who have been born in England, are Englishmen.'

Thus born in an island in which the ancients might have placed their Hesperian gardens and golden apples, the temperature of the climate and quality of the soil *inimical* to *poisonous insects*, have cleaned our veins from the *sour* and *acid* blood of the Scythians and Saxons. We begin [p. 17] to open our eyes, and to learn wisdom from the experience of ages. We are tender-hearted. We are good natured. We have feelings. We shed tears on the urns of the dead, deplore the loss of hecatombs of victims slaughtered on the gloomy altars of religious bigotry, cry in seeing the ruins of cities over which fanaticism has displayed the funeral torch, and sincerely pity the blind zeal of our Scotch and English neighbours (whose constant character is to pity none) for erecting the banners of persecution at a time when the inquisition is abolished in Spain and Milan, and the Protestant gentry are caressed at Rome and live unmolested in the luxuriant plains of France and Italy.

The statue of Henry the Sixth is now grown obsolete. The razor of calamity has shaved our lower and upper lips, and given us smooth faces. Our land is uncultivated, our country a desert. Our natives are forced into service of foreign kings, storming towns, and in the very heat of slaughter, tempering Irish courage with Irish mercy.¹² All our misfortunes flow from the long reigning intolerance, and the storms which, gathering first in the Scotch and English atmosphere, never failed to burst over our heads.

We are too wise to quarrel about religion. The Roman Catholics sing their psalms in Latin with a few inflections of [p. 18] the voice. Our Protestant neighbours sing the same psalms in English on a larger scale of musical notes. We never quarrel with our honest and worthy neighbours, the Quakers, for not singing at all. Nor shall we ever quarrel with Mr. Wesley for *raising his voice to heaven*, and warbling forth his canticles on whatever tune he pleases, whether it be the tune of Guardian Angels, or Lango-lee. We like *social harmony*, and in *civil* music hate *discordance*. Thus when we go the shambles we never enquire into the butcher's religion, but in to the quality of his meat. We care not whether the ox was fed in the pope's territories, or on the mountains of Scotland, provided the joint be good. For though there be many *heresies* in old books, we discover neither *heresy* nor *superstition* in beef and claret. We divide them cheerfully with one another. And though of different religions, we sit over the bowl with as much cordiality as if we were at a *love feast*. The Protestant Associations of Scotland and England may pity us, but we feel more comfort than if we were scorching one another with fire and faggot.

Instead of singing 'peace to men of good will on earth',¹³ does Mr. Wesley intend to sound the fury Alecto's horn,¹⁴ or the war-shell of the Mexicans? The Irish, who have no resource but in their union, does he mean to arm them against each other? One massacre to which the fanaticism of the Scotch and English regicides gave rise is more than enough. Mr. Wesley should not sow the seeds of a second. When he felt the first [p. 19] fruits and illapses of the spirit; when his zeal, too extensive to be confined within the majestic temples of the Church of England, or the edifying meeting houses of the other Christians,

¹²Note in original: 'Count Dillon and the Irish brigade could not be prevailed on by D'Etaing to put the English garrison to the sword. "We will not kill our countrymen", said they. "Would it not be wiser to let the gallant men go to mass, and serve their own king?"' [Referring to Arthur Dillon (1670–1733).]

¹³Luke 2:14.

¹⁴A figure in Greek mythology, whose name means 'unceasing anger'.

prompted him to travel over most parts of Europe and America, and to establish a religion and houses of worship of his own; what opposition has he not met with from civil magistrates! With what insults from the rabble! Broken benches, dead cats, and pools of water bear witness! Was he then the trumpeter of persecution? Was his pulpit changed into Hudibras's 'drum ecclesiastic'?¹⁵ Did he abet banishment and proscription on the score of conscience?

Now that his *tabernacle* is established in peace, after the clouds have borne testimony to his mission,¹⁶ he complains in his second letter¹⁷ (wherein he promises to continue the fire which he has already kindled in England) that people of exalted ranks in church and state have refused entering into a mean confederacy against the laws of nature and the rights of mankind. In his first letter he disclaims persecution on the score of religion, and in the same breath strikes out a creed of his own for the Roman Catholics, and says that 'they should not be tolerated even amongst the Turks'. Thus the satyr in the fable breathes hot and cold in the same blast, and a lamb of peace is turned inquisitor.

'But is not that creed of the Roman Catholics mentioned by Mr. Wesley the [p. 20] creed of the Roman Catholics?' By right it should be theirs, as it is so often bestowed on them, and that according to the civil law a free gift becomes the property of the person to whom it is bestowed, if there be no legal disqualification on either side. But the misfortune is that the Catholics and the framers of the fictitious creed—so often refuted, and still forced on them—resemble the Frenchman and the blunderer in the comedy; one forces into the other's mouth a food which he cannot relish, and against which his stomach revolts.

Mr. Wesley places in the front of his lines the *general* council of Constance, places the pope in the centre, and brings up the rear of his squadrons with a confabulation between a priest and a woman, whilst his letters are skirmishing on the *wings*. Let us march from the rear to the front, for *religious warriors seldom observe order*.

A priest then said to a woman whom Mr. Wesley knows, 'I see you are no heretic. You have the experience of a real Christian.' 'And would you burn me?' said she. 'God forbid', replied the priest, 'except for the good of the church.' Now this priest must be descended from some of those who attempted to blow up a river with gunpowder, in order to drown a city.¹⁸ Or he must have taken her for a witch. Whereas, by his own confession, 'she was no heretic'. [p. 21] A gentleman whom I *know* declared to me upon his honour that he heard Mr. Wesley repeat, in a sermon preached by him in the city of Cork, the following words: 'A little bird cried out in Hebrew, 'O eternity! eternity! Who can tell the length of eternity?''¹⁹ I am then of opinion that a *little Hebrew bird* gave Mr. Wesley the important information

¹⁵Samuel Butler burlesques seventeenth-century Puritans in *Hudibras*. The poem begins (lines 9–12) with a clergy person summoning a congregation to action: "When Gospel-trumpeter, surrounded / With long-eared rout, to battle sounded, / And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic, / Was beat with fist, instead of a stick"

¹⁶Note in original: 'See an abridgment of Wesley's journal, wherein he says that in preaching one day at Kinsale a cloud pitched over him.' [See JW, *Journal*, Aug. 7, 1760, *Works*, 21:270.]

¹⁷O'Leary is referring here to a letter dated Feb. 19, and signed 'J. W.' from London (which included a transcription of 'A Defence of the Protestant Association'), that appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* (Feb. 26, 1780), p. 2. John Wesley, when responding to O'Leary, denied that this letter was by him, which helps explain the difference in stance between the two letters that O'Leary notes.

¹⁸Note in original: 'Amongst other plots attributed to the Roman Catholics in the reign of Charles the First, this extraordinary one was charged upon them. See Hume.' [Referring to David Hume's *History of England*.]

¹⁹This would be a repeat of the sermon that JW preached first in Tauton, Somersetshire, on Sept. 12, 1775, and was published as Sermon 84, *The Important Question* (*Works*, 3:181–98). See section III.12 (p. 196), where JW relates a story found in Philip Melancthon's *Historiae Quaedam Recitata Inter Publicas Lectiones* about a talking bird (not mentioning what language). JW specifically comments

about the *priest* and the *woman*. One story is as interesting as the other, and both are equally alarming to the Protestant interest. Hitherto is drawn a battle between us.

From the rear then, let us advance to the van, and try if the *general* council of Constance, which Mr. Wesley places at the head of his *legions*, be impenetrable to the sword of truth. After reading the ecclesiastical history concerning the council, and Doctor Hay's answer to Archibald Drummond,²⁰ I have gone through drudgery of examining it all over in St. Patrick's library when Mr. Wesley's letters made their appearance. The result of my searches is a conviction that there is no such doctrine as 'violation of faith with heretics', authorised by that council. Pope Martin V, whom the fathers of the council elected, published a bull wherein he declares, 'That is not lawful for a man to perjure himself on any account, even for the faith.' Subsequent pontiffs have lopped off the excrescences of relaxed casuistry.

The pope's *horns* then are not so dangerous as to induce Mr. Wesley to sing the lamentations of Jeremiah the prophet, deploring the loss of [p. 22] Jerusalem, or to send us from London an Hebrew elegy to be modulated on the key of the Irish Olagone. 'Their souls are pained, and their hearts tremble for the ark of God.'²¹ 'Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askalon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.'²²

This same elegy resounded through Great Britain a little before the *ark* of England was destroyed, the sceptre wrested out of the hands of her king, her pontiffs deprived of their mitres, and her noble men banished with her senate. Thus, as the Delphian sword slaughtered the victim in honour of the gods, and dispatched the criminal on whom the sentence of the law was passed, the Scripture is made subservient to profane as well as sacred purposes. It recommends and enforces subordination, and at the same time becomes an arsenal from whence faction takes its arms. Like Boileau's heroes in the battle of the books,²³ we ransack old divines who, wrapped up in their parchment blankets, sleep at the ease on the shelves of libraries, where they would snore for ever if the noise of the *gunpowder* upon an anniversary day, or the restless hands of pamphlet writers industrious in inflaming the rabble, did not rouse them from their slumber.²⁴ Peace to their manes!

The charity sermon preached in Dublin by Doctor Campbell, the anniversary sermon preached in Cork [p. 23] last November by Doctor la Malliere, and the discourse to the Echlinville volunteers, by Mr. Dickson²⁵ have done more good in one day, either by procuring relief for the distressed or by promoting

parenthetically: 'I pass no judgment upon it, but set it down nearly in his own words.'

²⁰George Hay, *Roman Catholic fidelity to Protestants ascertained; or, An answer to Mr. W.A.D.'s [William Abernethy Drummond's] letter to G.H.* (London: J.P. Coghlan, 1779).

²¹Note in original: 'Wesley's second letter.' [Again, this second letter was *not* by JW.]

²²2 Sam. 1:20; quoted in the second letter that O'Leary attributed to JW. Cf. 1 Sam. 4:13.

²³Referring to an argument about the relative value of ancient vs. modern writer that split French cultural loyalties between 1687 and 1715. Nicolas Boileau led the forces arguing that classical antiquity produced mighty minds that posterity could only follow with humility.

²⁴*An Appeal from the Protestant Association to the People of Great Britain concerning the Probable Tendency of the late Act of Parliament in favour of the Papists* (London: J. Dodsley, et al., 1779) was published on Nov. 5, 1779, to mark the anniversary of deliverance from the 'Gun-powder Plot'; see advertisement in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Nov. 3, 1779), p. 1.

²⁵Thomas Campbell, *A Sermon preached in the Church of St. Andrew's Dublin, on Sunday the sixth of February, 1780 ...for the benefit of charity* (Dublin: W. Hallhead, 1780); William Steel Dickson, *A Sermon on the Propriety and Advantages of acquiring the Knowledge and use of arms in times of public danger; preached before Echlinville volunteers, on Sunday the 28th of March 1779* (Belfast: James Magee, 1779).

benevolence, peace, and harmony amongst fellow-subjects of all denominations, than the folios written on Pope Joan²⁶ have done in the space of two hundred years.

I must now sound the retreat, with a design to return to the charge and to attack Mr. Wesley's first battery, on which he has mounted the *canons* of the council of Constance. If I cannot succeed from want of abilities, but not from want of the armour of truth, I am sure of making a retreat in which it is impossible to cut me off. For in the very supposition that the council of Constance, and all the councils of the world had defined 'violation of faith with heretics' as an article of faith, and that I do not believe it. 'Violation' then 'of faith with heretics' is no article of my belief. For to form one's belief, it is not sufficient to read a proposition in a book. Interior conviction must captivate the mind. The Arian reads the divinity of Christ in the New Testament, and still denies it. Would Mr. Wesley assert that the divinity of Christ is an article of the Arian faith? If then 'violation of faith with heretics' be the tessera fidei,²⁷ the badge of the Roman Catholic religion, the Roman Catholics are all Protestants, as well entitled to sing their psalms as Mr. Wesley his canticles. I would not be one hour a member of any religion that would profess such a creed as Mr. Wesley has sent us from London. [p. 24]

You may be perhaps surprised, gentlemen, that the foundation to a serious subject should savour so little of the gloom and sullenness so familiar to polemical writers; or that the ludicrous and serious should be so closely interwoven with each other. — But remark²⁸ a set of men who tax the nobility, gentry, and head clergy of England with *degeneracy* for not degrading the dignity of their ranks and possessions. Remark them exposing their parchments in meeting houses and vestries, begging the signatures of every peasant and mendicant who comes to hear the gospel: 'Wrong no man.'²⁹ 'He that loves his neighbour fulfils the law.'³⁰ etc. And those pious souls, 'pained and trembling for the ark of God',³¹ running with the faggot to kindle the flames of sedition and oppress their neighbours. Remark in seventeen hundred and eighty a lord with his hair cropped, a Bible in his hand, turned elder and high priest at the age of *twenty-three*,³² and fainting for the *ark of Israel*.

In the foreground of this extraordinary picture remark a *missionary* [i.e., JW] who has reformed the very reformation, separated from all the Protestant churches, and in *trimming* the vessel of religion, which he has brought in a *new dock*, has suffered as much for the sake of conscience as Lodowicke Muggleton or James Nailer could register in their martyrology.³³ Remark that same gentleman inflaming the rabble, dividing his majesty's subjects, propagating black slander, and [p. 25] throwing the gauntlet to people who never provoked him.

Is not fanaticism, the mother of cruelty and the daughter of folly, the first character in this *religious masquerade*? Is it not the first spring that gives motion to these extraordinary figures so

²⁶A woman who supposedly reigned as pope for a few years during the Middle Ages, according to a popular legend.

²⁷'The marker of faith.'

²⁸I.e., observe or take notice.

²⁹Cf. 2 Cor. 7:2.

³⁰Cf. Rom. 13:10.

³¹Cf. 1 Sam. 4:13.

³²Lord George Gordon (1751–93), born of a Scottish noble line, was first elected to Parliament in 1774 (at age of 23). He emerged as the leader of the Protestant Association movement.

³³Lodowicke Muggleton (1609–98) was an English religious thinker who founded a small Protestant sect that bore his name, and encountered public opposition, as evident in his spiritual account published posthumously: *The Acts of the Witnesses*, edited by Thomas Tomkinson (London: s.n., 1699). James Naylor (1618–60) was an early English Quaker who met with public resistance that was chronicled in *Memoir of the Life, Ministry, Tryal, and Sufferings of James Nailer* (London: J. Roberts, 1719).

corresponsive to Hogarth's enraged musician?³⁴ And in fencing with folly, have not the gravest authors handled the foils of ridicule? To the modern Footes and Molieres, or to the young student in rhetoric who employs irony in enlarging on his theme, should I forever leave the 'pained souls and trembling hearts' of the Scotch Jonathan and the English Samuel,³⁵ with their squadrons of Israelites fighting 'for the ark of the Lord', if what they style in England the Gordonian Associations had not voted their thanks to Mr. Wesley for what they call his 'excellent letter'.³⁶ Such a performance is worthy the appropriation of such censors, and in their holy shrines the sacred relic should be repositied. In examining a performance which contains in a small compass all the horrors invented by wild and misguided zeal, set forth in the most bitter language, I shall confine myself to the strict line of an apologist, who clears himself and his principles from the foulest aspirations. To the public and their impartial reason the appeal shall be made. To the sentiments implanted in the human breast and to the conduct of man, not to the rubbish of the schools, Mr. Wesley should have made application when he undertook to solve the interesting problem, Whether the Roman Catholics should be tolerated or [p. 26] persecuted? But inspired writers partake of the spirit of the *seers*, and copy as much as possible after the prophets. The prophet Ezekiel breathed on a pile of bones, and lo—a formidable army starting from the earth, and ranging itself in battle array. Mr. Wesley blows the dust of an old book, and lo—squadrons of religious warriors engage in a crusade for the extirpation of the infidels.

The loyalty, the conduct, the virtues common to all, the natural attachment of man to his interest and country, the peaceable behaviour of the Roman Catholics have no weight in the scale of candour and justice. An old council held four hundred years ago, is ransacked and misconstrued. A Roman Catholic is unworthy of being tolerated amongst the Turks, because Mr. Wesley puts on his spectacles to read old Latin.

I have the honour to remain, gentlemen,
Your humble and obedient servant,

Arthur O'Leary

Source: published transcription; Arthur O'Leary, *Mr. O'Leary's Remarks on the Rev. John Wesley's Letters in Defence of the Protestant Associations in England* (Dublin; London: reprinted for J. P. Coghlan, 1780), 12–26.³⁷

³⁴Referring to the satirical cartoons of William Hogarth (1697–1764).

³⁵I.e., Lord Gordon and JW.

³⁶This commendation took place at a meeting of the Protestant Association on Feb. 17, 1780, in Southwark, chaired by Lord Gordon; reported in the *London Evening Post* (Feb. 19–22, 1780), p 2; and *St. James's Chronicle* (Feb. 19–22, 1780), p. 1.

³⁷This letter appeared first in the *Freeman's Journal* (no known surviving copies). It was advertised first as the published pamphlet in *Freeman's Journal* on Mar. 28, 1780, p. 4. It was then printed from the pamphlet in *Walker's Hibernian Magazine* (Apr. 1780): 186–90.

From the Rev. Arthur O'Leary

Dublin
c. March 10 1780

[p. 27]

Gentlemen,¹

Fanaticism is a kind of religious folly. We laughed at it in a former letter. Whoever has a mind to indulge his humour at our expense is heartily welcome. You now expect a serious answer to a serious charge. I send you such as occurs.

'The Council of Constance has openly avowed violation of faith with heretics. But it has never been disclaimed. Therefore', concludes Mr. Wesley, 'the Roman Catholics should not be tolerated amongst the Turks or pagans.'²

A council so often quoted in anniversary sermons, parliamentary debates, and flying pamphlets challenges peculiar attention. We shall examine it with as much precision as possible, and with the more impartiality, as strict justice shall be done to all parties. Mr. Wesley knows that we are all Adam's children, who feel the [p. 28] fatal impressions of our origin. And that ambition which took its rise in heaven itself often lurks in a corner of the sanctuary where the ministers of religion offer up their prayers, as well as in the cabinets of kings where shrewd courtiers form their intrigues. At a time then when ambition, that insatiable desire of elevation, that worm which stings the heart, and never leaves it at rest, presented the universe with the extraordinary sight of three prelates reviving the restless spirit of the Roman triumvirate,³ and disturbing the peace of mankind as much with their spiritual weapons as Octavius, Anthony, and Lepidus had disturbed it with their armed legions.⁴ At a time when the broachers of new doctrines were kindling up the fire of sedition and, after shaking the foundations of what was then the established religion, were shaking the foundations of thrones and empires. At that critical time, in 1414, was held the Council of Constance, with a design, as the fathers of that council express themselves, to reform the church in her head and members, and put an end to the calamities which the restless pride of three bishops, assuming the titles of popes by the names of Gregory the Twelfth, Benedict the Thirteenth, and John the Twenty-Third, had brought on Europe, split into three grand factions by the ambition of the above-mentioned competitors. Such transactions in the ministers of a religion that preaches up peace and humility, as the solid foundations on which the structure of all Christian virtues is to be [p. 29] raised, may startle the unthinking reader and give him an unfavourable idea of religion. But we are never to confound the weakness of the minister with the holiness of his ministry. We respect the sanctuary in which Stephen officiated, though Nicholas profaned it. We revere the place from whence Judas fell, and to which Matthias was promoted. The Scriptures respect the chair of Moses, though they censure several pontiffs who sat in it. And no Catholic canonizes the vices of popes, though he respects their station and dignity. The pontifical throne is still the same, whether it be filled with a cruel Alexander the Sixth, or a benevolent Ganganelli.⁵

¹This letter too is described as 'Addressed to the Committee for Conducting the Free Press, and taken from the *Freeman's Journal*'.

²JW, 'A Letter to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*', §3.

³The Council of Constance was called to resolve the conflicting claim of three different persons to the papal throne.

⁴Caesar Augustus, Mark Antony, and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus formed a military alliance in Nov. 43 BCE that many view as the end of the Roman Republic. The Triumvirate existed for two consecutive five-year terms.

⁵Giovanni Vincenzo Antonio Ganganelli served as Pope Clement XIV from May 1769 to his death in 1774.

To the Council of Constance was cited then John Hus, a Bohemian famous for propagating errors tending to tear the mitre from the heads of bishops, and wrest the sceptre from the hands of kings. In a word, he was obnoxious to church and state. And if Mr. Wesley and I preached up his doctrine *in the name of God*, we would be condemned *in the name of the king*. The Protestant and Catholic divines would banish us from their universities, and the judges of assize would exterminate us from civil society. Such a doctor had no indulgence to expect from a council which, after deposing two rivals for the popedom, condemned a third for contumacy, and elected another in his room.

But in mentioning John Hus, whose trial and execution at Constance have given rise to the foul charge of *violation of faith with heretics*, let none [p. 30] imagine that I am an apologist for the fiery execution of persons, on the score of religious opinions. Let the legislators who were the first to invent the cruel method of punishing the errors of the mind with the excruciating tortures of the body, and anticipating the rigour of eternal justice, answer for their own laws. I am of opinion that the true religion, propagated by the effusion of the blood of its martyrs, would still triumph without burning the flesh of heretics; and that the Protestant⁶ and Catholic legislators who have substituted the blazing pile in the room of Phalaris's brazen bull⁷ might have pointed out a more lenient punishment for victims who, in their opinion, had no prospect during the interminable space of a boundless eternity but that of *passing from one fire into another*. If in enacting such laws they had consulted the true spirit of religion, I believe the reformation of their own hearts would have been a more acceptable sacrifice to the Divinity than hecatombs of human victims. 'No God nor man', says Tertullian, 'should be pleased with a forced service.' 'We are not to persecute those whom God tolerates', says St. Augustine. That faith is fictitious which is inspired by the edge of the sword.

But still the nature of society is such that, when once the common landmarks are set up, it [p. 31] opposes the hand of the individual that attempts to remove them. Where one common mode of worship is established, and fenced by the laws of the state, whoever attempts to overthrow it must expect to meet with opposition and violence, until custom softens the rigour of early prejudices and reconciles us to men whose features and lineaments are like our own, but still seem strange to us because their thoughts are different.

How far opposition to religious innovations is justifiable is not our business to discuss, but the experience of ages evinces the fact. And in dissimilar circumstances, Mr. Wesley has made the trial. In kingdoms where (as in the Roman Pantheon) every divinity had its altars, speculative deviations from the religion established by law, the singularity of love-feasts and nocturnal meetings, so unusual among the modern Christians of every denomination, roused the vigilance of the magistrate and influenced the rage of the rabble. Now that custom has rendered Mr. Wesley's meeting-houses and mode of worship familiar, and that all denominations enjoy a share of that religious liberty whereof he would fain deprive his Roman Catholic neighbour, his matin hymns give no uneasiness either to the magistrate or his neighbours. But had Mr. Wesley raised his notes on the high key of *civil discordance*—had he attempted by his sermons, his writings, and exhortations to deprive the bishops of the established religion of their croziers, kings of their thrones, and magistrates of the sword of justice—long ere [p. 32] now would his pious labours have been crowned with martyrdom, and his name registered in the calendar of [John] Foxe's saints.

Such, unfortunately, was the case of John Hus. Not satisfied with overthrowing what was then the established religion, and levelling the fences of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, he strikes at the root of all temporal power and civil authority. He boldly asserts that 'princes, magistrates, etc. in the state of mortal sin are deprived *ipso facto* of all power and jurisdiction.'⁸ In this doctrine was enveloped the seeds of

⁶Note in original: 'The imperial laws which condemned heretics to the flames have been put into execution by Calvin, Queen Elizabeth, James the First, etc.'

⁷A torture and execution device purportedly used in ancient Greece.

⁸Note in original: 'See the acts of the Council of Constance in Labbe's collection of councils.' I.e., Philippe Labbe, *Sacrosancta Concilia ad Regiam editionem exacta*, 17 vols. (1671–72).

anarchy and sedition, which subsequent preachers unfolded to the destruction of peace and tranquillity almost all over Europe, and which Sir William Blackstone describes as follows: 'The dreadful effects of such a religious bigotry, when actuated by erroneous principles, even of the Protestant kind, are sufficiently evident from the history of the Anabaptists⁹ in Germany, the Covenanters in [p. 33] Scotland, and the deluge of sectaries in England, who murdered their sovereign, overturned the church and monarchy, shook every pillar of law, justice, and private property, and most devoutly established a kingdom of saints in their stead.'¹⁰

John Hus then, after broaching the above mentioned doctrines, and making Bohemia the theatre of intestine war, is summoned to appear before the Council. He obtains a safe conduct from the Emperor Sigismund, commanding governors of provinces, etc. not to molest him on his journey to or return from Constance, but to afford him every aid and assistance. In all the provinces and cities through which he passes, he gives public notice of his intention to appear before the council and stand his trial. But instead of standing his trial, and retracting his errors, he attempts to make his escape, in [p. 34] order to disseminate and make them take deeper root. He is arrested and confined, in order that he should take his trial, after having violated his promise and abused a safe conduct granted him for the purpose of exculpating himself, or retracting his errors, if proved against him before his competent judges. It is here to be remarked that John Hus was an ecclesiastic, and that in spiritual cases the bishops were his only and competent judges. The boundaries of the two powers, I mean the church and state, being kept distinct; the censer left to the pontiff, and the sword to the magistrate. The church confined to her spiritual weapons; privation of life and limb and corporeal punishments being quite of the province of the state. One should not interfere with the other. As the body of the criminal is under the control of the magistrate, too jealous of his privilege to permit the church to interfere with his power—so, erroneous doctrines are under the control of spiritual judges, too jealous of their prerogatives to permit the civil magistrate to interfere with their rights. Hence, when the partisans of Hus raised clamours about his confinement, and pleaded his safe-conduct, the council published the famous decree which has given rise to so many cavils, for the space of four hundred years, though thousands of laws of a more important nature, and of which we now think but little, have been published since that time. [p. 35]

The council declares,

That every safe conduct granted by the emperor, kings, and other temporal princes to heretics or persons accused of heresy ought not to be of any prejudice to the Catholic faith, or to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Nor to hinder that such persons may and ought to be examined,

⁹Note in original: 'This is no imputation on the Anabaptists of our days, who are as peaceable and good men as any others. Men's opinions change with the times, as in different stages of life we change our thoughts, and settle at the age of forty the roving imagination of sixteen. Custom and mutual intercourse amongst fellow subjects of every denomination would soon quench the remaining sparks of religious feuds, if distinctive law were abolished. But unfortunately for the society in which we live, the laws, whose aim should be to unite the inhabitants, are calculated to divide them. My neighbour distrusts me, because the penal laws held me forth as a reprobate before I was born, and during my life encourage him to seize my horse, or drag me before a magistrate for saying my prayers; which reduces me to the sad necessity of hating him, or considering him as an enemy, if in the great struggle between nature and grace, religion does not triumph. Before Lewis the Fourteenth and George the First repealed the laws against witches, every disfigured old woman was in danger of her life, and considered as a sorceress. Since the *witch-making* laws have been repealed there is not a witch in the land, and the dairy-maid is not under the necessity of using counter-charms to hinder the milk from being enchanted from her pail. Thus if the penal laws, which by a kind of omnipotence create an original sin, making rogues of Catholics before they reach their hands to the tempting fruit, were once repealed, they would be as honest as their neighbours, and the objects of their love and confidence.

¹⁰Note in original: '[William] Blackstone's *Comment[aries on the Laws of England]*, vol. IV. chap. 8.'

judged, and punished according as justice shall require if those heretics refuse to revoke their errors. And the person who shall have promised them security shall not, in this case, be obliged to keep his promise, by whatever tie he may be engaged, because he has done all that is in his power to do.

I appeal to the impartial public, whether that declaration of the council does not regard the peculiar case of *safe-conducts*, granted by temporal princes, to persons who are liable to be tried by competent and independent tribunals? And whether it be not an insult to candour and commonsense, to give it such a latitude as to extend it to every lawful promise, contract, or engagement between man and man? As if the Council of Constance meant to authorize me to buy my neighbour's goods, and after a solemn promise to pay him, still to keep his substance and break my word.

The church and state are two distinct and independent powers, each in its peculiar line. A man is to be tried by the church for erroneous doctrines. A temporal prince grants this man a safe-conduct, to guard his person from any violence which may be offered him on his journey, and to procure him a fair and candid trial on [p. 36] his appearance before his lawful judges. Has not this prince done all that is in his power to do? Doth his promise to such a man authorize him to interfere with a foreign and independent jurisdiction, or to usurp the rights of another? Do not the very words of the council, 'because he has done all that is in his power to do', prove that lawful promises are to be fulfilled?

Such jurisconsults, whether Catholics or Protestants, such as Prenus, Speklam, and others, as I have accidentally read concerning the nature of safe-conducts lay down for a general rule that they are never granted to suspend the execution of the laws. *Salmis conductus contra jus non datur*. It were nugatory in the Emperor Sigismund, presumptive heir to a kingdom which Hus's doctrine had changed into a theatre of intestine wars, to grant a safe-conduct the meaning and sense whereof would be equivalent to the following pass: 'Although you have set kingdoms in a blaze by striking at the vitals of temporal authority, and overthrown the established religion of the land, yet go to Constance and comeback, without appearing before your lawful judges or retracting doctrines which have caused such disturbances in church and state.' Safe-conducts then are not granted to screen delinquents from punishment, when legally convicted; much less to countenance disobedience to the laws, and disorder, by impunity.

The council was the most competent judge of Hus's doctrine, in which he steadfastly [p. 37] persevered. Neither king nor emperor could deprive the bishops of privileges inseparably annexed to their characters— viz., spiritual jurisdiction and the right of judging doctrines. Hus was degraded and retrenched, according to the usual formalities, from a communion from which he had separated himself before. This is all the bishops could have done. This they acknowledge after the sentence of Hus's degradation was pronounced. 'This sacred synod of Constance, considering that the church of Christ has nothing further that it can do, decrees to leave John Hus to the judgment of the state.' His execution was in consequence of the imperial laws, enforced by the civil magistrate, as the execution of heretics in England and other Protestant states has been in consequence of the imperial laws adopted by such powers. The Protestant clergy, as well as the clergy of Constance, decided upon points of doctrine, and went no farther.

Thus we see that this superannuated charge of *violation of faith with heretics* resembles those nightly spectres which vanish upon a nearer approach. We find nothing in this council relative to such a charge, but a dispute about a pass granted to a man who goes to take his trial before judges whose jurisdiction could not be superseded. Or if we intend to do justice to men with the same eagerness that we are disposed to injure them, we must acknowledge that the fathers of that council condemned lies, frauds, perjury, and those horrors which Mr. Wesley would fain fix upon the Roman Catholics. The [p. 38] foundations then on which Mr. Wesley has erected his aerial fabric being once sapped, the superstructure must fall of course. And his long train of false and unchristian assertions are swept away as a *spider's web*, before the *wind* of logical rules. *From absurd premises follows an absurd conclusion*.

What greater absurdity than Mr. Wesley's insisting upon a general council's disclaiming a doctrine it never taught? If Mr. Wesley be so credulous as to believe that the pope has horns, we must

convene a general council to declare that his forehead is smooth? Is it not sufficient to disclaim the truth of the odious imputation, when the false creed is fixed on us? We are really of opinion that whoever believes us capable of harbouring such sentiments is capable of putting the horrid maxims in practice. He must have studied the human heart not in the books of nature but in [Thomas] Hobbes's *Leviathan*, and should curse his fate that providence had been so unkindly partial to him.

Rousseau declares, that if he had been present at the resurrection of Lazarus, he would not have believed it. 'The apparition', says he, 'would have made a fool of me, by frightening me out of my senses. But it would never have made a convert of me.'¹¹

If a general council were held in order to *disclaim* the ridiculous and abominable creed imputed to Roman Catholics, the sceptic, who gives no credit to their doctors and universities, to the oaths and declarations of millions, would [p. 39] give no credit to a convention of bishops with the pope at their head.

Let the appeal be made, not to stubborn sceptics but to those who listen to the voice of reason and consult the heart. This interior monitor, when passion and prejudice are hushed into silence, is seldom consulted in vain. Let us not travel into Catholic states where perjury is punished with death, and every argument tending to prove that the pope can absolve subjects from oaths and grant a dispensation to commit all kinds of crimes is confuted with a halter. Let us look nearer home, and compare what we see on one hand, with what is supposed on the other.

We see a million and half of Roman Catholics smarting under the most oppressive laws that the human heart could ever devise. When they were enacted our ancestors had the lands of their fathers and the religion of their education. If perjury had been an article of their belief, they could have secured their inheritance by taking an oath of abjuration. If papal dispensations were, in their opinion, lenitives to an ulcerated conscience, when or where could they have been more seasonably applied than at that time and place where the properties of millions depended on the application?

If oaths against conviction, dispensations with perjury, and anticipated absolutions from future crimes were articles of their belief, they would have prevented the blazing comets which scorch the living and spread their influence to the [p. 40] dormitories of the dead from kindling in their native air; and hindered cruelty, which is disarmed in the tyrant's breast at sight of the expiring victim, from pursuing them to the grave and depriving them of the *cold* comfort of mingling their ashes with those of their ancestors.¹²

Those laws which have banished our nobility from the senate; deprived our gentry of the liberty of wearing a sword, either as a means of defence against the midnight assassin or as a part of dress in the open day; the merchant of the power of realizing the fruits of his industry, in obtaining landed security for his money, or the liberty of purchasing; the lower class of people of the liberty of becoming common soldiers, mayor's sergeants, or coal-measurers; and the valiant youth of serving his king, and reaping laurels in defence of his country—these laws are all still in being. It is true, to the honour of the Irish senate, they have staunched the blood flowing this long time past from one of the most tender veins of the human heart, by putting it out of the power of the profligate son to betray and rob his tender and hoary father. But still [p. 41] the insidious neighbour can seize his neighbour's horse. The unfaithful husband can banish his chaste and virtuous wife, after the oath pledged in presence of God at the nuptial

¹¹Cf. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Miscellaneous Works* (London: T. Becket and P. A. de Hondt, 1767), 4:86–87.

¹²Note in original: 'The penal laws offered the most galling insult to the Roman Catholic gentry at the time of their being enacted. Their burying places were in the ruins of old abbeys, founded by their ancestors. A law was enacted prohibiting to bury in those dreary haunts of cats and weasels, and a fine of ten shillings was to be levied on every person who assisted at the funeral.'

solemnity. The designing villain can set fire to his house, and build a new one, at the expense of his Catholic neighbours who were asleep whilst he himself was lighting the faggot.¹³

Thus like a *running evil*, in a successive gradation, they ulcerate every part of the body. And though the lenity of the magistrate is a kind of mollifying application, that may assuage the sore for a certain time, yet whilst the noxious humour lurks within the recess of the law, we can never expect a radical cure.

'It is needless to comment upon the spirit of such laws—the very recital chills with horror.' So remarks my learned and worthy acquaintance, Doctor Campbell.¹⁴ 'Let it not be argued that these laws are seldom put in execution. Is property to depend upon the courtesy of an avaricious, malignant neighbour? ... Damocles was, perhaps, safe enough under the suspended sword of Dionysius; but the apprehension of danger scared away those visions of [p. 42] happiness which he had seen in the envied pomp of tyranny.'¹⁵ 'Laws', says the President Montesquieu, '*which do all the mischief that can be done, in cold blood.*'¹⁶ And to which Lucretius might allude in his famous *Epiphonema*: '*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!*' (Could religion be productive of such mischief!) That philosopher who, in reading the epitaph of a voluptuous monarch, cried out that it was better suited to an ox than to a king ('*Bove quam rege dignius*); in reading the penal code, could form another antithesis: 'The seal that gave a sanction to such laws should rather bear the impression of the claws of a lion than the head of a queen.'¹⁷

Such are the laws to whose unrelenting rigour we are every day exposed. The disposition of man, so averse to restraint, would soon suggest a method of dissolving the odious chains which, like those used by the Tuscan princes who fastened living men to dead bodies, punish for an entire century the living for the dead. The disposition of man, so averse to restraint, would [p. 43] soon shake off the oppressive burden, if the importunate voice of conscience did not silence the cries of nature, and intimate to the Catholic that *death is preferable to perjury*. The remedy is in our own hands, and we daily refuse to apply it, though a small bandage could soon close up the bleeding veins of oppression, and a slight palliative remove the temporal grievances of which we complain. The churches are open. And though Mr. Wesley says that 'our oaths are light as air',¹⁸ yet one oath taken against the conviction of our consciences would level the fences, and sweep away all the penal laws, 'as so many spiders' webs',¹⁹ to use his *delicate* expression. This is an argument which speaks to the feelings of man, and which no sophistry can ever refute. The priests themselves are interested in the profanation. For by entering into a collusion with their flocks, and using their magic powers to forgive all sins *past, present, and to come*, they could permit them to graze on the *commons of legal indulgence*. And by turning them into a richer pasture, expect more milk and wool. Avarice has ever been the reproach of the sanctuary. It is recorded in Scripture that the priests

¹³Note in original: 'Mr. O'Leary was present when the case was tried in the county courthouse of Cork. He has likewise seen the venerable matron, after twenty-four years marriage, banished from the perjured husband's house, though it was proved in open court that for six months before his marriage he went to mass. But the law requires that he should be a year and a day of the same religion.'

¹⁴Thomas Campbell, *A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland* (Dublin: W. Whitestone et al., 1778), 251.

¹⁵Note in original: '*Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland*, pp. 251–52.'

¹⁶Charles de Secondat, Baron Montesquieu *The Spirit of Laws* (London: J. Nourse & P. Valliant, 1750), 1:464.

¹⁷Note in original: 'Queen Anne, the last sovereign of the Stuart line, who, after combining against her father and violating the articles of Limerick, under pretence of strengthening the Protestant religion, gave a sanction to those laws; though her chief aim was to secure herself against the claims of her brother. Thus religion often becomes an engine of policy in the hands of sovereigns. Query to civilians: Should not oppressive laws cease, when the motives that gave rise to them subsist no more?'

¹⁸JW, 'A Letter to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*', §7.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, §4.

of the old law used to take the best part of the victim to themselves, before it was offered to the God of Israel, and that Judas sold our Saviour for thirty pieces of silver. Mr. Wesley then must *charitably* presume that no *priest* will forego his personal interest in compliment to his successor. And as it is his [p. 44] interest to impose upon his votaries, to slacken the reins and shelter himself under the shade of the laws, either perjury is no part of his belief or he must be too scrupulous; which in Mr. Wesley's opinion is *heresy* to believe.

In ethics, as in mathematics, there are self-evident axioms. No proposition in Euclid is more clear than the following: 'A person who does not think perjury a crime, would not forfeit a guinea from reluctance to an oath.' The Roman Catholics forfeit every privilege, rather than take an oath against their conscience. Are not they Adam's children? Have they not the same sensations of pain and pleasure as other men? Their vices and virtues, do they not run in the same channels with those of their Protestant neighbours? Are they not animated with the same desires of glory, allured by the blandishments of pleasure, courted by the charms of riches, as eager for the enjoyment of ease and opulence? If perjury be their creed, if their clergy be endued with the magic power of forgiving not only *present* but *future sins*, why do not they glide gently down the stream of legal liberty, instead of stemming the torrent of oppression? Why do not they qualify themselves for sitting in the senate, and giving laws to the land in concert with their countrymen, instead of being the continual objects of penal sanctions? It is that they are diametrically the reverse of what they are represented. [p. 45] Their religion forbids them to sport with the awful name of the Divinity. They do not choose to impose upon their neighbours, or themselves, by perjury; nor run the risk of eternal death for a little honey. Were it otherwise, in three-weeks time they could all read their recantations, and be on a level with the rest of their fellow-subjects. They could imitate that philosopher who had two religions—one for himself, and another for his country. Yet the archives of national justice can prove that Catholics, reduced to the necessity of discovering against themselves, preferred the loss of their estates to the guilt of perjury, when a false oath could have secured them in their property. Notwithstanding this imputed creed, they prefer the smarting afflictions of the body to the stinging remorse of the soul. And when worldly prosperities stand in competition with conscience, they rather choose to be its martyrs than executioners. Gentlemen, reconcile if you can perjurers from principle with sufferers from delicacy of conscience, and I shall style you the children of the *great Apollo*.

But are not the Catholics a set of passive machines, veering at the breath of the pope, who can dispense with them in anything? 'Or what security can they give to Protestant governors, whilst they acknowledge his spiritual power?'²⁰ If this be any objection to their loyalty, Catholic kings should banish their Catholic subjects, and introduce Protestants in their stead. For as the Roman Catholic faith is the same all over the [p. 46] world, and that France and Spain are more convenient to the pope than the Britannic islands, he would have more machines to move, more votaries to obey his mandates, and more facility in compassing his designs. In England and Ireland all the Protestants would oppose him; whereas in Catholic kingdoms, if his power has such an unlimited sway over the conscience of man as Mr. Wesley asserts, every subject, nay, kings themselves, would be bound to obey him. But Catholic subjects know that if God must have his own, Caesar must have his due. In his quality of pontiff, they are ready to kiss the pope's feet. But if he assumes the title of conqueror, they are ready to bind his hands. The very ecclesiastical benefices, which are more in the spiritual line, are not at his disposal.

When England had more to dread from him than now, a Catholic parliament passed the statute of praemunire;²¹ the bishops and mitred abbots preferred their own temporal interest to that of the pope, and reserved the benefices to themselves and the clergy under their jurisdiction. Charity begins at home, and I do not believe any Catholic so divested of it as to prefer fifty pounds a year under the pope's government to an hundred pounds under that of a Protestant king. Queen Mary, so devoted to the pope's cause, both on account of her religion and the justice done to her mother by the inflexible resolution of the sovereign

²⁰Cf. *ibid.*, §5.

²¹The Statute of Praemunire (16 Ric. 2, c. 5) prohibited the assertion or maintenance of papal jurisdiction, or any other foreign jurisdiction in England, against the supremacy of the monarch.

pontiff, still would not cede her temporal rights, nor those of her subjects, in compliment to his spiritual power. After the [p. 47] reconciliation of her kingdom to the apostolical see, a statute was passed enacting that the pope's bulls, briefs, etc. should be merely confined to spirituals, without interfering with the independence of her kingdom, or the rights of her subjects.

The history of Europe proclaims aloud that the Roman Catholics are not passive engines in the hands of popes, and that they confine his power within the narrow limits of his spiritual province. They have often taken his cities, and opposed Paul's sword to Peter's keys, and *silenced the thunders of the Vatican* with the noise of the cannon. They know that Peter was a fisherman when kings swayed the sceptre, and that the subsequent grandeur of his successors could never authorize him to alter the primitive institution that commands subjects to obey their rulers, and to give Caesar his due.

With regard to his spiritual power, you will be surprised, gentlemen, when I tell you that, from Lodowicke Muggleton down to John Wesley, those who have instituted new sects amongst the Christians have assumed more power than the pope dare to assume over the Catholics.

They may add or diminish; but with regard to the pope, the landmarks are erected and we would never permit him to remove them. If he attempted to preach up five sacraments instead of seven, we would immediately depose him. Mr. Wesley may alter his faith as often as he pleases, and prevail on others to do the same. But the pope can never alter ours. We acknowledge him, indeed, as head of the church, for [p. 48] every society must have a link of union, to guard against confusion and anarchy. And without annexing any infallibility to his person, we acknowledge his title to precedence and preeminence. But in acknowledging him as the *first pilot to steer the vessel*, we acknowledge a compass by which he is to direct his course. He is to preserve the vessel, but never to expose it to shipwreck. Any deviation from the laws of God, the rights of nature, or the faith of our fathers would be the fatal rock on which the pope himself would split. In a word, the pope is our first pastor. He may feed, but cannot poison us. We acknowledge no power in him either to alter our faith or to corrupt our morals.

If the pope's power were then rightly understood, his spiritual supremacy would give no more umbrage to the king of Great Britain than the jurisdiction of a diocesan bishop. But deep-rooted prejudices can scarcely be removed. And little can be expected from the generality, when the learned themselves are hurried by the tide of popular error.

From want of rightly understanding the case, and attention to the discriminating line drawn by the Catholics between the pope's spiritual and temporal power, Sir William Blackstone himself gave into the snare of vulgar delusion. This learned expositor of England's common law declares the Roman Catholics as well entitled to every legal indulgence as the other dissenters from the established religion, maugre their real presence, purgatory, confessions, etc. But still the pope's ghost haunts him to such [p. 49] a degree that he would fain have the Catholics abjure his spiritual supremacy. But Sir William, who has exposed himself to the censure of Mr. Sheridan in establishing the formidable right of conquest over Ireland,²² and to the animadversions of the divines by declaring that an act of parliament 'can alter the religion of the land'²³ (as if, by act of parliament, we should all become Turks, be circumcised, and expect an earthly paradise), has exposed himself to the reproaches of every smatterer in divinity, who could ask him if, in acknowledging the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishop of London, he encroached upon the privileges of the Lord Mayor.

But in talking of the power of parliament 'to alter the religion of the land', Sir William has argued from facts. And in talking of the *spiritual* power of the pope, he must have argued from hearsay. The lawyer may be excused when he talks of spiritual powers. But what apology can be pleaded by the apostle and divine who, like Tristram Shandy's priest, baptizes the child before he is born, and grants popes and priests the power of forgiving all sins, not only *past* and *present*, but *sins to come*? This Mr. Wesley asserts. It is surprising magic that *forgives* now the sin that is to be committed a hundred years hence. Let

²²Charles Francis Sheridan, *Observations on the Doctrine laid down by Sir William Blackstone, Respecting the Extent of the Power of the British Parliament, Particularly with Relation to Ireland* (London: J. Almon, 1779).

²³See Blackstone, *Commentaries*, 1:156.

no one deprive Mr. Wesley of the glory of the *invention*. Past sins, in our belief, can be forgiven by popes and priests, not as primary agents but as subordinate instruments in the hands of the Divinity; not according to the [p. 50] absolute will of the priest, but according to the dispositions of the penitent, and the clauses of the covenant of mercy, which the priest can neither alter nor disannul.

The dark recesses of the criminal consciences must be searched. The monster must be stifled in the heart that gave it birth. A sincere sorrow for past guilt, a firm resolution to avoid future lapses, and every possible atonement to the injured Deity and the injured neighbour are the previous and indispensable requisites. Take away any of the three conditions and the pope's and priest's absolution are but empty sounds. The keys of the church rattle in vain. They are no more than the mutterings of sorcerers, or words of incantation pronounced over a dead body without ever imparting to it the genial heat of animation and vitality. Popes nor priests can do no more than God himself, and the Scriptures declare that God will never forgive the sinner without sorrow and repentance. And the schoolmen dispute whether, by an absolute power, he could raise to the beatific vision a soul polluted with the defilements of guilt. If then the priest's absolution be any plea against Roman Catholics, it may as well be said that the promise of the Most High to pardon the repentant sinner, 'although his sins were as red as scarlet',²⁴ encourages men to commit sin. Or that a man may take an oath contrary to his conscience, under the idea that a subsequent repentance will gain forgiveness and pardon.

'But is it not intolerable presumption in man [p. 51] to arrogate such power?' Be it so. I am an apologist when I write in a public paper. Controversy I leave to the schools. If I make my confession to a priest, what is it to my neighbour? Society will gain by the *pretended* superstition, for the most immoral Catholics are those who seldom or never frequent the sacraments. I look on the pretended conferences of Numa Pompilius with the nymph Egeria, as a mere fiction devised by that political prince. Yet I admire the wisdom of the legislator who introduced a plan of softening the savage manners of his uncivilized subjects, and smoothing the asperity of stubborn nature by religious awe. Those who are unacquainted with the nature of confession may consider it as *priestcraft*. Yet neither master nor landlord will ever lose by the imposture when their servants and tenants kneel to a priest, whose duty is to revive in their minds the notions of probity and virtue. Thus the wisest of the Protestant churches have never discountenanced confession. The form of absolution, and the previous dispositions required on the part of the penitent are set down at large in the liturgy. And as to the power of forgiving sins, granted to the ministers of religion, express mention is made of it in the Scriptures. Mr. Wesley must acknowledge the power, whether it consists in the priestly absolution, or in the preaching of the gospel, or 'in pious canticles, sung with a skilful tongue and harmonious voice, lifting the rising soul and [p. 52] plunging it into a mystical slumber as soothing and soft as the balm of Gilead.'²⁵

Such Christians as acknowledge original sin, and the virtue of baptism to cancel the unavoidable debt, must acknowledge that the minister of religion effaces the stain by applying the elements. If the Catholics believe that, by the institution of Christ, the minister of religion can forgive sins; they are convinced at the same time that he is no more than a subordinate agent, who derives his power from a superior being in absolving the adult, as he derives his power from the same source when he purifies the soul of the infant. I know full well that God could change the heart of man, and forgive sins in young and old, without the interposition of a human being. The prophet who was consulted by two Jewish kings, and before he would give an answer called for a harp, could have received the prophetic inspiration without touching the strings of the tuneful lyre. Christ could have restored the blind man to his sight without applying the mud to his eyes, and converted the world without exposing his apostles to martyrdom. But am I to bring him to an account for using intermediate agents? Or [p. 53] what I think to be an institution of the Divinity, is it not my duty to abide by it? Happy those who can save themselves without the

²⁴Cf. Isa. 1:18.

²⁵Note in original: 'See an abridgment of Wesley's *Journal* where he compares the impressions he made on his hearers to the *balm of Gilead*. As far as I can recollect, he relates in his large journal a surprising history of one of his acquaintances who fell into a pious slumber, which deserves to be recorded in the history of the *seven sleepers*.'

assistance of any other! Thrice happy Mr. Wesley, who is already registered in the *book of life*, and empowered to grant *inamissable* security to others for the anticipated enjoyment of eternal bliss. He can sum up the number of the holy souls who have climbed up the steps of the mystical ladder; and on the highest step of all, as on the ramparts of an impregnable fortress, reckon so many souls *confirmed* in a state of *inamissable* sanctity.²⁶ Whilst I am so miserable as not to know whether I am *worthy of love or hatred*, and have millions of times more reason than St. Paul to solicit the prayers of my fellow-Christians, 'lest that in praying for others, I myself may become a reprobate'.²⁷

In our communion, gentlemen, we never hold forth our confessions and absolutions as licences for guilt, but as curbs to the passions. Our [p. 54] priests make their confession, as well as the laity, for no priest can absolve himself, nor flatter himself with impunity in committing *present* or *future crimes*. Our directors point out the path to the wayfaring pilgrim, between the two extremes of despair and *presumption*. To guard against the first, the gates of penance are thrown open, as so many avenues that lead to mercy. To guard against the second, the dread of God's judgments, the uncertainty of the last hour, the abuses of God's graces, which if neglected swell the long list of crimes and punishments, are held forth in all their terrors.

We represent to the guilty conscience, sinking under a weight of anxieties and crimes, the penitent thief crying out for mercy and obtaining pardon. We represent to the obstinate and presumptuous sinner the impenitent thief, threatening reprobation. We know that, whilst the serpent is raised up in the wilderness, no wound is incurable. We know on the other hand that, when criminal cities had filled up the measure of their iniquity, in vain did Abraham lift up his hands to heaven to solicit their pardon. If we place between the Judge and the sinner a great Mediator—though the Mediator and Judge be the same—yet we place between the Mediator and sinner an awful Judge. We earnestly recommend the frequent use of confession, because man is so frail that he stands in frequent need of it. But still we recommend it, not as loose reins to humour the [p. 55] sinners' passions, but as a stiff bridle to check their sallies. We never encourage our penitents to new disorders, but inspire them with detestation for former guilt, and fear of swelling the score. For we know the danger of affronting mercy by new crimes, but cannot know the fatal point where paternal goodness is limited. Thus we lead our penitents in the intermediate path between despair and presumption, by the delicate clue of hope and fear, until they reach the critical term, where the soul, after bursting the chains of its earthly prison, takes its flight into the vast region of spirits. And even when arraigned before the judgment seat, we tremble for its destiny.

Such, gentlemen, is the nature of confession, whether you consider it in a useful or abusive light. Had Mr. Wesley (who, after publishing twenty-six volumes, knows everything, even the *language of birds*) known its nature, he would not have adduced it as an argument in justification of intolerance, but rather left the *imputed power* of forgiving all kinds of *sins past, present, and to come* as a flower of rhetoric to grace the garden of the Cynics. Away then with his *priestly absolutions* and *dispensing powers*. He assumes more power than any priest could pretend to. Away with *violation of faith with heretics*. We acknowledge no heresy in the duties of social life, or the obligations of Christian virtues. [p. 56]

Such, gentlemen, are the principles of the Roman Catholics. They are quite the reverse of Mr. Wesley's charges. Let the impartial public decide whether a set of perjurers, authorised to commit all kinds of crimes with impunity (such as the Roman Catholics are painted), would suffer one week on the score of conscience? In our faith we follow the maxim of St. James, 'Whoever transgresses the law in one

²⁶Note in original: 'See Wesley's *Journal*, where he declares that on his visitation he met so many *sanctified*, so many *justified*, and so many *confirmed* in love. *Qui potest capiat* [Let the one who is capable, take it]. I cannot comprehend this mystical divinity. By continuation in love he must mean that whoever believes himself once arrived at that happy state, can sin no more. I am glad to see a fellow-creature *confirmed* in the love of God. But I am sorry to find some so *ill-confirmed* in the love of their neighbour as to tell half Europe to their faces that they are *perjurers*, and to apologize for a rabble who set fire to their neighbours houses. This is what we call an *ardent*, or *burning love*.'

²⁷Cf. 1 Cor. 9:27.

point, is guilty of all.’²⁸ The same rule holds good in morals. In allowing that a man is bad in committing one crime, we do not allow that he is guiltless in committing another. The sacrifice must be entire, and grace never sanctifies a divided victory. The fabric of our religion is so closely cemented, the links of the chain which unites all the articles of our faith are so fastened within each other, that if you take off one of the links, or loosen a stone in the edifice, the whole system is entirely destroyed. If then all the horrors fixed upon us by the dark pencil of misrepresentation be articles of our belief, when we disclaim them upon oath we are real *heretics*, and as well entitled to every legal indulgence as those who go to church, and swear against *transubstantiation*.

We admire the integrity of Regulus, who suffered the most exquisite tortures rather than violate an oath given to his enemies. In the administration of distributive justice, the magistrate must give credit to the heathen, who swears by his false gods, to the Jew, who swears [p. 57] by the Old Testament, and to the Turk, who swears by the Koran. In cases of life and property, he gives credit to the oath of a Roman Catholic, whether he appears as a witness or juror. In giving no credit to the oaths of Roman Catholics when they disclaim *perjury*, *dispensations for frauds*, *rebellion*, *treachery*, etc. he betrays his judgment, and insults humanity. But if judgment has been ever betrayed or humanity insulted, they are now betrayed and insulted by those persons who compose what they call the ‘Protestant Associations’, of whom Mr. Wesley is become the apologist.²⁹ In taking up the pen to conclude this letter, I received their *Appeal to the People of Great Britain*, printed in London by J. W. Pasham.

Mr. Wesley, who has abridged *his own journal* to give it a greater circulation, has abridged this six-penny pamphlet in his first letter.³⁰ In the beginning of the American war he published his *Calm Address*, in order to unite the colonies to the mother country. The ‘balm of Gilead’ proving ineffectual beyond the Atlantic, he now has recourse to caustics at home. Three years ago he intended to unite us; now he intends to divide us. Thus we find Penelope’s web in his *religious looms*—what he wove three years ago, he now unravels.

In this *Appeal*, on which he passes such encomiums, and the design whereof he declares to be ‘benevolent’, you can perceive the dormant seeds of antiquated fanaticism sprouting anew, [p. 58] and vegetating into religious frenzy. Which has deluged the earth with an ocean of calamities, and which would give heathen princes room to glory that the gospel has never been preached in their dominions. An apothecary’s shop has never been stocked with more drugs than this *Appeal* is stocked with massacres. They have inserted in it the bull, ‘In Coena Domini’,³¹ which has never been received in any Catholic kingdom. And from an old book which was foisted on the public in the beginning of the Reformation, as containing the fees of the Roman chancery, they conclude that ‘a Roman Catholic can sleep with a woman in a church, and commit there other enormities, by paying nine shillings’; and that ‘he may murder a man, and commit incest, on paying seven shillings and six-pence’³² Though shillings and six-pences are English coins, not current in Italy; and in Catholic countries the murderer expires on the wheel, and whoever commits incest or profanes the churches by carnal sins is burnt at the stake.

What is more surprising, gentlemen, these new apostles of the Gordonian Association, who, to use the words of our old friend Hudibras,

²⁸James 2:10.

²⁹O’Leary is still assuming JW was the author of the essay defending the Protestant Association that JW specifically denied writing.

³⁰JW makes some points that agree with the Protestant Association, but his ‘Letter to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*’ is not an abridgement of the *Appeal*.

³¹A papal bull issued annually on Maundy Thursday, that censured heresies, schisms, etc.; in *An Appeal from the Protestant Association to the People of Great Britain concerning the Probable Tendency of the late Act of Parliament in favour of the Papists* (London: J. Dodsley, et al., 1779), 44–45.

³²Note in original: ‘See the *Appeal* from the Protestant Associations, p. 18.’

Their holy faith do found upon
The sacred text of pike and gun,³³

imagine that they are delegates of heaven for the salvation of souls. Their hands do not [p. 59] brandish the glittering spear on the American plains, where D'Estaing and Prevost dispute the laurel.³⁴ But like Samuel, deploring the loss of Saul, their eyes are bathed in tears, and their *bowels yearn for millions of spirits that have no existence but in the prescience of God*, who can pity an error and forgive it, and who is more concerned in their salvation than Lord George Gordon or Mr. Wesley.

I am afraid, gentlemen, that you mind your own souls and bodies more than you mind those of others. To rouse you from your spiritual lethargy, and inflame you with some sparks of love for your neighbour, I send you a piece of a sermon taken from the *Appeal* of the Associations. After deploring the 'loss of millions of common people', who are 'prohibited from reading the Scriptures' (though it were charity to teach them first how to spell) 'and who have souls as infinite in value and duration as the proudest prelates, or highest monarchs upon earth'—they go on: 'To tolerate popery is to be instrumental to the perdition of immortal souls now existing, and of millions of spirits that at present have no existence but in the prescience of God; and is the direct way to provoke the vengeance of an holy and jealous God, to bring down destruction on our fleets and armies.'³⁵ [p. 60]

I really imagined that the Protestant Associations were not so cruel as to refuse me mercy, and exclude me from the kingdom of heaven, if I lead an honest, sober, and virtuous life. I am convinced that several of Admiral Rodney's sailors are Roman Catholics,³⁶ and that the bullets which *told so well*, in mauling poor Langara,³⁷ were fired by hands that crossed a popish forehead. Oliver Cromwell, *seeking the Lord*, and preaching upon the Sabbath day in a leather breeches and buff waistcoat, with his trusty sabre by his side,³⁸ did not scruple to enter into a confederacy with Cardinal Mazarine against the Spaniards. It was equal to England which of the two was foremost in the breach, the French dragoon with his whiskers, after saying 'Hail Mary', or the round-head with his leather cap, after 'groaning in the spirit'. Spain lost Dunkirk, and England triumphed.

King William, who to his honour could never be prevailed on to violate the articles of Limerick, had six thousand Roman Catholics in his army when he fought the battle of the Boyne. And the Catholics and Protestants of Switzerland maintain their independence against all the powers of the continent, in consequence of their union. But the Protestant Association, like Ezekiel, have swallowed a book in which are written *verses*, and *lamentations*, and *woe*.³⁹ Already their luminous souls, enlightened by the prophetic [p. 61] spirit, see future times unlocking their distant gates, and pouring forth *millions* of monsters. And from a desire to procure the salvation of Adam's children, it is to be dreaded that, at long run, they will imitate the holy fanatics of Denmark who, in order to procure heaven for young infants after being baptized, used to slaughter them in their cradles.

[pp. 62–68 address the *Appeal* of the Protestant Association more than JW]

³³Cf. Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*, Pt. I, Canto 1, ll. 195–96.

³⁴Referring to the recent siege of Savannah, contested by a French Admiral the Comte d'Estaing and the British General Augustine Prevost.

³⁵Note in original: 'See the *Appeal* from the Protestant Associations,' p. 18, and cry out Ohone! ohone! ohone! 'Ohone' is the Irish form of 'Alas'.]

³⁶George Brydges Rodney, 1st Baron Rodney (1718–92), a British naval officer.

³⁷Juan Francisco de Lángara y Huarte (1736–1806) was a Spanish naval officer who was defeated by Rodney's forces in Jan. 1780.

³⁸Note in original: 'See Gregorio Leti, in his Life of Cromwell.' [Leti, *La vie d' Olivier Cromwel*, 1694.]

³⁹See Ezek. 2:10.

[p. 69]

Should Mr. Wesley or any of his Associators think it worth their while to make any remarks on these letters, they cannot justly expect a rejoinder. They have started forth the unprovoked aggressors and, not satisfied with attempting to deprive the Roman Catholics of their rights as subjects, they have slandered and aspersed their characters. I am no stranger to the ground on which they will attack me: either the rusty weapons of old councils or a catalogue of old massacres will be drawn out of their mouldering arsenals. Arms as ill-suited to the eighteenth century as Saul's helmet was to David's head. I will be attacked with the Council of Lateran, the wars of the Albigenses, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, etc. I am a Christian and deny the transmigration of souls. I am nowise concerned in past transactions. Or if my religion be charged with them, I have in my hands the cruel arms of retaliation. I shall divide the charge into two branches: barbarous actions and barbarous doctrine.

If Mr. Wesley reckons all those who are not, or have not been, in communion with the see of Rome in the number of heretics and himself among them (as doubtless he does), I shall then lay at his door all the abominable and seditious doctrines taught by those whom he styles heretics, from the time of Simon the Magician down to our days. The impurities of the gnostics, the [p. 70] enchantments of the Ophites, the perjury and frauds of the Priscillianists, the errors of the Albigenses and millions besides. If from these distant times I make a transition to a nearer era, I shall prove to him from the works not only of insignificant writers of the Reformed religion, but of the very founders of the Reformation, who assumed as much power over their followers as the pope assumes over the Catholics, that they taught doctrines cruel, immoral, and seditious; and that the most horrid barbarities were committed in consequence of those doctrines.

Calvin not only commits heretics to the flames, but moreover writes a book in justification of his proceedings. And in his commentaries on the Scriptures he teaches that *usury* is lawful. Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer have authorized polygamy and permitted a prince to marry a second wife during the life of the first. The decrees of the Synod of Dordt caused great persecution in Holland. Knox and his followers propagated the gospel with fire and sword. I have [p. 71] already mentioned the doctrine of John Hus and his master [John] Wycliffe, so inimical to sovereigns.

If I take a review of the greatest champions who, within these four hundred years, have undertaken the Herculean task of overthrowing the kingdom of antichrist, I see them all claiming a mission from heaven, as well as Mr. Wesley, and still overturning thrones and empires. I see Germany deluged with oceans of blood; Boers headed by fanatical preachers, promising the deluded multitude to receive the bullets in their sleeves, attacking their princes and sovereigns; tailors paving their way to the throne over heaps of mangled carcasses in order to re-establish the 'kingdom of Jerusalem'; *apostles* heading armies and commanding by their last will their dearly beloved children, reformed from 'the errors of popery', to make a drum of their skins,⁴⁰ in order to rouse the saints to battle; the streets of London ensanguined with the gore of peaceable citizens, destroyed by the Fifth-Monarchy men proclaiming king Jesus; communion tables stained with the blood of Protestant bishops; scaffolds reeking with the blood of Protestant kings; solemn leagues and covenants sealed for the extirpation of papists and malignants,⁴¹ and entered into with as much eagerness as Hannibal entered Italy after swearing the destruction of the Romans upon the Carthaginian altars; the poniard lifted by the hand of religious madness, and [p. 72] committed such slaughter and carnage that people propose the disagreeable and odious problem: 'Whether religion has been of greater use than harm to mankind?'

Still I am inclined to exculpate religion from the blame of calamities which can be traced back to the rage of fanatical preachers, the cruelty of governors, the policy and craft of ministers of state, as to their genuine sources. 'Matters were first embroiled in the cabinet', says Rousseau, 'and then the leading men stirred up the common people in the name of God.'⁴² In the midst of this religious rage I see

⁴⁰Note in original: 'Zisca, a follower of John Hus.'

⁴¹Note in original: 'A name given to Protestants of the established church.'

⁴²Rousseau, *Miscellaneous Works*, 3:316.

humanity asserting her right, and resuming her empire. I see Catholic governors refusing to comply with the imperious mandates of a cruel king and a no-less cruel queen at the time of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and Catholic bishops saving all the Protestants in their dioceses. I see in Ireland the great Protestant bishop [William] Bedell, with his clans and thousands, in the free exercise of their religion in the midst of a Catholic army, whilst a Protestant bishop bleeds at the foot of a communion table in Scotland for reading the English liturgy. Thus I am convinced that people of all denominations would be happy together if their clergy recommended mutual love and benevolence. And that if we divested ourselves of passion, religion would never arm the hand with the poniard. If Innocent the Third excommunicated the heretics of his time, Innocent the Eleventh entered into a league with Protestant kings. [p. 73]

Thus, gentlemen, you see how the world changes. On the wide theatres spread by the revolutions of time new characters daily appear, and different circumstances are productive of different events. It is in vain to ransack old councils, imperial constitutions, and ecclesiastical canons, whether genuine or spurious, against heretics, in order to brand the present generation of Catholics. In the very city (I mean Rome) where the general Council of Lateran was held, Protestants are caressed and live with ease and comfort. Travellers agree that it is the theatre of civility, benevolence, and politeness. In the German empire, where by the constitutions of Frederick the Second heretics were condemned to the stake, all religions enjoy full liberty. In some places the Catholic priest and Calvinist minister officiate in the same church, and bishoprics are alternately governed by Catholic and Protestant prelates.

All laws, whether civil or ecclesiastical, are done away by time when the motives that gave them rise subsist no longer. And none but a slave to bigotry and prejudice will confound the eighteenth with the thirteenth century. Because Father Roger Bacon was imprisoned as a sorcerer on account of his extensive knowledge in astronomy, perspective, etc.; or that Galileo's doctrine of the motion of the earth was condemned by a numerous tribe of divines, headed by seven cardinals, under the eyes of the Roman pontiff, must it be obtruded on the public that the Roman [p. 74] Catholics must consider the motion of the earth round the sun *as heresy*? Or firmly believe that there is magic or witchcraft in the *camera obscura* because Father Bacon, who described it, was seven years confined in prison?

Hence from the opinions of men, or the actions of popes, or the disciplinary canons of councils, or the proceedings of bishops who composed them in one age, there is no arguing to the belief of men in another. Popes have attempted to absolve subjects from their allegiance to their sovereigns. It is no more an article of my belief that they can do it by the authority of the keys than it is a article of my belief that I can strike a king on the cheek because Calvin teaches that: 'Earthly princes abdicate their authority when they erect themselves against God, and that we ought rather spit in their faces than obey them.'⁴³ Mr. Wesley and the Association would do well to analyse some of that Doctor's writings and Knox's sermons, and to insert them in their *Appeal* as a contrast to the obsolete canons which they have extracted from Sir Richard Steele's appendix.⁴⁴ 'Erect themselves against God' is a phrase merely spiritual, and of a fatal tendency, because the broachers of such doctrines think it a sufficient plea against kings not inclined to receive the *truths* they themselves are prompted to preach. And as every [p. 75] one thinks himself in the right, error has many chances for the sword of authority.

But in my opinion *Peter's pence*, not Peter's keys, have founded the claims of popes when they made the unsuccessful attempt.⁴⁵ To the investiture of bishoprics in Germany, which brought on the great broils between popes and emperors, was annexed some temporal emolument founded upon compacts between the two powers. The English monarchs made their kingdom tributary to the apostolical see. If then pontiffs have deviated from the primitive paths in meddling in the temporals of kings, the reason is

⁴³Note in original: 'Calvin [Commentary] on Daniel, chap. 6, v. 22.'

⁴⁴The *Appeal* of the Protestant Association frequently includes material from the Appendix of Richard Steele, *The Romish Ecclesiastical History of Late Years* (London: J. Roberts, 1714).

⁴⁵I.e., they were motivated more by concern about losing financial support than spiritual authority.

obvious. They had prescription to plead, oaths and treaties to support their claims. In the conduct of kings choosing them for arbiters of their quarrels, and liege lords of their territories, they found a specious pretext to punish the infraction of treaties and the breach of prerogative. A repetition of the same acts introduced custom. Custom, supported by time, obtains the force of a law. The law bound the parties concerned, and the violation of the law has been attended with penalties. Hence the deposition of an emperor was more owing to the code and conduct of Justinian than to the gospel of Christ. Hence Henry the Eighth and Queen Elizabeth's *pretended* danger from the popes who threatened them, and attempted in vain to absolve their subjects from their allegiance.

The popes considered themselves as the liege [p. 76] lords of the kingdom of England, after receiving for so many years a tribute from its sovereigns. They never absolved the Catholics of Denmark and Sweden from their allegiance to Protestant kings, because they could plead no stipulations. According to the canon law, a hundred years' prescription can be pleaded against the Church of Rome. A hundred years and more have elapsed since any pope has attempted to absolve subjects from their allegiance, though armies have been poured into his territories and his cities taken by princes.

Kings have nothing to dread from an abrogated power abolished by the same cause that gave it rise. But if empire be founded in grace, and not in the rights of nature or the laws of civil society; if a deviation from the immutable truth that saw the world in its cradle and is to preside at its dissolution be a plea against kings; let them be eternally armed with the scales of the leviathan against the barbed irons to which they are exposed from those who think themselves the only persons enlightened with the rays of gospel knowledge. Nothing then is to be apprehended from popes. Less is to be apprehended from spurious canons, or the *memory* of councils which gave up the *ghost* six hundred years ago. And any inference from the proceedings of the fathers of the council of Lateran, or obsolete texts of the canon law against former heretics, to alarm the Protestants of our days is the fruit of ignorance, or malice, or [p. 77] both.

The Protestants of our days sway the sceptre of authority. Kingdoms and republics, laws and institutions, federal unions and civil compacts, blessings in peace and triumphs in war, the allegiance of their subjects and protection (the result of allegiance) record them in the annals of fame and put them on the same level with the Caesars to whom tribute and submission are due. How are they connected with the motley rabble of heretics who appeared and disappeared in former times, overturning and attacking church and state, and attacked by both in their turn? No state acknowledged their power. No band of civil union linked them together. No subjects swore allegiance to them.

No Catholic recognized a king, parliament, or magistrate amongst the Albigenses, whom people dignify with the title of Protestants—and whom Protestant powers would consider as the pest and bane of society if such were now in their dominions. Disciples of the Manicheans, they admitted two supreme and independent principles, and granted two wives called Colla and Colliba, to the God of Truth. Had their doctrine been confined to mere speculations, in an age more enlightened than the thirteenth century [in] which the council of Lateran was held, in all appearance humanity would pity them and philosophy would smile at their errors. But this wild theory was still surpassed by the most monstrous practices. They considered [p. 78] marriage as a state of perdition, but chastity was not one of their vows. More could be said, but I am afraid that my readers already blush. And whoever dignifies the Albigenses with the title of Protestants, in order to inflame the rage and kindle the rancour of fellow subjects by a recital of the ill treatment of those pretended martyrs, should not only blush but hide himself.

Let none imagine that whatever is mentioned in the sessions of a general council is an article of faith. There are decrees of discipline which are at the discretion of kingdoms and provinces either to reject or adopt. There are articles of faith which, in our opinion, neither time, place, or circumstances can alter. Thus the Council of Trent, which commands the Roman Catholics, under pain of *anathema* or curse, to believe the necessity of sin and the reality of original sin is universally received in all Catholic countries as far as it confines itself to the decision of speculative points and proposes them as articles of belief. But where the same council decrees that the manor or land on which a duel is fought, with the connivance of the owner, should be confiscated and applied to pious uses, it is rejected. Though the motive of the decree be laudable, as it tends to suppress vice and restrain the passions, yet as the means (such as the forfeiture

of lands, etc.) are quite out of the spiritual line, this decree of discipline is not [p. 79] received. By the same rule, two things are not to be considered relative to the Council of Lateran, often quoted and as often misapplied. The fathers of that council have anathematized the errors of the Albigenses so repugnant to reason, morality, and the principles of revealed religion; and every similar error extolling itself against the orthodox faith. So far they confined themselves within the limits of their spiritual provinces, and so far every Roman Catholic submits to their decrees. But when they proceeded further and granted the lands of the persons whom they condemned as 'heretics' to the Catholics who would take possession of them, no Roman Catholic is concerned in a verdict that disposes of temporal property. For neither popes nor councils have been appointed as the supreme and *infallible* arbiters of succession to thrones, the transfer of property or temporal affairs, by him who refused to compromise matters between two brothers and declared that 'his kingdom is not of this world'.⁴⁶ Nor is it to be presumed that the ambassadors who assisted at the council would betray the interest of their kings, who often excepted against the competency of spiritual tribunals as to the decision of temporal rights.

And as to the distinction between articles of faith and canons of discipline, we find it even in the New Testament. The same apostles who preached the divinity of Christ, which we all believe, decreed in a council that the Christians should abstain from the use [p. 80] of blood and the flesh of strangled animals.⁴⁷ We believe the doctrine they preached; we overlook the discipline they established because the prohibition was temporary. The doctrine is permanent, opinions are fugitive. Laws, discipline, and decrees vary with time. We are but little concerned in the transactions of the twelfth or thirteenth century. We are a new world, raised on the ruins of the former. And if hitherto we could not agree as Christians, *it is high time to live together as men*. There is land enough for us all, and it is by far better to see towns and cities rearing their heads on the banks of our rivers than to see our fertile country depopulated by intolerance. Let religion be left out of the case. Whigs and Tories, Guelphes and Gibelins⁴⁸ may repeat the same creed and be still divided. The French and Sicilians went to the same churches to sing their hallelujahs upon an Easter Sunday, when soon after the groans of bleeding victims began to mingle with the harmonious sound of chiming bells. The Dutch and English were Protestants when the first massacred the latter in the island of Amboyna. Had the sufferers been of a different persuasion from that of the aggressors, religion would appear as the chief character in the two tragedies. If speculative errors be punishable, there is a day of reckoning. And eternity is long [p. 81] enough for *retribution*. But during the short span of life, checkered with so many anxious cares, let us not resemble those savages who glory in dispeopling the earth and carrying the mangled heads of their fellow creatures on the tops of their reeking spears, as so many trophies of their barbarous victory. In vain do we give ourselves up to hatred and vengeance. We soon discover that such cruel pleasure was never adapted to the heart of man; that in hating others we punish ourselves; that humanity disclaims violence; and that the law of God, in commanding us to love our neighbour, has consulted the most upright and reasonable dictates of the human heart.

The world is tired of religious disputes, and it is high time for you, gentlemen, to be tired of me. It is time to agree to a truce and leave the field to such champions as are willing to engage in national and political contests infinitely more useful to the public than the *thread-spun* arguments of polemical divinity, decrees of councils, or obsolete canons.

Should any of the champions of the eighty-five legions of Glasgow,⁴⁹ or any of their allies and confederates sound the trumpet, I shall not prepare myself for battle. If I attempted to throw fanaticism into ridicule, they are welcome to discharge at me arrows reposed in the quivers of the *Spanish Friar*

⁴⁶Cf. John 18:36.

⁴⁷Note in original: 'Acts 15th chap.'

⁴⁸Note in original: 'Two formidable factions in the time of the disputes between the popes and emperors.'

⁴⁹Roman Catholics in Glasgow were subjected to abuse in late 1780 by what were identified as no less than eighty-five societies whose purpose was to resist the Catholic Relief Act.

and the *Duenna*.⁵⁰ Of what use is it to the public if I have recourse to *Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea*,⁵¹ where our [p. 82] modern apostles are taken off in the conference between Momus and Mother Brimstone?⁵²

If the attack be serious, the weapons will be taken from the mouldering arsenals of old councils, popes' decrees, and obsolete canons. There will be a repetition of the same thing 'for ever and for aye' to use the words of old Robin Hood. But should Mr. Wesley, or Archibald Drummond, or any apostle belonging to the *eighty-five societies* intend to be of use to the public, I shall cooperate with their pious endeavours with all the veins in my heart.

We have obtained of late the privilege of planting tobacco in Ireland, and our tobacconists want paper. Let Mr. Wesley then come with me, as the curate and barber went to shave and bless the library of Don Quixote.⁵³ All the old books, old canons, sermons, and so forth tending to kindle feuds or promote rancour, let us sling them out at the windows. Society will lose nothing. The tobacconists will benefit by the spoils of *antiquity*. And if, upon mature deliberation, we decree that Mr. Wesley's *Journal*, and his apology for the Association's *Appeal*, should share the same fate with the old buckrams, we will procure them a gentle fall. After having rocked ourselves in the large and hospitable cradle of the free press, where the peer and the commoner, the priest and the alderman, the friar and swaddler,⁵⁴ can stretch themselves at full length, provided they be not too churlish, let [p. 83] us laugh at those who breed useless quarrels and set to the world the bright example of toleration and benevolence.

A peaceable life and a happy death to all Adam's children! May the ministers of religion of every denomination—whether they pray at the head of their congregations in embroidered vestments, or black gowns, short coats, grey locks, powdered wigs, or black curls—instead of inflaming the rabble and inspiring their hearers with hatred and animosity for their fellow creatures, recommend love, peace, and harmony!

[O'Leary then notes some typographical errors in the printing of this letter in the *Freeman's Journal* and prays God will grant the person responsible more exactness] [p. 84]

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your most affectionate and humble servant,

Arthur O'Leary

Source: published transcription; Arthur O'Leary, *Mr. O'Leary's Remarks on the Rev. John Wesley's Letters in Defence of the Protestant Associations in England* (Dublin; London: reprinted for J. P. Coghlan, 1780), 27–84.⁵⁵

⁵⁰The titles of a satirical play by John Dryden and a comical opera by Thomas Linley.

⁵¹A recent popular book by the Irish author Charles Johnstone.

⁵²Two characters in Johnstone's book.

⁵³See Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, i.1.6.

⁵⁴'Swaddler' was an early mocking name for the Methodists in Ireland.

⁵⁵This second letter was first serialized in *Freeman's Journal* in March 1780 (see pieces in surviving copies for Mar. 14–16, pp. 1, 4; Mar. 18–21, p. 1; and Mar. 21–23, p. 1). It was advertised first as the published pamphlet in *Freeman's Journal* on Mar. 28, 1780, p. 4. It was then printed from the pamphlet in *Walker's Hibernian Magazine* (May–July 1780), 269–72, 304–08, 371–75.

From Thomas Hanson (autobiography)

Crowan
March 11, 1780

It is very difficult to write where self is concerned. But as I am requested, I shall endeavour to give a brief account of those circumstances in my life, which particularly discover the divine pity towards me.

I was born of honest parents, in Horbury near Wakefield, in the county of York, I think in May 1733, the youngest of two sons at a [twin] birth, my parents having had six sons and two daughters. He that was born with me died in his childhood. My father died when I was near eleven years old. Six out of the seven of us that lived have found mercy and forgiveness through Christ. My truly pious mother had the happiness to see it before she died, though she has been dead above twenty years. Two of my elder brothers fell into sin and turned back; but one is restored, I hope, to favour and to heaven. The other is not yet recovered; but oh, may he be soon!

We always lived in love and harmony. I never had, to my knowledge, twenty angry words with either brother or sister in my life. I do not remember to have heard an oath in all the family. About thirty-four years ago my mother and three elder brothers were brought to God. I was then convinced, and a little awakened, by hearing Mr. Francis Scott,¹ the very man (I think) by whom my ever-dear mother had been awakened and brought to God. From that time my good desires did not quite leave me. I hope my mother's prayers, tears, and advice will never leave my mind and heart. I was a thoughtless, careless, Christless son before that time, and had no fear of God before my eyes.

I was placed, at about thirteen years of age, in the profession which my father and brothers had followed—viz., a clothier. I now often went to hear the Methodist preachers, though we had some miles to go. Many of those that are now, I doubt not, singing in heaven, used to go and come with me in the evenings through the woods, often singing those sweet words:

Break forth into singing, ye trees of the wood;
For Jesus is bringing lost sinners to God.²

I used to pray inwardly in my way to the preaching, yea, and often turned aside to pray. I was afraid to be seen or known to pray alone, so I sought out every private place that I could.

We had much persecution then, and a great deal of talk about false prophets in sheep's clothing. But the most common name for them was 'the damnation preachers', which I thought was far from sheep's clothing. So that did not hinder me much. But I was greatly troubled with horrid suggestions, and had many fears (no doubt from the wicked one) in private prayer, that I was for quite laying it aside. I was afraid to go to it, and yet I durst not give it over. I was in a strait on another account, I was ashamed of the gospel. I did not stand firm on God's side; and yet I durst not be on the devil's side. I was very fearful of being deceived, reasoning and doubting for several years whether the knowledge of pardon was attainable here. I thought God did forgive men their sin, but that none could know it for himself. But afterwards I was clearly convinced by hearing my brother's experience, and weighing the scriptures that he urged for it. And I had then a comfortable hope of one day finding it. But for some years I was between hope and fear. When I was about nineteen years old, in 1752, by my eldest brother's advice, I went to Mr. Byrrie's, at the Deighn-House, near Netherthong. Here I stayed for near four years. Divine providence certainly cast me here, where I had all the advantages I could wish for, having two schoolmasters near at hand. I wrought seven or eight hours a day with my book before me, and spent the rest of the day and part of the night in learning. This I did during the whole time I was here. Mr. Hinslif taught me to write, and cast

¹Francis Scott was a joiner and local preacher, a room in whose shop was used as a place of worship for the society in Wakefield; see *WMM* 61 (1838): 555.

²CW, Hymn 21, st. 2, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 30.

accounts for above a year. And Mr. Wood, of Netherthong, the Latin master, taught me a little Latin and Greek. I got what I could by heart in the day, and said it to him at night. But as soon as I left this place, I laid these studies aside, and reassumed them no more to this day. I have since had far better work, and could not see any need of these for the understanding of the holy Scriptures.

We had no Methodist preachers here. I did not hear ten sermons, except at church, for near four years. Here I was greatly beloved by those that had any seriousness, and greatly hated by those that had none. For I could not hold my tongue about religion. My conscience would not let me be quiet many a time. I told them we must know our sins forgiven, or perish forever. And frequently I wept with some of them about it. Several thereabouts came to me for advice concerning their souls; though I, poor creature, was ignorant enough and well-nigh lost in my book.

My conscience during these years often alarmed me. But now it would give me no rest for want of Christ, and pardon. So I determined, notwithstanding many offered me favours in worldly things, to go home to my mother and brothers. Several wept and entreated me to stay. I told them I cannot save my soul here. I have not the means suitable for it.

Home I came, in 1756, with a full resolution to seek Christ till I found him, or die in the seeking of him. Then I sold, or gave away, nearly all my books, and through grace began to be as diligent in the ways of God as I had been in study.

I now added fasting to all the other means of grace. Soon after this the tempter told me, 'Thou art good enough.' But a sermon of honest brother Ash, on Galatians 2:21, and the words of my dear mother, who said, 'Though I bore you, if you do not come to Christ, stripped of all, you will never be saved', tore away my self-righteousness. God now taught me to expect Christ and pardon every hour. My burden was too great to be expressed. When God had, by various means (particularly by reading the Bible, and the extract of Ambrose on the new birth,³ on my knees) brought me, for three weeks, to the brink of despair. Just before I found pardon, I was miserable beyond description.

On July the 16th, 1757, at night, under my brother Joseph's prayer, I yielded, sunk, and as it were died away. My heart with a kind, sweet struggle melted into the hands of God. I was for some hours lost in wonder, by the astonishing peace, love, and joy which flowed into my heart like a mighty torrent. When I came to recollect myself, I asked, What hast thou done? It was sweetly, but deeply impressed, 'I have made thee mine.' No tongue can tell what peace, love, joy, and assurance I then felt. My willing heart and tongue replied, Hast thou thus loved me? Here I am, willing to spend and be spent for thee. God now gave me to see all creation, redemption, grace, and glory in a new light, and everything led me to love and praise him.

From this night I could not hold my tongue from speaking of the things of God. A few days after my happy conversion I felt anger at one who persecuted us. Soon after my peace left me. Then the tempter said, 'He that is born of God sinneth not.⁴ But thou hast sinned. Therefore thou art not born of God. Thou hast deceived thyself.' I was then in a great measure ignorant of his devices, so gave up my shield and was in the depth of distress, ready to choose strangling for near two hours. It then came to my mind: What if I had deceived myself? Pardon is free and given in an instant. It is ready for needy, lost sinners, I will go as I am, cast myself on the ground, and on Christ at once. My former peace, love, and joy returned in a moment. This sore trial taught me more watchfulness. After this I walked in great love, and peace, for near two years, buying up every opportunity for prayer, hearing, and reading. I read the chief part of the *Christian Library*, with Mr. Wesley's works that were then published, and several other books, to my great help, instruction, and comfort.

Now the same Spirit that witnessed my adoption cried in me, night and day, 'Spend and be spent for God.' Yet never was anyone more timorous. I thought the work so great, and my abilities so small. I cried, I am not fit. I wept and kept it to myself for months. Oh, what a struggle had I between my unfitness and my love to God and souls! After this, the Ossett people, by earnest entreaties, prevailed on

³Apparently JW's extract of Isaac Ambrose's *The Doctrine of Regeneration*, in *Christian Library*, 13:55–89.

⁴See 1 John 5:18.

me to pray in public. And it pleased God to make it the means of awakening some sinners. Then I was persuaded to exhort. God blessed this also to the conversion of several in the neighbouring towns. Now began my warfare with the various sects about us, who came, when I had preached at Ossett, to dispute with me often till midnight. But I was soon heartily weary of dispute, for it caused a decay in my peace and love.

My inbred corruptions now began to perplex me more than ever, and to be a heavy load indeed for some time. But one day, meeting with a few young men (as I often did), God gave me such a deliverance and such a weight of love as I had not heretofore. I seemed too happy to live on earth, and thought God was going to take me home. My joy allowed me little sleep for weeks. I told it to none but my brother, and to him only when I could keep it no longer from him.

Not long after this a letter came from Mr. Thomas Olivers (who afterwards behaved with the tenderness and wisdom of a father to me) to let me know that I was appointed by the Conference, to travel in the then York circuit. This was done wholly without my knowledge. No one had spoke to me about it, nor I to anyone. I already preached four or five times a week about home, and loved the people too well to desire to leave them. In my answer to Mr. Olivers I said, 'I have no doubt of my call to preach, but have no desire to be a travelling preacher. I am not fit for it. I cannot come.' He replied, 'If your father was dead, and your mother lay a dying, you must come and preach the gospel.' I wept a fortnight about it. I said to my brother, 'Go you. You are more fit than me.' He said, 'God knows who is fit. He has called *you*. Therefore go.' The gracious Spirit working in me a willingness to spend and be spent for God, and my brother persuading me, I went in 1760, and through grace have continued unto this day. In all this time, I call the all-seeing God and his people to bear witness, that I have sought nothing but his glory, in my own salvation and that of others.

I have been in most of the circuits in the kingdom. And I trust God has been pleased to use me, and those with me during these twenty years, to unite thousands to the societies. But it is better to leave this to God and his people. They are our epistle, written by Christ to the rejoicing of our hearts. May their conversion be known and read by all that know them!

I have been in dangers, by snow-drifts, by land-floods, by falls from my horse, and by persecution. I have been in sickness, cold, pain, weakness, and weariness often; in joyful comforts often; in daily love and peace, but not enough; in grief and heaviness through manifold temptations often. I have had abundance of trials, with my heart, with my understanding and judgment, with various reasonings among friends and foes, with men and devils, and most with myself. But in all these, God in mercy has hitherto so kept me that I believe none can with justice lay any single immoral act to my charge, since the day God through Christ forgave my sins.

All my design in preaching has been, and is, to bring sinners to Christ, and to build up saints in their most holy faith, hope, and love, to a perfect man.

To this end the chief matter of my preaching has been the essentials of religion, such as the lost state of man, depraved, guilty, and miserable by nature. His justification through the alone merit of Christ by faith only, together with the witness and fruits of it. The new birth, the necessity, benefits and fruits of it, in all inward and outward holiness. I have endeavoured to explain the new covenant in its benefits, condition, precepts, threats, and rewards. I have shown that perfect love is attainable here, by those that press for it with their whole heart. I teach piety to God, justice and mercy to men, and sobriety in ourselves, endeavouring to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man in every station of life and in all relations. I also endeavour to guard souls against the temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil; against the hurtful opinions that surround them; and against the hindrances of their repentance, faith, hope, love, and holiness. I have also shown them the danger of delay, of refusal, or of drawing back to sin, death, and hell.

In the pulpit, I have seldom meddled with the decrees, or the five points of debate. I suffered so much loss by them before I set out to travel that I determined not to meddle with them but when my brethren were in danger of being led aside or hurt by them. So far as I see clear evidence for any of these things I hold and prove them as occasion offers. But where I see no sufficient proof of a proposition, I leave the discussion of them to those that are wiser. But yet I cannot help thinking that many of these

disputes are not much more than a learned play. And if wise men would but play with these in good humour it would not much grieve one. But when they grow angry, and call each other by vile names, because they differ from them herein, no doubt the devil has a great hand in it. He aims to undo, by the non-essentials in religion, the good that is done by insisting on the essentials. This has often been a cause of fear and grief to me. But having resolved to take Christ for my sufficient teacher, I am now contented to know what he has revealed, and to leave the rest to another world. I have from my beginning thought myself the poor man's preacher, having nothing of politeness in my language, address, or anything else. I am but a brown-bread preacher, that seeks to help all I can to heaven, in the best manner I can. Oh, that in the day of Christ's judgment, I may rejoice, not only in the sincerity of my labour but in knowing that I have not preached, and laboured, and suffered without fruit; but have been the instrument of gaining souls to, and of keeping them with, Christ. And oh that he may present them to the Father, without blame, in perfect love! This is the real desire of

Thomas Hanson

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 477–85.⁵

⁵This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 6:201–10.

From the Rev. Samuel Badcock¹

April 22, 1780

Reverend Sir,

The manuscript which accompanies this address will, I doubt not, carry its own authenticity with it to *you*. It fell into my hands some time since, by means of the departure of a Mr. Mansell for Ireland, on account of debts contracted at Barnstaple.² This person married a daughter of your niece, Mrs. [Philadelphia] Earle. They both died soon after he absconded.³ Of these particulars, it is likely you are not ignorant. A gentleman of Barnstaple was for some time in possession of the books and manuscripts [of Samuel Wesley Jr.]. Many of them were sold. And others, together with some papers of a family nature, were sent to Mansell; who if I mistake not, lives with his mother at or near Dublin.

I have seen some other manuscripts of your mother's, and wish I could have secured them for you. I think they have much intrinsic excellence; and to a son, they must be doubly acceptable. If I should have it in my power to get more of these papers, I will take care to send them to you.

Source: published transcription; Whitehead, *Life*, 1:xv-xvi.

¹Rev. Samuel Badcock (1747–88) pastored a Dissenting congregation in Barnstaple, Devonshire from 1769–77. Originally raised with evangelical leanings, he was drawn by Joseph Priestly into more liberal views. Dismissed by his congregation in 1777, he returned to his hometown of South Moulton and supported himself in part by publishing ventures. This included an account of Samuel Wesley Jr. drawing on items described above from Philadelphia (Wesley) Earle. See *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica* 20 (1784): xli–xlvi.

²Thomas Ridgate Maunsell married Philadelphia Earle on Aug. 31, 1773 in Barnstaple, Devon. Philadelphia was the daughter of Thomas Earle and Philadelphia Wesley (daughter of Samuel Wesley Sr.), baptized in Jan. 1751. She died in childbirth. and was buried on July 7, 1774, in Barnstaple.

³Philadelphia (Wesley) Earle was buried Sept. 14, 1773, in Barnstaple.

From Francis Asbury

Petersburg, Virginia
May 12, 1780⁴

[In 1779–80 a split developed among American Methodist lay preachers. Those in northern colonies, shepherded by Francis Asbury, insisted on remaining connected to the Church of England until the outcome of the war was clear, and barring lay preachers from offering the Lord's Supper. A group of preachers in southern Virginia, arguing that the Church of England was effectively dissolved in their setting, moved at a regional conference to create a new church and allow a select group of (unordained) preachers to offer the Lord's Supper. Asbury and Freeman Garrettson arranged to meet with leaders of the southern group in May 1780 near Richmond. As Garrettson summarized:]

“We for a considerable time conferred together, and much of the divine presence was among us. On both sides it was painful to part. This the great Governor of the church would not permit—for when the help of man failed, he interposed his omnipotent hand and convinced our brethren that they ought at least to accede to a suspension of the ordinances for one year, till the founder of our society, Mr. John Wesley, could be consulted. A circumstantial letter was written to that venerable apostle of the age, which moved his bowels of compassion towards us; and he was fully convinced *some time after*,⁵ that he was in duty bound, for the prosperity of the connection in America, to do that thing which he once but little expected: I speak with respect of his sending over a power of ordination, with his approbation of our becoming a separate, though episcopal church.”

Source: secondary summary; Freeborn Garrettson, *Experience and Travels* (Philadelphia: Joseph Cruikshank, 1791), 162.

⁴Asbury records writing this letter in his *Journal* on this date (1:350), but does not describe the contents.

⁵Emphasis added.

From Christopher Hopper (autobiography)

Colne
May 20, 1780

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I never had the least desire or design to trouble others with my insignificant life. I know how difficult it is for a man to speak of himself. But as you desire it, I will do as well as I can.

I kept a diary the first year after I set out from Newcastle upon Tyne, for Ireland. At my return I took a fever at Newlands.¹ After my recovery I looked over my journal with a view to go on, but I saw so many blunders and imperfections therein that I immediately committed it to the fire. Since that time I have kept no regular account of my little labours. Therefore I am under a great disadvantage in giving any tolerable account of them.

I have looked over my manuscripts, and have found a few memorandums which have assisted me a little. Many other things I have committed to memory, which never have, and I hope never will be erased.

As I have had the pleasure of travelling with you many hundred miles in England, Scotland, and Ireland these last five and thirty years, I have been much helped by reading over your journals, to trace out my crooked path. By these few assistances, I have endeavoured to give some account of my nativity, childhood, and callings; the various dealings of God with me from my youth up to my conversion; my call to preach the gospel; and the opposition and the success I met with when I first set out.

But I have given very little account of any of my labours, trials, comforts, or success these last eight and twenty years. I apprehend these would swell too large for your present purpose. I will therefore leave them to that great day when the righteous Judge will reward every man according to his works.

May the Lord succeed your labours, give you peace in the way, a joyful exit, and then a crown of glory. Pray for me, who am, rev. and dear sir,

Your unworthy son in the gospel of Christ,

Christopher Hopper

I was born at Low Coalburns, in the parish of Ryton, in the county of Durham, on the 25th of December, 1722. Moses Hopper, my father, was a farmer. My mother, whose name was Ann, was daughter to George Barkiss, farmer, in the same county. They were both of good repute, and much attached to the Church of England, but strangers to vital religion.

My mother had nine children, six sons and three daughters, of whom I was the youngest. When I was about five years old I was sent to school, to one Mr. Alderson, a man of piety and good understanding, who taught those under his care not only the branches of learning he professed, but the fear of God and the first principles of religion. He catechized us twice every week, and made us attend the church every Lord's day and all holy days appointed for public service. After I had learned to read, write, and understand a little of the mathematics, I lost my beloved master, who made a most awful exit. He had been, as I thought, more devout one week than common. The Sabbath following he received the sacrament at Ryton church. Some days after, a few gentlemen with fair words persuaded him to play a civil game at cards. But afterwards he fell into great distress of mind, and could not properly attend his school, which was often left to the care of his eldest son and me. The spring following, after many sore conflicts, he sunk into deep despair and then drowned himself.

This melancholy event made my heart tremble, and was a means of bringing some serious thoughts into my mind about *heaven, hell, death, and judgment*. I began to distinguish between vice and virtue, the godly and ungodly men. These impressions remained till I took a severe illness, which continued near two years and reduced me to a mere skeleton. Mr. Foster, who attended me, pronounced me incurable.

¹Newlands, Northumberland; 2 mi. southwest of where Hopper was born.

This alarmed me, and filled my heart with slavish fear. I judged it was high time to prepare for a future state, and according to the light I had begun the business without delay. I read my Bible with much pleasure, prayer, and attention. The more I read it, the more I loved it. Many verses, and some favourite chapters which I understood best, made such a deep impression upon me that I soon had them by heart. *The Practice of Piety*,² *A Form of Prayers*,³ and a Psalm book were my library. I prayed and sung with fear, and some degree of joy. I had very slight notions of my depraved nature and the sin of unbelief, but clear views of my actual transgressions. I had been addicted to swear when I was put out of humour. and to lie when I could gain anything by it or cover or excuse a fault. I had been apt to pilfer among the children when I could do it with a good grace.

I was very proud, and prone to anger; yea, of a cruel disposition. I took a diabolical pleasure in hanging dogs, worrying cats, and killing birds and insects, mangling and cutting them to pieces. One instance of my inhumanity I perfectly remember to this day. One evening as I was returning from school, with some of my friendly associates, we found a great number of frogs collected together in a marshy place. We proclaimed war against them. We armed ourselves with stones, and with all the fury of little fiends, murdered the poor, innocent, defenceless creatures. We then left the field in great triumph. But God soon requited me. That night I dreamed I fell into a deep place full of frogs, and they seized on me from head to foot and begun to eat the flesh off my bones. I was in great terror and found exquisite pain until I awoke, sweating, and trembling, and half dead with fear.

About this time my dear father died of a consumption, I hope a true penitent. He was interred at Ryton church with great solemnity, among his ancestors. I was then left to the care of my indulgent mother and brethren. Soon after my father's death my eldest brother married, and they divided my father's farm and the goods and chattels he left amongst them. But I was neglected and overlooked like one that did not belong to the family. But *this* did not give me the least *concern*. My disorder still continued, with my convictions. I prayed, wept, and looked towards the hill of Sion. I found comfort and a good hope through grace. I waited every day for my final dissolution, and longed to be with Christ. I loved God, the Redeemer, and all mankind. I was happy. After some time it pleased God to restore me to perfect health, beyond all human expectation. After my recovery, my mind was quickly drawn after the world again. I saw transitory objects in another point of view than I had done during the time of my illness. My love to God and religion, and my desires after another world, soon grew very cold. I quenched the Holy Spirit, who departed and left me again to the folly of my own heart.

As I was the youngest child of the family, and had nothing left me, I judged it would be proper to think of some business to procure bread. And my mother and brother being willing to put me to the *grammar school*, and give me a good *education*, I accepted the offer and concluded it was the best thing I could do. But in the interim one Mr. Armstrong, a shopkeeper, wanted a boy and sent for me. I embraced the opportunity, and prepared to go without delay. I thought I should escape the wearisome task of study, having nothing to do but to improve the learning I had already, to qualify me for a merchant's apprentice. My mother accompanied me to Mr. Armstrong's, and put me in possession of my new place. I went with great pleasure; and met with a kind reception. After I had been some time on trial, I was to be bound by indenture for seven years. This put my youthful mind into a new chain of reasoning. I thought I would never be bound to stand so long behind a counter. Therefore, in spite of all persuasion, I left my place and returned home.

After this a project entered into my head that I would be a musician. I told my brother. He approved of it, bought me a violin, and provided me a master. I begun with great assiduity, and concluded I had found the very thing that would make me happy. I played away all my convictions, lost my taste for spiritual things, and banished all thoughts of a future world. I now employed myself in doing some little things in the house and about the farm; and all the time I had to spare I spent in playing, singing, dancing, fishing, fowling, and whatever came next to my hand. I was then between fifteen and sixteen years of age,

²Lewis Bayly, *The Practice of Piety* (London: Andrew Crook, 1613).

³Possibly John Tillotson, *A Form of Prayers used by His late Majesty, King William III* (London: J. Barnes, 1704).

and begun to think of some employment whereby I might have money to support my foolish desires. My brother kept wagon-horses. When the wagon-ways were first framed between the new coal mines and the river Tyne, the farmers were under an obligation to their landlords to employ a certain number of horses for that purpose. I was a strong, active young man, and thought I could manage a wagon very well. My brother was willing I should make the trial, and gave me a proper horse for that service. I soon made a great proficiency in this dirty, slavish, and dangerous occupation. And I was hugely pleased with my new department. Novelty pleases, whether the man sits on a *throne* or a *dunghill*. I frequently boasted of my strength, agility, and skill in this sphere of action, and thought I was arrived at the summit of my preferment. I found it a singular pleasure in whatever company I was to talk of feeding and guiding wagon-horses, of wagons and wagon-ways, the nature and value of coals; and concluded I only wanted a little money to make me a fitter, or a London crimp. My vain mind was as much taken up with those things as the *mathematicians* with their abstruse science, or the *philosophers* with the wonders of nature. I followed this business, and the various branches of agriculture, for about five years. During this period of my life I was given up to folly. I greedily pursued, according to my ability, all the pleasures of the world. I spent nights and days together in hunting, cocking, card-playing, horse-races, or whatever the devil brought to town or country. And, O grief of heart! *Gentlemen, clergymen, mechanics and peasants* made up the crowd! But in the enjoyment of these poor toys, I had many severe checks and sorrowful moments. The universe appeared as a vault wherein true comfort was entombed; and the sun himself as a lamp to show the gloomy horrors of a guilty mind. I often said in my cool intervals, 'Hath the great God of love provided no better things than these for his reasonable creatures?' Now at this time I was my own *master*, and lived without control. I followed my former pleasures, but with a trembling hand. I found Satan's service perfect drudgery, and all earthly objects empty and vain.

In this dull, melancholy round I dragged on for some time, without any real comfort or solid satisfaction. I was not happy, yet I believed there was something which could make me so, but I knew not what it was or where to find it. Sometimes I reflected on what I felt in my affliction when I was a youth, but it appeared as a dream. I was frequently in great and imminent danger. But through the interpositions of a kind, unerring providence, I escaped ten thousand snares and deaths, by night and day, at home and abroad. One evening in particular, two of my companions and I were riding home in a wagon very jovially, and as we were passing over a very high battery the horse started suddenly to one side, and snatched the wagon from the planks. Immediately it overset, and turned over and over, to the bottom of the hill. The trembling spectators who beheld this awful event concluded with shrieks and cries, 'They are all killed; their bones are broken in a thousand pieces.' But to their great astonishment, and our unspeakable comfort, we were very little hurt.

After I had recovered my reason, and found I was alive and out of hell, my stubborn heart yielded to my Almighty Deliverer. I feared his great name, wept for joy, and was overwhelmed with grief for my folly. This deliverance wrought a deep conviction in my heart. The true light shined on my dark soul, and God laid me in the dust. I only wanted a spiritual guide to show me the way. But alas, I could not find him in the country!

In May 1742 we heard a strange report of one [John] Wesley, a Church clergyman that had been at Newcastle upon Tyne, and had preached in Sandgate to many thousands who heard him with astonishment. This new thing made a huge noise. The populace entertained various conjectures about him. But few, if any, could tell the motive on which he came, or the end he had in view. He made a short blaze, soon disappeared, and left us in a great consternation. Some time after, his brother Charles came and preached at Tanfield-Cross. I ran with the multitude to hear this strange preacher. When I saw a man in a clergyman's habit, preaching at a public cross to a large auditory, some gaping, some laughing, and some weeping, I wondered what this could mean. When he had concluded, some said, 'He is a good man, and is sent to reform our land.' Others said, 'Nay, he is come to pervert and deceive us, and we ought to stone him out of our coasts.' I said if he is a good man, good will be done, and it is plain we want a reformation; but if he is an impostor, he can only leave us as he found us, that is, without hope and without God in the world. I cannot tell what induced me to go so far, but I found I was in danger of being called a Methodist, and was glad to dismiss the conversation with a smile, and a piece of drollery.

In November, Mr. [John] Wesley returned to Newcastle, formed a religious society, and laid the foundation of the Orphan House. At the same time he visited Tanfield-Leigh, Wickham, Swalwell, and Horsley. His name was then well-known in town and country. All mouths were filled with Wesley and his followers: some for, and many against them. I knew very little of the matter, but thought it was most prudent to join the general voice against this new way.

The spring following, 1743, John Brown, a plain farmer, removed from Tanfield-Leigh to the Low Spen and invited Mr. Wesley to his house. I then heard occasionally those preachers, who I thought could tell their story well, without stammering; but still found much fault with this strange method of proceeding. At this time there was a great clamour about religion amongst all sects and parties, and I made a bustle among the rest. I said, I will read my Bible, say my prayers, go to my own parish church, reform my life, and be good and pious, without the scandal of the cross. Alas! I did not consider, 'No cross, no crown'.⁴

I hobbled on in this lame, ignorant manner till at last I became deeply serious. I saw there was more in religion than I enjoyed or understood. I saw that God had been striving with me from my infant days. I looked back with astonishment on his loud calls, compassionate helps, tender mercies, and great deliverances. He had raised me from the gates of death, when all human help failed. He had saved me from perils and dangers by night and by day. He had richly provided for me, when I was left to myself very young. A sight of these favours raised in my cold heart some sensations of gratitude to my bountiful Benefactor. I said in my heart, Shall I still trifle with the Almighty God of heaven and earth? Shall I fly in the face of my infinite Creator? Shall I play with eternal things? Will God always strive with the children of men? My few days are passing away like a shadow. Pale death is approaching. The Judge is standing at the door. Eternity, eternity, is come! Alas, I am not ready! I am in my sins—unholy, unhappy, and therefore not prepared to die.

I will now cry to God for mercy. He willeth not the death of a sinner. It is his pleasure to save me from sin and the punishment due to it. He waits to be gracious, that his great name may be exalted. 'He is good to all, and his mercy is over all his works.'⁵ I am a monument of his sparing goodness. I will therefore look up and hope in his word. Behold, this is the accepted time. Behold, this is the day of salvation. God hath sent his servants to show poor sinners the way of life. I was then determined to hear and judge for myself. God had now prepared my heart for the reception of the truth. I said, I will no longer be led by the laughing multitude, nor be deluded with the noise of vain tongues.

The Sabbath-day following, Mr. [Jonathan] Reeves preached at the Low Spen, at one o'clock in the afternoon. I heard him with great attention, but found a veil on my heart. I did not clearly see God's method of justifying a guilty sinner, through faith in the blood of his Son.

In the evening he preached again on those words, 'And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest of these is love.'⁶ In his plain pathetic manner he gave us a definition of these principal *graces*, with their inseparable *concomitants*, and showed the unspeakable happiness of all those who had a saving *faith*, a good *hope*, and the *love* of God. The word came home to my heart with energy. The veil was removed. The true light shined upon me, and I said, Alas, I am undone! If these things are true, and doubtless they are, I have only the faith of a devil, the hope of a hypocrite, and the love of this present evil world. My mouth was stopped. I stood guilty before God. My stout heart melted like wax before the fire. I trembled at the word. My strength left me. God frowned, his law condemned, conscience roared, Satan raged, and the pit was ready to receive me.

I quietly retired from the crowd into a little parlour to cover my shame. I sat down on the side of a bed and reclined my guilty head on the pillow, in great distress of mind. It was the cry of my heart, God be merciful to me a sinner! Save, Lord, or I perish! Save, or I am lost, forever lost! My all is guilt, pollution, misery, and helplessness. In this wretched situation I continued some time, shut up in unbelief

⁴Title of a famous book by William Penn.

⁵Cf. Ps. 145:9.

⁶Cf. 1 Cor. 13:13.

as in a prison. I could only say, 'Lord help me!'⁷ He then heard my cry, and sent me relief. A glorious light shone into my heart, and discovered to me the blessed plan of man's redemption, through the blood of a crucified Saviour. I saw God had fulfilled his great original promise. He sent his Son to save sinners, the chief of sinners. He lived, suffered, and died for a lost world. 'He tasted death for every man.'⁸ He gave himself a ransom for all.'⁹ I said in my trouble, the good Shepherd came from heaven to earth, to 'seek and save that which was lost, to bring again that which was driven away, to bind up that which was broken and to strengthen that which was sick'.¹⁰ But I am lost, I am driven to the mouth of hell, ready to drop into the flames. I am broken to pieces. I am sick of sin, sick of myself, and sick of a vain world. I will therefore look unto the Lord. 'My God will hear me.'¹¹ He hath died for *me*. I shall, yea, doubtless, I shall obtain mercy after all I have done. The *God of truth* hath promised *mercy*; the *Son of his love* hath procured *mercy*; the *Spirit of truth* is ready to reveal *mercy*; and the messengers of peace are come to proclaim *mercy*, free *mercy*, to every perishing sinner, 'through the blood of the everlasting covenant'!¹² I said, I *can*, I *will*, I *do* believe in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. I am freely justified. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. God is now my God in Christ. The love of God is shed abroad in my heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto me. The spirit of bondage is gone. The Spirit of adoption is come. I can now cry, Abba Father. The same Spirit beareth witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. No enmity—No wrath—No curse—No condemnation. The ruined sinner is saved. I then found a glorious, and undeniable change. God, Christ, angels, men, heaven, earth, and the whole creation appeared to me in a new light, and stood related to me in a manner I never knew before. I found love to my God, to his yoke, to his cross, to his saints, and to friends and enemies. I said, this is Bible religion, Scriptural Christianity. Let men call it what they please: a delusion, enthusiasm, Methodism, or Mahometanism. That is nothing to me, hard names do not change the nature of the thing. I then went on my way rejoicing; a wonder to my father's family, to all that knew me, and to myself. All my idols fell to the ground before the ark of God. I found a perfect hatred to sin, and a complete victory over it.

The whole tenor of my life and conversation was new. *Free grace, infinite mercy, boundless love*, made the change. My heart, my tongue, my hands, were now, in my little way, employed for my loving God. I was no longer of the world, therefore the world began immediately to hate me. Some said, 'Ah! what think you! Christopher Hopper is converted!' Others said, 'He hath received the Holy Ghost!' Others said, 'He is mad, keep far from him, come not near his habitation.' Some of a more compassionate turn pitied me. But all agreed I had renounced my baptism, left the Church, and was in a dangerous situation.

Soon after, Mr. Wesley came to Low Spen, formed a little society, and made me a leader to help and watch over them. I was but a novice, a young raw disciple, unskilled in the word of righteousness. But faith in Christ, and the love of God in my heart, overcame all the powers of darkness. I found unspeakable pleasure in doing and suffering the will of God. I laboured diligently with my hands. I owed no man anything. I had enough for myself, and a little to spare for others. I attended four or five meetings every week. We prayed, sung psalms and hymns, read the Bible, and exhorted one another to fear and love God. The power of the Lord was present to heal. He owned his own work, and gave us prosperity. Many of my old companions were awakened; also my poor old mother, one of my sisters, and one of my brothers, who had been a champion in the devil's cause but has been an ornament to religion from that

⁷Matt. 15:25.

⁸Cf. Heb. 2:9.

⁹Cf. 1 Tim. 2:6.

¹⁰Cf. Ezek. 34:16.

¹¹Mic. 7:7.

¹²Heb. 13:20.

time to this day. The fire now kindled, and the flame spread. I had one invitation after another, to High Spen, Barlow, Woodside, Prudhoe, Newlands, Blanchland, Durham, Sunderland, and many other places.

As yet I had not examined my call to preach the gospel, nor considered the consequences of such an undertaking. I was sweetly carried on with a strong, prevailing influence, and a loving desire to promote the glory of God. I saw the world dead in trespasses and sins, void of light, holiness, and happiness. I therefore thirsted after their salvation, and thought it my duty to promote it. God blessed his word. Sinners were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. But the devil was highly displeased. He saw his kingdom was in danger, and immediately proclaimed war against me.

I met with great persecution, many discouragements, and much opposition, in every place. Men of all ranks used their power and influence to stop this blessed work of God. They spoke all manner of evil against the work, and the instruments employed therein. They dispensed with two or three awakened clergymen, tolerably well. These were regularly ordained, men of learning, gentlemen, and divines. But to see a plowman, or an honest mechanic stand up to preach the gospel, it was insufferable. Hell was moved from beneath. A council was called, the edict came forth, and war commenced!

Laymen and ecclesiastics joined heart and hand to suppress these pestilent fellows—not with acts of kindness, Scripture, or reason; but invectives and lies, dirt, rotten eggs, brickbats, stones, and cudgels. These were Satan's arguments in vindication of his own cause. It was the common cry in town and country, 'Press them for soldiers. Send them on board a man-of-war. Transport them. Beat them. Stone them. Send them to prison, or knock out their brains and dispatch them at once, *for there is no law for them.*'¹³

Several of my fellow sufferers had shared honest John Nelson's fate already.¹⁴ And I expected to be the next. They had their eyes on me. They daily pursued me as Saul did David. They waited for an opportunity to seize on the prey. But the hand of the Lord was with me, so I escaped! He delivered me by various means, at sundry times, and often in a very remarkable manner.

Once in particular, as I was preaching at Wickham to a quiet, attentive congregation, the constable came with his attendants, to apprehend me. They guarded the door, and stood with fierce impatience to seize me. When I had concluded, I stepped down, went through the midst of them, was conveyed through a window, and went quietly home, leaving the peace officer and his gentlemen to end the dispute with loud words, hard blows, and bloody faces!

When I first set out to do all the good I could, without fee or reward, I did not foresee this violent storm. I begun now to consider what latitude I was in, and whether it would not be a point of wisdom to tack about, and steer for some quiet harbour.

There had been many things said and wrote against this 'new way'; especially, against those illiterate preachers who so exceedingly disturbed the world. I found some doubts concerning my call to the work, and almost wished they might be well-grounded, that I might, with a good conscience, desist from preaching.

I was therefore determined to examine myself, whether I had a right to preach, or whether I had rashly entered into a work that did not belong to me. One evening I went into a wood, by the side of Derwentwater, much dejected. Clouds and darkness surrounded me, and my spirit was troubled within me. I said, my enemies are too strong for me. There are few on the Lord's side, but myriads against him. What shall I do? Alas! 'My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.'¹⁵ I am a *worm* and no *man*. O my God, let me enjoy this sweet solitude, and see my friends and companions no more! Let me live as a hermit in this lonely desert till my few days are ended, then shall my weary spirit be at rest.

¹³Editor's note: 'This was a great mistake. There was law for us. But we could not find a magistrate who had courage or honesty enough to put it in force.'

¹⁴Nelson was pressed into military service for a while.

¹⁵Judg. 6:15.

I did not want ease, wealth, or honour; but to know, do, and suffer the will of my Lord and Master. I thought, if I have made a mistake God will forgive me, and I will take shame to myself. I will desist from preaching, and live and die a private Christian. But if God hath called me to publish the gospel of his dear Son, I must bear a public testimony, and leave the event to him.

In the midst of these reflections it occurred to my mind, what evidence is sufficient to satisfy me in this weighty matter? I only want a rational, scriptural evidence. Let me then inquire with prayer and fasting what reason have I to believe that I am called to preach the gospel?

1. I have heard and believed the gospel, and found it to be the power of God to the salvation of my own soul. And I believe it to be the powerful means which God hath appointed to reclaim and save lost sinners.¹⁶ 2. I believe all power is given to Jesus Christ in heaven and in earth, therefore he alone hath power and authority to call, qualify, and thrust out labourers into his own harvest.¹⁷ Hence I learn that this power cannot be acquired by human art or learning, or purchased with gold or silver.¹⁸ 3. I believe those who are called and put into this work by *him* shall turn sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.¹⁹ 4. I have a rational conviction that God hath committed unto me the word of reconciliation.²⁰ I have this treasure in an earthen vessel, in a feeble, mortal body; that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man.²¹ I find by daily experience 'we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.'²² 5. According to this conviction, I have preached the gospel to sinners, dead in sin, and they have been awakened and converted to God. Children of the devil are become children of God, and heirs of eternal life.

Having considered these things, I concluded, my call to preach the gospel was consistent with Scripture, reason, and experience. I was filled with joy. I said, 'I have now the countenance of my God; the hands of his dear Son, the bishop of my soul, laid upon me; the approbation of three presbyters sent by him; the prayers of his dear people; the testimony of a good conscience, and the pleasure of seeing Sion prosper. I therefore pray earnestly that God may incline, persuade, and sweetly influence my heart, and open my mouth by his Holy Spirit to dispense the word of truth to a world of perishing sinners. This I desire to do continually, in season and out of season, according to the ability he hath given me.' My drooping spirit now revived. The fear of men and devils departed from me, and I set out with double courage. I could say, 'Jehovah is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?'²³ Then the word of the Lord came unto me saying, 'Cry aloud and spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.'²⁴ My heart replied, 'For Sion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake, I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.'²⁵ The Lord was with me night and day. His threatenings passed over me, his promises comforted me, and his precepts were my delight. I could say,

¹⁶Editor's note: 'Rom. 1:16'.

¹⁷Editor's note: 'Matt. 28:18'.

¹⁸Editor's note: 'Acts 8:20'.

¹⁹Editor's note: 'Acts 26:18'.

²⁰Editor's note: '2 Cor. 5:[19]'. Orig.: '2 Cor. 5:8'; a misprint.

²¹Editor's note: '2 Cor. 4:7'.

²²Editor's note: '2 Cor. 3:5'.

²³Cf. Ps. 27:1.

²⁴Cf. Isa. 58:1.

²⁵Cf. Isa. 62:1.

To me, with thy dear name is given,
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven.²⁶

In the year 1744 I taught a school at Barlow, in the parish of Ryton. My time was employed six days in teaching the children under my care the branches of learning I professed, and the first principles of Christianity.

I spent every Sabbath, and all my vacant hours, in preaching, reading, praying, visiting the sick, and conversing with all that providence put in my way. God was with me, and blessed my weak labours. Sinners were converted, believers multiplied, and my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour.

But Satan did not like this work. Therefore he stirred up the rector of Ryton and his curate,²⁷ with those under their influence, to prevent me. They gave me first hard words, and then hard blows.

In a little time I was summoned to appear in the Spiritual Court at Durham, to answer for my conduct. I did not know what I had done, but was soon informed that I was impeached for teaching a school without license; and what was still worse, for calling sinners to repentance and warning the wicked to flee from the wrath to come (an offence that cannot be overlooked by men who know not God!). But God raised me up friends, who stood by me and defended my cause against all my adversaries.

After this troublesome affair was ended, I met with a trial of another kind. Before I was awakened I was deeply in love with one Jane Richardson, a farmer's daughter, and an agreeable young woman. She was my first love, and had laid fast hold on my youthful heart. She had every accomplishment I wanted, but religion! Alas, she was unacquainted with God. This was a bar indeed! I found a desire to break off all correspondence with her, but was afraid she could not bear it. I was greatly troubled, and prayed for divine direction. God was pleased to hear and grant my request. She was soon awakened, and found peace with God. All objects being removed, on May the 28th, 1745, we were joined together in Ryton church. She was a loving wife, a faithful friend, and a very agreeable companion. She made my joys and sorrows her own. We worshipped God in spirit and truth, and rejoiced in the Son of his love.

The same evening I preached at the Low Spen. The Lord was with us, and we praised his name together. We lived a few months with my wife's friends at the Smeals near Derwent, in a most loving, agreeable manner. God made us of one heart and mind, and united our souls together, by one spirit, in humble love.

In the year 1746, I removed from Barlow, to the preaching house at Sheephill. I received the preachers, and my other religious friends, with much pleasure. My heart was open, my door was open, and my little table free for strangers. I gave up my soul, body, and substance to my adorable Saviour, and grieved I had no more to give.

I commonly preached or met a class every evening, after I had dismissed my scholars. I preached twice or thrice, and often four times every Sabbath-day. When I had a day or two to spare from my present vocation, I visited Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, and many other towns and villages, ten, twenty, or thirty miles round. Herein I met with much opposition, and was frequently in great jeopardy. Indeed I did not much regard a little dirt, a few rotten eggs, the sound of a cow's horn, the noise of bells, or a few snowballs in their season. But sometimes I was saluted with blows, stones, brickbats, and bludgeons. These I did not well like; they were not pleasing to flesh and blood.

I sometimes lost a little skin, and once a little blood, which was drawn from my forehead with a sharp stone.²⁸ I wore a patch a few days, and was not ashamed. I gloried in the cross. And when my small sufferings abounded for the sake of Christ, my comfort abounded much more. I never was more happy in my own soul, or more blessed in my labours.

The latter end of July 1747 I had a call to visit Cornwood, and met with a kind reception. I preached several times among the people called Quakers. I hope good was done.

²⁶CW, 'Hymn for Believers, 31', st. 2, *HSP* (1749), 1:245.

²⁷John Lloyd was currently rector at Ryton; and Francis Hunter, curate.

²⁸Editor's note: 'It was at Sunderland, in the midst of an outrageous mob of sailors.'

On my return I had an invitation to preach at Allendale Town. A great congregation attended, who behaved well, and heard the word gladly. The latter end of December I visited Allendale again. A glorious work broke out. The Lord stretched out his hand to save sinners. Mr. Toppin,²⁹ minister of that place, used all his art, power, and influence to stop it. But he could do nothing; his strength was perfect weakness against the Lord.

I went from town to town, and from house to house, singing, praying, and preaching the word. And great multitudes followed from place to place, weeping and seeking him that was crucified. Great numbers were awakened, and found peace with God, through the blood of the Lamb. I have frequently seen a whole congregation melted into tears, and bowed down before the Lord, as the heart of one man. Especially once, when I was preaching in Mr. Lowe's old barn at Dod Bank, the Lord manifested his great power. He wrought for the glory of his own name, and I stood still and looked on, with loving fear and wonder.

In the year 1748 I gave up my school at Sheephill, and everything that was comfortable and convenient, and removed to Hindley Hill, in Allendale. I lodged with honest James Broadwood, and was as one of his family. The presence of the Lord dwelt in his house, and we lived in peace and unity. I formed a society at Hindley Hill, another at West Allen, one at Alston, and one at Nenthead. The Lord was among them of a truth. I had now work enough, and God's blessing on my labour.

In the latter end of this year I visited Weardale. Some of the brethren attended me from Allendale. It was in a storm of snow that we crossed the quagmires, and enormous mountains. When we came into the Dales, we met with a very cold reception. The enemy had barricaded the place, and made his bulwarks strong. But the Lord made way for his truth. He opened the heart of a poor Scotch shepherd to receive us into his little thatched cabin, where we lodged all night.

The next day I preached under the walls of an old castle. A few children, and two or three old women attended, who looked hard at us. When I had done, we followed them into their houses, and talked freely to them in their own language about the kingdom of God. They heard and obeyed the gospel. The next evening, I had a large congregation who heard with much attention, and received the word gladly. Sometime after, I preached in private houses, alehouses, cockpits, or wherever I could find a door open. The fire then spread from heart to heart, and God was glorified. This was the beginning of a good work in Weardale, which has continued, and increased to this day.

The spring following, in the year 1749, I begun teaching a school near Hindley Hill. But the work of God so increased in my hands that I could not properly attend it. Therefore, in the latter end of the year I gave it up, with all other secular employments, and cast myself on the bounty of my Lord and Master.

My little substance soon failed, and I saw nothing before me but beggary and great affliction. Sometimes I was carried above all earthly objects, and had a comfortable view of the heavenly country. At other times I was much depressed, and could see nothing but poverty and distress.

I well remember once, on the top of a cold mountain in a violent storm of snow, when the congealed flakes covered me with a white mantle, Satan assaulted me and pushed me hard to return to my school, or some other business to procure bread. I staggered through unbelief, and almost yielded to the tempter.

But as the attack was sudden, so the battle was soon over. The Lord sent these words to my heart like lightning, 'When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing, Lord.' (Luke 22:35) I answered with a loud voice, 'Nothing, Lord, nothing, Lord.' All my doubts and fears vanished in a moment, and I went on my way rejoicing!

Constrain'd to cry by love divine,
My God, thou art forever mine!³⁰

²⁹Orig., 'Topping'; John Toppin was curate at Allendale chapel in 1735–56.

³⁰CW, 'Hymn 42', st. 8, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 54.

Since that time I have been richly supplied with all good things. This day I am full. I have all, and abound. Praise God and the Lamb forever!

The work now begun to spread in the Dales, Hexhamshire, North Tyne, and soon reached Whitehaven.

And now God raised up many preachers, men eminent both for gifts and graces. Some of them continue local, and some are itinerant preachers to this day. The latter end of the year 1749, I left the Dales, and the dear children God had given me.³¹ I rode to the Smeals, where I parted with my dear wife and friends, with melting hearts and many tears.

In those days we had no provision made for *preachers' wives*, no *funds*, no *stewards*. He that had a staff might take it, go without, or stay at home.

I then set out for Bristol. I called at Chester, Durham, Stockton, Thirsk, and Knaresborough, and found the Lord in every place. I spent a few days at Leeds. Here God opened my mouth to speak his word, and I hope good was done.

I preached at Birstall, on the top of the hill, before the foundation of the preaching house was laid. Large congregations attended, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. I rode on to Halifax and found their little society at Skircoat Green. God gave us a blessing. I then rode to Rochdale and preached in the evening, at the widow Whittaker's, to as many as the house could contain. They were turbulent enough, but we were not afraid, for God was with us. Next day I rode to Manchester, and preached that evening in a little garret by the river side. The congregation multiplied every meeting. On the Sabbath-day the old place would not contain them. The multitude was impatient to hear. The old wooden house shook under us, and put the congregation in confusion. Many trembled, and some believed. The next evening they procured me an Anabaptist meeting house. The place was crowded. They heard with attention. Many were awakened, and joined themselves to seek and worship God. They immediately bought a piece of ground, and laid the foundation of their first preaching house, which is now their dwelling house. I rode through Cheshire, and joined a society at Alpraham, and another at Poole. It was an humbling time among the opulent farmers, the murrain raging amongst their cattle. They buried them in the open fields. Their graves were a solemn scene. The hand of the Lord was on the land. I visited the suburbs of Chester. God begun a good work then which has increased and continued to this day. I preached at Birmingham, Evesham, Stroud, and Kingswood, and then rode to Bristol, where I spent a few days, and I hope not in vain.

March 20, 1750 I set out with Mr. [John] Wesley for Ireland.³² We crossed the New Passage into Wales, and reached Cardiff before night.

21. We rode to Brecknock through heavy rain. Mr. Wesley's mare fell twice, and threw him over her head, but without any hurt to man or beast.

22. We rode to Builth. A congregation waited for Howel Harris, but he did not come at the time appointed. So at their request, Mr. Wesley preached. I then spoke a few words. It was a time of love. The Welsh brethren rejoiced in the Lord. We then rode to Machynlleth, and then to Dolgellau, wet and weary enough.

24. We rode to Dannabull.³³ It rained incessantly all the way. Our horses were tired, and we were ready to faint. But God was our strength, and we rejoiced in our little toil.

25. We rode to Baldon ferry. Mr. Jenkin Morgan came to the waterside, crossed over with us into the Isle of Anglesey, and then conducted us to his house, halfway between the ferry and Holyhead.

Sunday, 26. Mr. Wesley preached at Howell Thomas's, in Trefollwyn parish. In the afternoon at William Pritchard's. The people understood no English, but their looks, sighs and gestures showed God was speaking to their hearts!

³¹Hopper's note: 'From this period, I shall only give a short sketch of my travels, and now and then mention a small incident.'

³²This journey can be traced, with more details, in JW's *Journal*.

³³I.e., Tan-y-bwlch.

We then went to lodge with one Mr. Holloway,³⁴ an exciseman, who lived in a quiet solitary place, where no human voice was heard, but those of the family.

Wednesday, 29. We rode to Holyhead, and sent back our horses with John Jane, who had travelled from Bristol to the Head with three shillings, and had one penny left. About eleven o'clock we went on board. As soon as we sailed, we had wind and rain enough without, and a violent storm in the ship. Mr. [William] Griffith, of Caernarfonshire, a clumsy, hard-faced man, saluted us with a volley of ribaldry, obscenity, and blasphemy. But God stopped his mouth, and he was confounded.

Thursday, 30. We wrought our way four leagues towards Ireland, but we were driven back in the afternoon to the mouth of the harbour. The wind then shifted two points, and we ventured out again. By midnight we were got halfway over, but the wind turning full against us, and blowing hard, soon brought us back into the bay again. Mr. Wesley preached that evening on the story of Dives and Lazarus, to a room full of men daubed with gold and silver. But they were soon satisfied with it, and went away murmuring. After they were gone, we had a comfortable meeting with a few plain Welshmen.

Saturday, 31. We were determined to wait one week longer, if the wind did not serve before. Mr. Wesley preached in the evening. Captain Griffith, with his dear gentlemen, made noise enough, but our God delivered us.

April 1. We returned to Mr. Holloway's, called at William Pritchard's, then went to Llanerch-y-medd;³⁵ but the sons of Belial would not suffer us to enter the place.

Thursday, 5. Mr. Wesley preached near the town, to a few precious souls, who heard and obeyed the word.

Friday, 6. The wind came fair, so we rode to Holyhead early in the morning, embarked with a fair wind, and in the evening landed at Dublin. I spent a few days in that city, and I hope not in vain. I then visited Portarlinton, Edenderry, Mountmellick, Tyrrellspass, Athlone, Birr, and Aughrim, and found the Lord was with me in every place. I had great crosses, but greater comforts. I then rode to Dublin and spent a few days there with much satisfaction.

July 22. I embarked with Mr. Wesley for England. We sailed about ten in the morning, and in the afternoon came to an anchor.

Monday, 23. We had a vehement squall of wind, thunder, and lightning between the Welsh sands and the rocky shore of Lundy. We cried to the Lord in our trouble, and he delivered us out of our distress.

Tuesday, 24. The wind was contrary. It blew a storm. The seas ran mountain-high. We were tossed in a narrow channel, full of shoals, rocks, and sands. We prayed for help; our God heard and brought us safe to Pill.

The next day I came to Bristol, where I spent a few days with pleasure, and then set out for Newcastle upon Tyne. I visited the societies in my way, and they refreshed me in the love of Jesus.

I spent a few weeks at and about Newcastle. My dear friends were glad to see me. We rejoiced together. I then set out for Whitehaven, where I had a good season. The Lord crowned my weak labours with success. About the latter end of the year I left Whitehaven, rode to Cockermouth, then to Penrith, and the next day came to Hindley Hill. I took a fever in my journey, but rode on to Newlands, where I took my bed. My dear wife met me with joy and grief. She soon caught the disorder, and we continued sick for many weeks.

We lodged with Mr. George Hunter, a friendly man. God richly provided all things for us. He blessed us in our sickness, and restored us to health. Praised be his dear name forever!

In the spring 1751 I set out for Bristol. I met with honest John Nelson at Leeds. We rode on together with some other preachers. We spoke freely to all that providence put in our way, and God blessed our labours. We rode through heavy rains and rapid floods, but the Lord preserved both man and beast, and brought us to our journey's end in peace.

Monday, March 11. Our Conference begun at Bristol. The more we conversed, the more our love increased to God and one another. We kept to our first doctrines, and were of one heart and one mind.

³⁴Orig., 'Holiday'. Walter (?) Holloway of Glyn Afon, Llangefni.

³⁵Orig., 'Llaneryell-ymadd'.

I then returned to Newcastle upon Tyne, visiting the brethren in my way. I preached every evening at seven, and every morning at five o'clock, and often at noonday—the common work of a Methodist preacher.

Monday, April 22. I set out with Mr. Wesley for Scotland. We rode to Alnwick. Our friends received us with joy. We praised God together.

Wednesday, 23. We rode to Berwick. Mr. Wesley preached at a young man's funeral who had been cut off suddenly. It was a solemn time. Many heard for eternity.

Thursday, 24. We rode to Old Camus, through a Scotch mist. We rode past Preston field, saw the place of battle, and Colonel [James] Gardiner's house. Here that good man, and brave soldier, fought and died for his king and country. We then rode on to Musselburgh, where Mr. Wesley preached in a large school, to a company of wise men, so called.

Friday, 26. We rode back to Berwick. I left Mr. Wesley, and the week following returned to Musselburgh, where I spent a few days. I preached night and morning to a large congregation, who heard with great attention. This was the beginning of a good work in Scotland. Some years after, I preached at Edinburgh, Dunbar, Leith, Dundee, and Aberdeen. God blessed his word, and raised up witnesses to testify that he had sent us to the North Britons also.

In 1752 I set out with my wife for Whitehaven, where I spent a few days with pleasure and profit to myself and others. We then embarked for Ireland, and after a tedious voyage landed at Dublin. I spent a few weeks in that city, and then rode to Cork, where I spent the winter with joy and sorrow. We had warm work in that city for a long time. B: but the word of the Lord prevailed, and silenced the enemy.

In the spring I returned to Dublin, and met my wife and friends, who had just escaped the fire of a very hot persecution. This year I had many *blessings* and *crosses*, both by sea and land.

I'll praise my God with ev'ry breath,
O let me die to see thy day!
Now snatch me from this life of death,
O come my Saviour, come away!³⁶

In the year 1753, I left Dublin and embarked for England. We landed at Whitehaven. I first visited the Dales, then rode to Newcastle, and the Lord was with us of a truth.

In the year 1754 I embarked at North Shields for London. May 22, our Conference begun. It was a time of love.

In June I embarked for Newcastle. I had a quick and pleasant passage. I preached to the ship's company, who heard the word with joy. I landed at Shield, and then came to the Orphan House, in Newcastle upon Tyne, where we praised God and the Lamb, with one heart and voice, for mercies we had received.

May 6, 1755. Our Conference begun at Leeds. The first question was whether we ought to separate from the Church of England? After many deep and serious conversations, we concluded that it was not *expedient* for many reasons.

I then set out again for Newcastle upon Tyne. As I was passing through Chapeltown I got a dreadful fall from my horse. My foot was much hurt, but all my bones were preserved, glory be to God and the Lamb! I rode with much pain to Newcastle, but enjoyed great peace and a calm resignation to the divine will. This I believe was a gracious dispensation, and was sent to humble me and prepare me for a greater trial.

August 15. My dear wife³⁷ took a fever. She had great pain and heavy affliction for about ten days, together with many violent temptations. But she enjoyed perfect peace, and was fully resigned to the will of her heavenly Father. At last she triumphed over death, and without a doubt, a sigh, or a groan, breathed out her happy soul into the arms of her adorable Redeemer!

³⁶Cf. CW, Hymn 10, st. 7, *Funeral Hymns* (1746), 15.

³⁷Jane (Richardson) Hopper.

On the 28th, Mr. [James] Massiot preached her funeral sermon, to a very large congregation of true mourners. The same evening she was interred, amongst her ancestors, in Ryton church. She was an agreeable, affectionate wife, a constant friend, and a pious, humble Christian. She is now in paradise, and I am left to mourn.

O may our heart and mind
Continually ascend,
That haven of repose to find
Where all our labours end;
Where all our grief is o'er,
Our suff'rings and our pain:
Who meet on that eternal shore
Shall never part again.³⁸

In July 1756, I set out for Bristol. Our Conference begun August 26th. It was a good season. September 15. I once more embarked for Ireland, with Mr. [John] Murlin, [Thomas] Olivers, [Nicholas] Gilbert, and [James] Massiot. On the 19th we were within sight of land, and being well-satisfied with a tedious and dangerous passage we left the ship and got into a fishing-boat, and after rowing very hard for some hours, landed at Robertson's Cove, about twenty miles from Cork. We were poor strangers now in a strange land, among a people of a strange language! There was not one inn or private house in the little village that could give us a night's lodging. It was a gloomy time. The day was gone, and we stood looking one at another like a company of poor prisoners. In these circumstances God sent us an honest farmer, who was a Papist, and he took us home to his house in the country and showed us great kindness. We lodged that night in the midst of our enemies. But the Lord suffered no man to hurt us. The next morning our kind host provided us horses, and sent a servant to conduct us safe to Cork.

Here we met with a kind reception. Our friends rejoiced with us, and praised God for all our deliverances. I lodged with old Mr. Massiot,³⁹ who kept a house too well-provided for pilgrims. I spent a few days in that city, preached night and morning, and visited the brethren from house to house. I hope good was done.

I then set out for Dublin, where I spent my winter with pleasure and profit.

The spring following I returned to Cork, where I spent about two months. I found much satisfaction, but not without temptations. I met with reproaches, and many cruel mockings, but found that Spirit resting upon me, which gave me victory over reproach and shame.

I then rode to Limerick, where I spent a few weeks. I met with some severe trials in that city, but God delivered me. I then set out for Dublin. I found my body and mind very weak, yet not without many kind visits from my dear Lord.

In autumn I took a sore fever. Doctor Rutty,⁴⁰ that venerable and wise physician attended me faithfully, without fee or reward. He thought my labours under the sun were ended. I bid farewell to the world. I was kept in perfect peace, patient and resigned to the will of my heavenly Father. I had comfortable and clear views of *paradise*, and a world of happy spirits. When to all appearance I was just on the brink of eternity, I fell into a sweet rest and dreamed I was dead, and saw all things prepared for my funeral and that my spirit was with Christ in a state of unspeakable happiness, but was sent back again to call a few more sinners to repentance. I then awoke, my fever was gone, and from that moment I began to recover. My strength of body soon returned, and the Lord sent me forth with a fresh commission.

I laboured in Ireland, till July 1758, and then embarked for England, with Mr. [Thomas] Johnson, [Paul] Greenwood and [Nicholas] Gilbert. We had a fine gale, and soon landed at Parkgate. I then rode to

³⁸CW, 'Hymns for Christian Friends, #43', st. 3, *HSP* (1749), 2:318.

³⁹Jacques ('James') Massiot, of Cork; father of the younger itinerant.

⁴⁰John Rutty (1697–1775), a distinguished Quaker physician in Dublin, who also treated JW.

Bristol. Our Conference begun August 10. It was a good season. God crowned our meeting with love and unanimity.

The latter end of September I arrived once more at the Orphan House without Pilgrim Street Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne. My good old friends were glad to see me, and received me as one raised from the dead.

In the latter end of this year I had some thoughts of changing my life again. I prayed for divine direction, and took the advice of some of my dear friends. One who loved me, and wished me well, recommended to me an agreeable person of a fair character, and on April 17, 1759, we were married at St. Andrew's, Newcastle upon Tyne.⁴¹ God made his face to shine upon us and blessed us, and amply rewarded me for all my days of mourning. He doubly restored to me all spiritual and temporal blessings. This was a day of prosperity, therefore I thought it a day of great danger.

I was now favoured with an agreeable, loving companion, a good house, a pleasant situation, and all things to make life easy and comfortable. I must confess I found a desire to settle, but not to leave my dear Master's work. I begun a little business, and had now a fair opportunity to step into the world. But my dear Lord would not suffer me. He showed me that his good work would bring me far more gain in the end than all the shops in Newcastle. So I set out for the north, and preached at P, Morpeth, Alnwick, Berwick, Dundee, Musselburgh, Leith, New and Old Aberdeen, Peterhead, and then returned to Newcastle the same way.

I then set out for London Conference, visited Canterbury and Dover, returned to London, and then rode back to Newcastle. In all those journeys I found the Lord was with me, and gave his word success.

In the year 1760, I again visited Scotland. The work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Sinners were converted, mourners comforted, and the saints built up in their most holy faith. We had now a fair prospect of a great harvest in North Britain, till men of corrupt minds stirred up the spirit of vain controversy. We then spent our time and strength about the meaning of words, instead of promoting the fear and love of God. My soul was troubled, and my spirit grieved within me, to see so many precious souls turned out of the way of holiness and happiness, by noisy disputes, and foolish jangling. These men will blush in the last day who have done this great evil. Let me live with men of peace, who love God and the brethren, and enjoy the life of religion in their own souls.

April 28, 1761. Mr. Wesley came to Edinburgh, and the Lord gave his word success. Sinners heard with attention, and the saints rejoiced in God their Saviour.

I visited Dundee, and Aberdeen, returned to Edinburgh, and from thence to Newcastle upon Tyne, where God blessed his own word. I then set out with Mr. Wesley and several of the brethren for Durham. Mr. Wesley preached in a green field, by the riverside, to a very large auditory. One poor man was favoured with a stone, and lost a little blood, but in the general they behaved tolerably well. I preached in the evening, in the same field, to a large congregation. A gentleman, so called, employed a base man to strip himself naked and swim through the river to disturb the hearers; but a good woman soon hissed him off the stage, so he was glad to return by the way he came, with much disgrace. Mr. John Greenwood informed me afterwards, that the very gentleman who encouraged the poor wretch above-mentioned was sometime after found drowned in the same river. O God, thy *judgments* are *unsearchable*, and thy *ways* past finding out!

In August I left Newcastle, and set out with my wife for London. It was a disagreeable journey, but God blessed and preserved us from all evil. September 1, our Conference begun. On the 22nd, King George the Third was crowned. Royalty was conspicuously displayed, and the glory of this present world set forth in all its splendour. But kings must die, and then all their glory shall vanish away.

Thence we set out for Newcastle upon Tyne, where I spent my winter.

The latter end of July 1762, we left Newcastle, and set out for Leeds. August 9, our Conference begun. I was stationed in that circuit. In July 1763, I set out for London. Our Conference begun and ended in love. I then set out for Scotland. I spent my winter in Edinburgh, Dunbar, and Berwick. We lived in a

⁴¹His new wife was Ann Twizel. The marriage was actually on Apr. 21, 1759.

little, dark room at Edinburgh, encompassed round with old, black walls, disagreeable enough. But we had a good season, many poor sinners were converted to God. We saw the fruit of our labours and rejoiced. My dear Edinburgh friends were very kind, especially Lady [Frances] Gardiner, that good old saint, who is now with Jesus in paradise. Praise God for all his mercies!

In the year 1764 I continued labouring in Scotland. On June 1, I set out with Mr. Wesley and my wife for Aberdeen. We had a pleasant and profitable journey. This summer we laid the foundation of our octagon at Aberdeen. The Lord gave me success. Many precious souls were awakened and added to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are enrolled in heaven.

November 13. We set out for Edinburgh, and rode to Dundee. The 15th, we rode to Kinghorn, and the next morning crossed the Firth and took the stage to Edinburgh. Our friends received us with joy, and we praised God together.

In the year 1765 we laid the foundation of our octagon [chapel] at Edinburgh. I met with much opposition, and many discouragements. But the Lord was on my side, and helped me. I collected all I could, gave all I could spare, and borrowed above three hundred pounds to carry on and complete that building.

I preached on the foundation one Sabbath-day to a large congregation. The power of the Lord was present to heal, and many rejoiced to see that day. I preached every Lord's day on the Calton Hill, a large Golgotha, a place of a skull! By preaching so often in the cold air, to very large auditories, with other difficulties and hard labours, I laid the foundation of a very dangerous disorder in my bowels, which baffled all the skill of physicians, and the virtue of medicine, for more than three years. But I could say,

Let sickness blast, and death devour,
If heav'n will recompense our pains:
Perish the grass, and fade the flow'r,
Since firm the word of God remains.⁴²

In July I set out for England. I spent a few days at Newcastle upon Tyne, and then rode to Manchester. Our Conference begun the 20th of August and ended the 23nd. God refreshed us. I visited the brethren, and then set out for the north.

In October Mr. Alexander Coats died at the Orphan House, in perfect peace. I saw him fall asleep in the arms of our adorable Saviour, without a doubt. Farewell my brother for a season! But we shall meet again to part no more.

In the year 1766, I laboured in Newcastle circuit, but was very much indisposed. I was just worn out. My bodily strength failed. I was on the verge of eternity. But blessed be God, I enjoyed great tranquillity of mind, and very good spirits.

Accepting my pain,
I no longer complain,
But wait till at last I the haven obtain:
Till the storms are all o'er,
And afflicted no more,
On a plank of the ship I escape to the shore.⁴³

February 20. That old saint, Henry Jackson, died full of love, being ninety-nine years and five months old. Let me die his death!

⁴²Samuel Wesley Jr., 'On Isaiah 40:6–8', st. 6, in JW, *Moral and Sacred Poems* (1744), 3:40.

⁴³CW, 'Penitential Hymns #4', st. 7, *HSP* (1749), 1:80.

August 12. Our Conference begun at Leeds. We enjoyed a solemn sense of the presence of God. We met, and parted in love. I then rode to Newcastle, and spent a few months in that circuit. My disorder continued, but I could say, 'When I am weak, then I am strong.'⁴⁴

In July 1767, I set out for London. God was with me, and gave me a will and power to preach his word. August 18 our Conference begun. Dear Mr. [George] Whitefield, and honest Howell Harris attended. All was love; all was harmony. It was a Pentecost indeed!

In the beginning of September 1768, I left Newcastle upon Tyne, and set out with my wife for Birstall, in Yorkshire. The Lord brought us to our journey's end in peace. We met with a hearty welcome. Our friends rejoiced with us, and we praised God together.

On Tuesday, August 1, 1769, our Conference begun at Leeds. The Spirit of God rested upon us, and made us of one mind and judgment.

In the latter end of July 1770, I rode to London. Our Conference begun August the 7th. The Lord presided over us, and made it a time of love. I then set out for Birstall, where I had laboured two years with great satisfaction, and I hope with some success.

August 26. I took my leave of my dear Birstall friends, and rode with my wife to Bradford in Yorkshire. We met with a loving reception. I laboured this year with much comfort. I hope good was done.

In the year 1771, the Calvinists proclaimed open war against the Remonstrants.⁴⁵ In August, several of them met at our Conference in Bristol, but their strength failed. They could do nothing. For truth is great, and will prevail.

The two following years I laboured in Newcastle circuit, among my dear friends and countrymen, whom I love for the truth's sake. Great things hath the Lord done in that [part] of his vineyard.

In the year 1774, I was appointed at the Bristol Conference for Liverpool circuit. I took my leave of my dear Newcastle friends with much reluctance, and set out with my wife for Lancashire. September 26, we reached Bolton-in-the-Moors, where we met with a friendly reception. We lodged with honest George Eskrick. The presence of the Lord dwelt with us, and we enjoyed great peace.

In the year 1775, I removed to Liverpool, where I spent a few months with pleasure and profit. I found much love both to the place and people. They bore with my bodily weakness, and refreshed me in the Lord.

In July 1776 I left Bolton and set out for London. Our Conference begun the first Tuesday in August. The shout of a King was in the midst of us, and we praised God together for all that he had done. I spent a few days in that great city, preached the word, visited a few dear Christian friends, and then set out for Manchester.

November 7. I set out once more for Ireland. The 8th, I reached Conwy; the 9th, Holyhead; the 10th, I embarked, and after a dangerous passage, landed that evening in Dublin. I preached every evening at Wood Street, to a large auditory. God blessed his word, and gave me success. I visited a few poor backsliders, who were glad to see the face of an old friend. May God restore them for Christ's sake! Monday, the 24th, I embarked for England; 25th, landed at the Head and took the stage to Conwy; 26th, I came to Chester; and the 28th to Manchester; where my wife and friends received me with great joy. We praised God for trials and blessings.

In the latter end of July 1777 I set out for Bristol. I visited the principal societies in my way, and God gave me strength of body and peace of mind. Our Conference begun the first Tuesday in August. We had a good season. Love to God and man crowned our meeting. I then rode to Manchester, and spent a few days with my old friends. I published the word of salvation in Salford on the Sabbath-day, to a large congregation. Some of our mistaken churchmen presented the fire engine. But their strength failed, they could do nothing. This vain attempt seemed to be the last effort of a conquered enemy. I then set out for Bradford in Yorkshire, where I spent an agreeable year with Mr. [Joseph] Benson and my dear friends. I hope our weak labours were made a blessing to many.

⁴⁴Cf. 2 Cor. 12:10.

⁴⁵Hopper is referring to the debate over the anti-Calvinist statement in the 1770 *Minutes*.

In the year 1778 our Conference begun at Leeds the first Tuesday in August. I was stationed another year with Mr. [John] Murlin and [Thomas] Johnson in Bradford circuit. We laboured together in love. God was with us, and gave us success.

In the year 1779 I was appointed at our London Conference for Colne circuit in Lancashire.

August 25. I took my leave of our dear friends at Bradford and set out with my wife for Colne. I met with many agreeable, and some disagreeable things. The grand enemy had wounded many who, I hope, are now healed again. We have had a severe winter, many crosses and trials, and many blessings. The Lord hath owned our weak labours, and given us a little success. The last time I visited the classes in this circuit, we added thirty-eight to our number, twenty-three to the church of the living God, who had found remission of sins through the blood of our adorable Saviour. Nine have died in peace, and are now with the spirits of just men made perfect, in the paradise of God.

I can say but little about the controversy between the Calvinian brethren and the Arminians. I believe Christ tasted death for every man, but I do not love contention. I am no disputant. I therefore leave polemical divinity to men of learning, abilities, and experience. I can only say I have been greatly humbled for my sin. I know in whom I have believed. I know God is love. I know it by experience. He hath loved me, and given his Son for me. I have peace with God, through faith in the blood of Christ. I am at peace with all the saints, with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I desire to follow after peace with all men. I hate sin, and by the grace of God I overcome it. I love holiness, the whole mind that was in Christ, and I pursue it. By all means I follow on, if I may apprehend that for which I was also apprehended of Christ Jesus. I aim at, wish, and pray for all that grace, glory, and immortality promised by the Father, and procured by the Son of his love. This I call Bible religion, genuine Christianity; and this religion I call mine.

This I desire to recommend to all men, by preaching his word in the pulpit, in the house, and in the way—in season and out of season, according to my ability.

Without this religion, all names, notions, and forms among all sects and parties are but mere parade and idle show. Without repentance, without faith in the blood of Christ, without holiness of heart and life, without love to God and man, all is nothing. Let all men consider this well, and pray for and seek after this one thing needful, that they may be saved from sin in this life, and from hell in the great day of the Lord Jesus!

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 23–34, 82–94, 136–48.⁴⁶

⁴⁶This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 1:179–239; followed by Hopper's further record of his continuing ministry, and reflections on his work by others.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Bristol Hotwells
May 20, 1780

I have this day received your kind favour,¹ as it did not reach Stroud until after we left our dear friends there. Knowing how much you are interested in everything that concerns your unworthy child makes me take the earliest opportunity of informing you how we have gone on since we left Sheffield. The recollection of favours received from God's man fills my heart with gratitude and makes me cry out, 'Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him or the son of man that thou should thus condescend minutely to order all that concerns him.'²

The day after I wrote to you we reached Derby,³ and on inquiring for an inn near Mr. Dobinson, a man directed our post boy to Mr. Dobinson's door. Mrs. Dobinson immediately came to the door and, on our telling her the mistake the man had made, insisted on our abiding with her while at Derby.⁴ We stayed here over Sunday and part of the time it pleased my dear Lord to give me to feel the symptoms of mortality more strongly than before. Dear Mrs. Dobinson was very kind, and treated me with all the affection of a tender parent and Christian friend. On Monday I was something better. We proceeded on our journey and reached Birmingham about five o'clock. After drinking tea at the inn, we called on dear Mrs. Jones. She was very free and open with us but, as her sisters were there, did not ask us to sleep at her house. We returned to the inn and the next day reached Worcester.

Here we met brother Collins⁵ and after a comfortable interview with him and some dear friends at brother Luty's,⁶ we went home with dear Miss Clark.⁷ These people fully answered the character you had given. They are lively and loving. The work both widens and deepens. God is with them of a truth. Our spirits were greatly refreshed, and the next morning we pursued our way forward with much of the presence of our dearest Lord. Miss Clark accompanied us to Tewkesbury. Our chaise was like a Bethel,⁸ and I believe we shall also have cause to remember this favoured season. We dined at brother Coler's and that night reached Stroud.

Here it was, as my dear father observes, we found a knot of kind friends. And to my great though very agreeable surprise, Nancy Bolton⁹ welcomed us to Mrs. Scudamore's,¹⁰ Mrs. Scudamore being gone

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Cf. Ps. 8:4.

³This letter, likely written c. May 1, is not known to survive.

⁴Michael and Rachel Dobinson, originally of London, were friends of Sarah Crosby and central to the establishment of Methodism in Derby, after moving there in 1761. See the account of Mrs. Dobinson (1725–1803) in *Methodist Magazine* 26 (1803): 557–66.

⁵This is again, likely, Brian Bury Collins, who was itinerating on occasion in Methodist settings (see his letter above for Sept. 1779).

⁶Elsewhere JW spells the name 'Lewty', which seems correct; likely Edmund Lewty, to whom several children were born in the 1770s.

⁷Mary Clark, of Tybridge Street, appears at the top of the oldest surviving list (in 1788) of the Methodist society in Worcester, and as a class leader in 1790; see John Noake, *Worcester Sects* (London: Longman, 1861), 330, 335. She never married, and may be the woman of that name buried in 1818 at All Saints church, aged 72. See JW's letters to her of Mar. 21, 1776; June 1, 1782; and May 31, 1784.

⁸See Gen. 28:12–19.

⁹Ann Bolton (1743–1822) of Witney, Oxfordshire.

¹⁰Rebecca Thornhill (1729–90), the daughter of William and Elizabeth Thornhill of Bristol, married Rowles Scudamore (1712–1802) of Stroud in 1753. Rebecca was a mainstay of Methodism in

to meet her class. We soon became one spirit; and though I was much fatigued in body, the goodness of my dear Lord and kindness of these dear friends filled my heart with thankfulness and resignedly I wished for strength to speak his praise who dealt so bountifully with me. The next morning dear Nancy Bolton went with us to New House.¹¹ At this delightful retreat we stayed a week. I was much worse than when I left home. Here also my spirit was truly humbled on account of the great love shown towards me by dear Mr. and Mrs. Wathen. Mrs. Wathen accompanied us to Pettifrance.¹²

We dropped Ebenezer at Kingswood (Tommy Colbeck did not come with us, as we found when we came to set off he had the itch to a very great degree. We left him to be cured and suppose sister Colbeck will send him as soon as well.¹³) and that evening reached Bristol. We stopped at Mrs. Forrest's, who told us Miss Johnson¹⁴ had been to desire we would sleep with her. She's a mother in Israel indeed and treats me as if I was her own child. On Thursday morning, [the] 11th instant, Mrs. Castleman came with us to the Hotwells.¹⁵ We have took up our abode at the Rock House.¹⁶ The family are quiet and orderly, our lodgings airy and pleasant. And it has pleased the Lord, ever since I first tasted the water, gradually to abate all my dangerous symptoms. It is much, if I am not continued a stranger in a strange land a little longer. And glory be to my dear Lord, his will is my rest. I feel all my desire swallowed up in one. And on Monday, while pleading with the Lord to enable me to glorify him, he sweetly spoke to my heart and said, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee and thou shall glorify me.'¹⁷ How was my spirit filled with wonder to think [of] a mortal glorifying the infinite of days, and I could not forbear saying, 'Lord, how can it be?' and the Spirit graciously answered, 'Whoso offers me praise honours me.'¹⁸ O that I may more than ever live in the delightful employ. I bless my dear Lord for the sweetness I have found in contemplating his perfections. How does every attribute conspire to make me blessed! O that I was capable of loving him more and serving him better than I have ever yet done. Well the time will come when, having escaped my earthly prison, my power shall be equal to my will and the spirit now so fettered with cumbrous clay [will] have liberty to range the illimitable plains of Jehovah's kingdom. While I dictate to the dear friend that writes for me, my spirit involuntarily cries out, 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!'¹⁹ But I check those risings of desire with, 'Not my will but thine be done',²⁰ for his time is best.

Stroud. One of JW's last acts was to abridge an account of her life: Sarah Young, *Some Particulars Relating to the Life and Death of Rebecca Scudamore* (Bristol: S. Bonner, 1790). JW's abridgement was published posthumously in *AM* 16 (1793): 211–18, 254–59, 307–13, 357–62, 418–23.

¹¹The home (later renamed Brimscombe Court) of mill owner Joseph Wathen (c. 1723–86) and Anne (Iles) Wathen (c. 1739–1803), in Far Thrupp, Gloucestershire, southeast of Stroud on the River Frome. See JW, *Journal*, Mar. 20, 1787, *Works*, 24:9; and *WHS* 5 (1906): 251–53.

¹²I.e., Petty France, Gloucestershire.

¹³There is no record that Thomas Colbeck Jr. attended Kingswood. Sister Colbeck would be his mother, Sarah (Sharp) Colbeck.

¹⁴Elizabeth Johnson (1721–98) of Bristol; her home on Hilgrove Street was a center of Methodism in the city.

¹⁵Letitia (Fisher) Castleman (1738–1822) was the wife of John Castleman (1734–1801), a surgeon in Bristol.

¹⁶A public house in Bristol Wells, near St. Vincent's Rock.

¹⁷Ps. 50:15.

¹⁸Ps. 50:23.

¹⁹Rev. 22:20.

²⁰Luke 22:42.

Yesterday we were at Publow²¹ and a more pleasing family of this kind I never saw before. We stopped to hear Mr. Dalton preach a funeral sermon for a departed sister whose name I think was Mary Gee. It was the person you visited along with Mr. Dalton, who charged him and another then present never to lift up their heel against their father in God. She made a blessed end, witnessing to the very last [that] God is able to save to the uttermost.

I think it is much if this reaches my ever dear and honoured father before he has left Scotland. Therefore I shall direct to Newcastle, and hope to hear where you will be, for though my spirit is ever united to you, yet it gives me pleasure to know where you are and is a help to my praying for the people you are labouring among. My fellow traveller joins me in love to brother [Joseph] Bradford.²² Please to tell him we have seen his wife; she is greatly restored and intended setting of[f] yesterday for the Isle of Wight.²³

I am better able to write now than when I last wrote, but still feel some bad effects generally follow much of this employment. And therefore [I] thought that you, my dear sir, would prefer a long letter written by my friend to a few lines written by me. However, I will conclude this long epistle, and if I have too long intruded on your precious time, forgive me. Dear Miss M[arshall] desires her love. May the God of all peace fill you now and forever with all his fullness prays, my dear, dear sir,

Your most unworthy, but truly affectionate, child,

E. Ritchie

Annotation: another hand, '28th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

²¹Orig., 'Publey'.

²²Ritchie was accompanied on her trip by 'Miss Marshall'; almost certainly Mercy Marshall (b. 1755), daughter of Jeremiah and Ann (Haigh) Marshall of Guiseley. See her letter of Nov. 11, 1780.

²³Bradford had married Mary Angell (1750–87) of Newport, Isle of Wight, in 1779.

From Cornelius Bayley

Deptford
May 29, 1780

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As I expected Mr. [Peter] Lièvre would have received a line from you before now, I did not trouble you with my letter. But I think it would not be well to delay any longer, lest you might be tempted to think I do not honour you as you deserve, which would give me more pain than I know how to express. And I may presume my past deportment will certify what I say.

Mr. Lièvre informed me that he had mentioned to you some months ago his intention of changing with me for a few weeks, if not months, if I entered into orders; to which you kindly agreed. The day before I was ordained he wrote to inform you of putting into practice his intentions. I therefore thought I need not take up your time with my letter before he had an answer. And as Mr. Lièvre had no doubt of your granting him his desire, I have ventured upon his place and he is set out for Mr. Greaves's,¹ Leicester, from whence he will go to the school and occupy till I return. Before I left Kingswood I set in order everything I possibly could for the furtherance of those two, Mr. Caddick² and Mr. [Alexander] Mather, who promised to supply my place as well as they were able till Mr. Lièvre came down, and also to assist him. I have at present no intention of leaving the school before June twelvemonth, unless you would not choose me to stay so long. This I do (not because I have no offers of curacies, for I have had two the last week besides the church to which I was nominated, but) to show you I will not leave you without a convenient opportunity of procuring a proper person in my place. And certain I am the good of the school greatly depends upon a proper colleague with Mr. [Thomas] Simpson. I do it also to show the love I have for you, the preachers, and the school. And I trust I shall never deny the glorious truths I have embraced. I have not determined any particular made to myself. In a year's time I trust the God of providence will point out my course. I shall gratefully acknowledge a line of advice and direction from you, reverend sir, how to order my future conduct. I can truly say I have entered into this important, this awful, work of the ministry with no other end than that of being made more holy myself by being exercised in sacred things, and that of being made, if my heavenly Father please to sanctify my endeavours, more useful to my fellow creatures.

I would not have taken the liberty of being absent so long without a line, particularly from your own hand, but that I know the friendship you have for Mr. Lièvre. Though his writing and speaking to you might be sufficient.

If you disapprove of it, one line from you will bring me down again immediately.

Let me, with your advice, entreat your prayers for me. The Lord protect and bless you. I am, reverend and dear sir,

Yours humbly and affectionately,

Cornelius Bayley

Address: 'The Revd. Mr. John Wesley / at his Preaching House / York

Endorsement: by JW, 'Corn. Baily ordained / Ma. 29. 1780 / a[nswere]d June 3'.

Postmark: '29/MA'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/3.

¹Apparently Rev. Thomas Greaves, rector of Broughton Astley, Leicestershire.

²Richard Caddick (1740–1819), of Sedgley, Staffordshire, signed the Aug. 1771 statement clarifying the 'anti-Calvinist' clause in the 1770 *Minutes* (see *Works*, 10:404). He then matriculated St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford in Oct. 1772 and took his BA from Christ Church in June 1776. It is unclear how long he may have served at Kingswood. He became a gentleman scholar, with a focus on Hebrew studies.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[[West Street]] [London]
[[Sunday]] [June 4, 1780]

[[Dear Brother,]]

The floods are risen, and lift up their voice.¹ Last night the mob were parading and putting us in bodily fear. My wife and sister Thackwray kept a watch-night. The Irish chairmen² swear they will have [[old Wesley's]] chapel down, for the mob avail themselves of your authority. [[Even Sam telling his mother 'His uncle's letter has helped to spirit up the mob.'³]] You would be sorry to resemble that great reformer John Knox.

Some of the Tabernacle⁴ have asked if Charles Wesley was not with the petitioners, and were surprised to hear I was not. 'What then', said they, 'does he not stand up for the Protestant cause?'

You read a very small part of the mischief already done in the papers. 'It is nothing', they say, 'to what they intend to do. But they have made a good beginning.' Brother Thackwray was an eye-witness. He saw them drag the Bishop of Lincoln out of his coach, and force him to kneel down.⁵ They treated him unmercifully—began to pull the house down to which he fled for shelter, and were scarcely persuaded by the owner (whose wife big with child was almost frightened to death) to let him escape at 11:00 at night.

Another bishop wisely cried out, 'Huzza, no popery', and was dismissed with shoutings.

Lord Mansfield⁶ would have reasoned with them, but they would not hear him, and handled him almost as roughly as the Bishop of Lincoln. They arrested several of the members [of Parliament], particularly Sir George Savile.⁷ [They] broke his wheels in pieces, and forced him to sit in his carriage on the ground. He durst not stir out of it. They pulled off the Archbishop's wig, etc.⁸

Imagine the terror of the poor papists. I prayed with the preachers at the [City Road] Chapel and charged them to keep the peace. I preached peace and charity, the one true religion; and prayed earnestly for the trembling persecuted Catholics. Never have I found such love for them as on this occasion; and I believe most of the society are like-minded.

Many of your friends wish now that you had never published the letter; but *nescit vox missa reverti*.⁹ The furious bigots, both Scotch and English, make good use of it. It would have answered the end without your name. If it occasions the demolition of our chapel, the least you can do is to build it up again.

¹On June 2, 1780, Lord George Gordon led nearly 60,000 persons to petition Parliament against the Catholic Relief Act of 1778. As Gordon was presenting their petition, the crowd outside became riotous. Order was restored by the army only after arresting 450 persons and hanging at least another 25. Lord Gordon was tried for high treason, but gained an acquittal.

²Chairmen were menial labourers, pushing or carrying passengers in chairs; many were Irish (and hence Catholic). Infamously a group was hired by Sir William Beauchamp Proctor during a Middlesex campaign in Dec. 1768, to protect him and to beat up his rival's supporters. So the phrase came to be equated with a mob.

³JW's 'Letter to the printer of the *Public Advertiser*', dated Jan. 21, 1780 (see *Works*, Vol. 16).

⁴I.e., Calvinist Methodists, aligned with Whitefield's Tabernacle in London.

⁵Thomas Thurlow (1737–91) was the current Bishop of Lincoln.

⁶CW's old schoolmate, William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield and Lord Chief Justice.

⁷Sir George Savile (1726–84) introduced a Catholic Relief Act in 1778.

⁸Frederick Cornwallis (1713–83) was the current Archbishop of Canterbury.

⁹Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 390: 'A word once spoken can never be recalled'.

How often am I forced to exclaim, '*Incredibile est quantum fratrem anterio sapientia!*'¹⁰ My wary answer to the insidious Scot was, 'Much may be said on both sides'. [[Will you give your vote for expelling Lord George [Gordon from] the house? If the government suffers the rebellious rioters to escape with impunity, and do not vindicate the right of ambassadors as well as the right of Parliament, there is an end of their authority. The mob will trample upon their weakness, and we shall be ruled for the future by the]] *Bellua multorum capitum*.¹¹ General Monckton computed the mob at 90,000,¹² yet said 'he would engage to conquer them all with 500 soldiers'. [[A man in his hearing cursed the king, and 'hoped to see him brought to the block'.]]

[[Mr. Croger(?) let me into an important secret that 'the patriots are as much divided amongst themselves as they and the ministry'. God I trust will confound their devices, bring order out of the confusion, and good out of all this evil.]]

[[The Calvinists]] *antiquum obtinent*.¹³ [[Let us still differ from them]] *toto caelo*.¹⁴ [[They marched at the head of the rioters.]]

Monday morning [June 5]

[[Many more acts of their vileness I have heard since I began this. Many lords and gentlemen they abused, <...¹⁵> mobbed, and would have killed (particularly Lord]] Stormont)¹⁶ [[if they had not been delivered by next to a miracle. Lord George was continually coming out of the House and inflaming his men. I should not wonder if some]] Scipio Nasica¹⁷ [[should quell him with a joint-stool. The old Romans would treat him more *majorum*.¹⁸]]

Tomorrow they promise to demolish the nunneries in Hammersmith. It will be a day of business at the House of Parliament, and in the city. [[The patriots have now had a fair trial of skill with the government, who must either yield or conquer.]]

Monday noon I breakfasted with John Pawson, John Atlay, and Dr. [Thomas] Coke, leaving a bonfire behind me of the spoils of the chapels at [[Lord George's door in the next street.]] John Atlay I found in a dreadful taking. He has been kept up all night by the bonfire in Moorfields. The mob was busied with destroying the remains of the chapel there,¹⁹ and three large houses adjoining (one the priest's), of which nothing has escaped the flames. The instruments, which the Associators²⁰ make use of first are boys with hatche[t]s, who coolly cut everything to pieces, then bring it out and cast it into the fire. An engine stands by in readiness to *prevent mischief*.

John Atlay trembles for our chapel. The same incendiaries, if employed and paid, would as freely burn us and ours. For why should not Protestants have their bonfires as well as papists? They have raised

¹⁰'It is incredible how much brother lacks common sense.'

¹¹Cf. Horace, *Epistles*, I.i.76; '[the people are a] many-headed beast'.

¹²Robert Monckton (1726–82), who rose to the rank of lieutenant-general, served mainly in North America, but as a member of Parliament was often in London. CW spells 'Moncton'.

¹³'Hold fast to their old ways'.

¹⁴'By the whole extent of the heavens'; i.e., entirely.

¹⁵One word is obscured by an ink blot.

¹⁶David Murray (1727–96), 2nd Earl of Mansfield, and 7th Viscount of Stormont, was a nephew of CW's friend William Murray.

¹⁷Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica (c. 181–132 BCE), a Roman politician who led a group of senators in clubbing to death the tribune Tiberius Gracchus with chairs and table-legs.

¹⁸'Traditionally'.

¹⁹A Roman Catholic chapel on White Street. It was rebuilt two years later.

²⁰I.e., those aligned with the Protestant Association.

many crusades against us; why should not we raise one crusade against them? Shall you or I be Peter the Hermit?²¹

Address: by an unknown hand, 'Mr. Wesley / Chesterfield Street / Mary[le]bone.

Endorsement: by CW, 'To B[rother] of Mob / June 6, 1780'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 4/48.

²¹Peter the Hermit (c. 1050–1115), a priest of Amiens known for raising an army for the First Crusade with his preaching.

From John Whittingham¹

[Coventry]
[c. June 30, 1780]

To The Public

As Mr. John Wesley's letter to the printer of the *Morning Post*² has been very industriously dispersed throughout the kingdom, with a design to inflame people against Roman Catholics, I beg leave to take notice of some capital errors that Mr. Wesley has been guilty of in that publication, in which he begins by praising *An Appeal from the Protestant Association*, and tells us that 'he shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that tract by a few plain arguments'.³

One of which is 'that no Roman Catholic does, or can, give any security for his allegiance or peaceable behaviour'; which he attempts to prove by making people believe 'that no oath is binding to Roman Catholics who live in any Protestant country' because, as he tells you, 'the Council of Constance openly avowed that no faith is to be kept with heretics'; from which he concludes, 'that papists ought not to be tolerated by any government, Protestant, Mahometan, or pagan'.⁴

Thus this pretended charitable preacher, after making a false assertion, which no council upon earth ever taught, endeavours to set all kings and princes against papists by instilling into their minds that Roman Catholics can give no security for their allegiance.

'If papists take five hundred oaths, they are all swept away as a spider's web',⁵ if John Wesley's false assertions are to pass for facts. But as his favourite Associators⁶ have so lately caused such infernal barbarities that were never before exhibited by Christians, I shall leave government to judge who are the best subjects—peaceable papists or rebellious Associators. Whether Mr. John Wesley's letter helped to inflame their late burning zeal, or to promote brotherly love, let others decide; whilst I prove Mr. John Wesley a false deceiver when he says: 'The power of granting pardons for sins—past, present, and to come—is and has been one branch of the spiritual power of the pope, and those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power can give no security for their allegiance, since' (as he says) 'they believe the Pope can pardon rebellions, high treason, and all other sins whatsoever.'⁷

To which I answer that although all Roman Catholics do believe that the pope hath a spiritual power of forgiving sins, yet no one believes that he can forgive any one person's sins without he hears the confession of the sinner. Nor that the sinner can be absolved by him unless he sincerely repents with a hearty sorrow for his offence, an utter abhorrence of his crime, and a firm purpose of amendment. Much

¹John Whittingham (born c. 1722) was a prominent nurseryman in the Coventry area who converted from his Church of England upbringing to Roman Catholicism in 1758. He emerged over time as an apologist for the Catholic community in Coventry. While Coventry largely escaped the violence of the anti-Catholic Gordon riots of early June 1780, Whittingham took a keen interest in them. This belated response to JW's Jan. 1780 letter to various London newspapers was one of the ways he sought to defend political toleration of Roman Catholics. It was circulated as a broadsheet in Coventry and then published in at least one London newspaper. See Ruth Barbour, 'John Whittingham: Coventry Nurseryman, diarist, Catholic Apologist, and Political Activist', *Warwickshire History* 16 (2014): 8–25.

²Given where Whittingham published his response, he surely means the appearance of JW's widely published Jan. 21, 1780 letter in *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (Feb. 5, 1780), p. 2.

³JW, 'A Letter to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*', §1.

⁴*Ibid.*, §§2–3.

⁵*Ibid.*, §4.

⁶I.e., members of the Protestant Association; whose efforts sparked the Gordon Riots in London in early June 1780.

⁷JW, 'A Letter to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*', §6.

less do we believe that he can forgive sins to come, or that he has the power of dispensing with our promises, oaths, or vows made to our kings or governors.

Oaths and promises made by Roman Catholics are not those light airy things as John Wesley falsely asserts, as no power upon earth can discharge us from any duty to which we are bound by the law of God and nature. And every Roman Catholic believes that faith, justice, truth, and honesty are duties which, by the law of God and nature, we owe to all mankind; and that we are bound to pay allegiance to our lawful sovereigns, let their religion be what it will.

But as if it was not enough to belie the pope, he casts a great slur upon the apostles by pretending to prove ‘that we cannot possibly give any security for our allegiance because we believe a priest has power to pardon sins’.⁸

Now all Christians know, or at least ought to know, that Christ gave the apostles power to forgive sins. But, if John Wesley’s method of arguing is to take place, no prince could depend upon the allegiance of any of the converts, because they believe the apostles could forgive sins. Therefore, if Mr. Wesley’s argument has any weight against Roman Catholics, then Nero and the first persecutors of the primitive Christians are to be justified and not condemned.

But if I mistake not, the Church of England teaches that her priests have power to forgive sins. If so, what does Mr. John Wesley make of the allegiance of all her children?

As to what Mr. John Wesley says about our building chapels at Bath and elsewhere, and our raising of seminaries,⁹ this—although a good hint to his friends the Associators—might not be the only cause why those particular places have been so barbarously dealt by. No, Mr. John Wesley professes himself to be no persecutor of any man for religious principles. With persecution he (good man) has nothing to do, if we can but believe his own words. And perhaps it was owing to this pious preacher that the papists were not served as he tells a Romish priest said he would serve a woman of Mr. Wesley’s acquaintance, if it were for the good of the church. Therefore, when Mr. John Wesley answers me, I beg he will not forget to tell us what the woman’s name was, and in what place she resided when the ‘Romish priest came to her, and talking with her largely, broke out, “You are no heretic! You have the experience of a real Christian!” “And would you”, she asked, “burn me alive?” He said, “God forbid! ... Unless it were for the good of the church!”’¹⁰

The weak remark with which Mr. Wesley concludes proves to me that he is not tied by either truth, justice, or mercy. And so I shall leave him to repent of the opposition which he and his friends have raised against the bill in favour of Roman Catholics, it being begun in malice and ended in such outrage that no meek teachers can vindicate their proceedings. The pretence of religion has only aggravated the guilt of sedition, and offended thousands besides.

John Whittingham, of Coventry

Source: published broadsheet (a copy survives in the Bodleian Library of Oxford University, G.A. Warwick, b. 1, f. 289); and printed in *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (August 5, 1780), p. 4.

⁸Ibid., §8.

⁹Ibid., §10.

¹⁰Ibid., §11. In his ‘Letter to the Editors of the *Freeman’s Journal*’, Mar. 23, 1780, §5.9, JW identified the woman as Elizabeth Duchesne (1724–76), of St. Giles, Middlesex.

From John Walsh

July 1780

I think it would be worth your while to take a view of those wonderful marks of the Lord's hatred to *duelling*, called 'The Brothers' Steps'.¹ They are in the fields, about a third of a mile northward from Montagu House.²

And the awful tradition concerning them is that two brothers quarrelled about a worthless woman, and according to the fashion of those days, fought with sword and pistol. The prints of their feet are about the depth of three inches, and nothing will vegetate, so much as to disfigure them. The number is only eighty-three, but probably some are at present filled up. For I think there were formerly more in the centre, where each unhappy combatant wounded the other to death. And a bank on which the first who fell died retains the form of his agonizing couch, by the curse of barrenness, while grass flourishes all about it. Mr. George Hall, who was the librarian of Lincoln's Inn, first showed me those steps twenty-eight years ago, when I think they were not quite so deep as now. He remembered them about thirty years, and the man who first showed them him about thirty more, which goes back to the year 1692. But I suppose they originated in King Charles the Second's reign. My mother well remembered their being plowed up, and corn sown to deface them, about fifty years ago. But all was labour in vain, for the prints returned in a while to their pristine form; as probably will those that are now filled up. Indeed I think an account of them in your magazine would be a pious memorial of their lasting reality.

These hints are only offered as a small token of my goodwill to yourself, and the work, by
Your son and brother in the gospel,

John Walsh

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 209–10.

¹Also known as the Field of Forty Footsteps.

²A mansion on Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, that was currently the first home of the British Museum.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
[July¹] 1780

My reasons against accepting your invitation to the Conference are: 1) I can do no good. 2) I can prevent no evil. 3) I am afraid of being a partaker of other men's sins, or of countenancing them by my presence. 4) I am afraid of myself; you know I cannot command my temper, and you have not courage to stand by me. 5) I cannot trust *your resolution*. Unless you act with a *vigour* that is not in you, *conclamatum est*.²

I am not sure they will not prevail upon you to ordain them. You claim the *power*, and only say it is not probable you shall ever exercise it.³ Probability on one side implies probability on the other, and I want better security. So I am to stand by and see the ruin of our cause? You know how far you may depend on me; let me know how far I may depend on you, and on our preachers. In the Bath affair you acted with vigour for the first time, but you could not hold out. Unmindful of your power and your infirmity, you yielded to the rebel instead of his yielding to you.⁴ You should not have employed him again till he had owned his fault. This quite overturned my confidence in you, which I should never have told you had I not been compelled.

If you think my advice can be of any use to you, I will attend you to Bristol, and be always within call.

Source: published excerpt; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:379–80.

¹This letter was written sometime after CW received JW's letter of June 8, and before JW's Conference with his preachers began in Bristol in early Aug. CW did end up attending that Conference.

²Terence, *The Eunuch*, II.iii.56. Allusion to a funerary rite, meaning no hope of life is left.

³See JW to CW, June 8, 1780.

⁴John Bristol, or perhaps Alexander M'Nab; see CW to JW, Dec. 6, 1779; and c. Aug. 10, 1780.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

Publow
July 4, 1780

Since I last attempted to write to my ever dear and reverend father,¹ how bountifully has my gracious Lord dealt with me! Help me to praise him, my dear sir. His mercy endures forever. And so far has he extended his wonted² goodness toward me that I know not how to tell you what he daily does for me. I continue to recover and now begin to feel my strength gradually returning. My heart cries out:

In blessing thee with grateful songs
My happy life shall glide away;
The praise that to thy name belongs
Hourly with lifted hands I'll pay.³

New obligations are laid on me to love and serve my blessed Lord. I sink beneath a weight of gratitude at my Saviour's feet; O what boundless love! He is with me. He dwells within a worm. He has made all glory to be to him alone.

Last Thursday we left our lodgings at the Rock House and came to spend a few days with dear Miss [Elizabeth Mary] Morgan at Miss [Ann] Chapman's. They were to come along with us to Publow last Monday, but Miss Morgan is the Lord's prisoner, having got a swelling in her face which rendered her coming with us impracticable. If she is better, they intend coming to us, as she seems very desirous of embracing every opportunity in her power of being with us. She is a precious soul indeed. Our spirits are much united. We drink into one spirit, and with her, dear sister [Elizabeth] Johnson, [Letitia] Castleman, and I have been permitted to take sweet counsel.

I find Publow a blessed soil for my spirit. My soul seems to breath a pure air in this calm retreat. And while indulged with the blessed enjoyment of my saviour's love, and the sweet society of Christian friends, I am lost in holy astonishment and praise at the blessed foretastes of heaven he gives us. Mrs. [Hannah] Owen is at London.⁴ Miss [Mary] Bishop during the holiday is gone to France. But Miss Owen⁵ is at home and our dear master condescends to make [her] one amongst us. We purpose, with the Lord's leave, staying here until near the time of your coming to Bristol, and then think of taking up our abode with Mrs. [Philadelphia]. But [we] are no less obliged to you, my dear sir, for your kind offer of a chamber at the room than if we had accepted it. But for some weeks we have been engaged to be in Norfolk Street, if my health will bear it, when next at Bristol.

I anticipate much pleasure in hopes of the profit I shall receive during the approaching season. O that you may come amongst us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace, and may we all drink more deeply into the Spirit of our God. I know you will say 'Amen'. Lord hear the united prayers of thy children, and give us more of heaven below. Your niece, Miss [Sarah] Wesley, spent the few days we were at the Chapman's with us. She was very friendly and open with us and much entreated us to come and see her when we come to town. May peace and love fill your whole soul now and ever prays, dear sir,

¹This letter, c. June 20, is not known to survive.

²I.e., usual or customary.

³JW, 'Psalm 63' (translated from the Spanish) st. 6, *CPH* (1738), 7.

⁴Following the death of her husband John in 1779, Hannah Owen (c. 1720–85), moved to London to live near her youngest daughter, Mary (Owen) Beardmore (1750–1809). Hannah's second daughter and namesake (1748–1820) accompanied her to London.

⁵Elizabeth Owen (c. 1739–1803), Hannah's oldest daughter, remained in Publow to continue the school for girls. In 1790 Elizabeth would marry William Pine, JW's printer in Bristol.

Your unworthy, though affectionate, child,

E. Ritchie

Annotation: another hand, '30th'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana,
Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

‘Anti-Enthusiast’ to the Printer of the *Reading Mercury*

Newbury [Berkshire]
July 6, 1780

Sir,

In a day when our ears are perpetually dinned with exclamations against popery, I cannot help asking whether we have not equally as much to fear from a set of men who, by the violence of rhapsody, can raise in weak minds such a degree of despair as tends to destroy both body and soul? I am led to ask this question from an even which took place here a short time since, which has not appeared in your paper.

On the 22nd of last month a soldier belonging to the 11th regiment of dragoons, quartered in this town, cut his throat in a most shocking manner with a razor. And after a very considerable loss of blood, supposing he had not completed his suicide, he ran down stairs and threw himself into the water at a mill tail; where by the violence of the stream he was driven on an opposite bank, from whence he was taken up with very little expectations of life. As the unfortunate man was far advanced in years, remarkable for sobriety, and was by no means in poor circumstances, it was for some time difficult to assign a reason for his committing so rash an action. But upon searching his pockets a letter was found from one of those damnation mongers commonly called ‘Methodist preachers’, filled with all those anathemas so common to that *candid, meek, and pious* fraternity. As the poor man had for some years been subject to a very weak habit of body,¹ it was very naturally concluded that his mind, being thereby enfeebled, had become an easy prey to the violent suggestions in that letter—which opinion he fully corroborated when he was sufficiently recovered to have the use of his speech.

We never find throughout the whole ministry of Christ or his apostles that any of their discourses had such an effect. It is pity but in such cases as the above our legislature should provide that the sufferer should recover damages against the anathematist, as an accessory to the fact.

It is remarkable that the fraternity [of Methodists] in this place, fearing their craft was in danger from the above fact, began immediately to report that he had committed it through fear of the discovery of a theft of which he had been guilty. Be so kind therefore as to inform them that he had much less reason to be guilty of dishonesty than they have of lying, for he is possessed of upwards of thirty pounds, which is far more than the value of their veracity.

I am happy to conclude with saying that the poor man is likely to recover [from] his misfortune.

A constant reader,

Anti-Enthusiast

Source: published transcription; *Reading Mercury* (July 17, 1780), p. 3.

¹This is likely a reference to masturbation, which was commonly assumed to weaken or impair the mind. Cf. JW, *Thoughts on the Sin of Onan* (1767), *Works*, 32:374–88.

From Barnabas Brough¹

[Great] Clinton
c. August 1780

For the comfort and encouragement of those who are struggling on heavenward through the help of my loving God, I would write down his gracious dealings with my dear deceased wife, especially when she was to face death—who is the king of terrors to such as are strangers to the precious name of Jesus.

But it was not so with Sarah Brough. She bore the yoke in her youth. Her father died when she was only eight or nine months old. After seven years she was forced to leave her mother and go to live with her uncle. At that time he had the form of religion and was seeking the power. All the family was called together every Sunday night, a psalm was sung and a good prayer read. But afterwards he was deeply convinced of sin, which made him cast off all trust in his own works and cry aloud for mercy, to the great astonishment of his family and friends.

This made such an impression on her mind as never wore off while she lived. But she continued in the fear of God wherever she went. She durst no more follow the practice of those of her age, but retired daily to prayer and meditation. She had often very deep thoughts of the day of judgment, and loved the company of sober, serious people.

When she was fit for service, and had her lot in an evil world, though she was exposed to the common infection through sin and wicked persons, yet the fear of God which she still retained made her flee from evil as from the face of a serpent. While her fellow servants took their pleasure on the Sabbath day, she shut herself in her room, or retired into the woods or fields, not regarding the scoffs of her neighbours. No more than she rues it now. And she has often expressed her thankfulness to God, for preserving her in the slippery paths of youth.

Many made suit to her, and she had many good offers as to temporal things. But a concern for her soul made her very cautious, as she had often observed the dreadful consequences of being unequally yoked.² And when she had purposed more than once to change her condition, she was still disappointed. For what end this was she knew not then, but she knew afterwards. He made her humble and thankful, and filled her with praise to her loving Saviour. How much more reason have I to be lost in wonder, praise, and love, to him that willeth not the death of a sinner? My lot was cast to build a fire engine near the gentleman's house where she lived. But we were utter strangers to each other. As to myself, I had no thoughts of changing my condition; nay, I was resolved against it. I saw many wherever I went weighed down with the weight of a large family. Nay, I often saw war in the house, worse than that of sword and gun. This made me abhor the very thought of changing my life. So I roved away with my jovial companions, and thought how much better it was with us than with those that were tied to a wife and children.

But one night, after we had been taking our pleasure as usual, I went to bed and fell asleep. In a few moments I awoke, and found myself hanging over the mouth of hell, with the heavy judgments of God ready to pour down upon my head and swallow up body and soul at once. I was by myself in a dark room, my companion not being returned from his sport. But the light of hell-fire, which I had within, discovered the dreadful wages of sin. In a while the extremity of my anguish abated, and I found a desire to pray. After prayer, I believed God would have mercy upon me if I would amend my life. My very heart and soul embraced the offer, and I said to him, 'I will do any way, or whatever thou pleasest.' So I continued praying and confessing to God, till 6:00 or 7:00 in the morning.

But it was not long before my companions got the better of all my promises and good resolutions. And I was led again as an ox to the slaughter. But had I pleasure in sin as before? Just as much as the poor jailor had who thrust Paul and Silas into the prison. At last I violently broke away from them, and came

¹Titled: 'Some Account of the Life and Death of Mrs. Sarah Brough, by Barnabas Brough, of Clinton, near Whitehaven'.

²Cf. 2 Cor. 6:14.

home by myself. But as I was going along, it seemed as if everyone I met with would slay me. When I came to my poor habitation, expecting nothing but sorrow, I found to my great surprise that God was still willing to show me mercy, and to give me another trial for my life. I then thought, 'What method can I take to avoid evil and do good?' That instant it was pressed upon my mind, 'Marry one that fears God.' Then, I thought, my companions will be disappointed and I too may love and serve God. But then I thought, where shall I find, and how shall I know, one that truly fears God? My hopes again were at an end, and I sunk down into the arms of trouble. But oh the unfathomable love of God, to poor, fallen man! He is more ready to hear than we to pray, more ready to direct than we to obey. But all that will obey, he will direct, and deliver from all their enemies. Soon after this, I became acquainted with her that afterwards was my wife. But I had no thought of this till one day she reproved me for saying 'by my faith', telling me it was a kind of oath. The reproof stuck in my heart like a spear. I withdrew from her, covered with shame. Immediately my vows came into my mind to change my life, if I could find a woman that could instruct me. And I had a clear witness that it remained for me, either to obey or to go to hell. But I thought, this woman is a servant of God, and how can she have *me*, who am a child of the devil? Yet it pleased God to incline her heart to venture upon me, and accordingly we were married. All glory to God!

Through her unwearied patience and watching over me, though I was like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, I dropped all my companions and was guided by her, as a little child. We constantly joined in prayer together and soon after we joined the poor, despised Methodists. For this I soon lost the favour of my master, who also laboured to keep others from employing me. But God provided for me better than he could do, and better than I could do for myself. Meantime my dear wife, like a good helpmate, braced me up on every side. She encouraged me wherever I went. And the Lord blessed me with her dear company near fourteen years. This little season we lived in peace, walking in all the ordinances of God, in universal self-denial, taking up our cross daily, and singing and praying in our family, night and morning. We fasted every Wednesday and Friday, and then had family prayers three times a day. She would not let one poor person that came in go without being served. She would also constantly exhort, and reprove, and speak for God wherever she came, whoever they were, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned. I remember a minister came to give the sacrament to a dying woman. He told her, 'You may die in peace, because you have done no harm.' My wife then could not but speak to him very plainly. And afterwards I spoke plain to the woman, and told her she would surely go to hell if she died without an interest in Christ. I went home to my closet, and wrestled with God for her departing soul. The next day she fell into a trance, and lay for some time as dead. When she came to herself, she said to my wife, 'My soul has been in hell. I was kept in the arms of the devil, and had no power, and no hope to get away. But my dear Lord came, with his garments dipped in blood, and delivered me from him. I thought before I was not afraid to die, and should go to heaven for I had done no harm. But how sorely was I deceived! What a delusion was I under! But now I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ.' She often looked with a heavenly mildness upon my wife, and said, 'Oh Sally, we have a loving Lord!' The next day, she fell asleep.

But notwithstanding her constantly using all the means of grace, and walking in all good works, all this time she could not freely say, 'My Beloved is mine, and I am his.' But I thought otherwise of her than she did of herself. I believed she was a precious child of God. But she was always a woman of a fearful spirit, and Satan tempted her strongly to think that she never did any act of mercy that was acceptable to God. When she had fed the hungry, clothed the naked, received the stranger, visited the sick, she was afraid lest the thought of her own large, young family, should have made her act not so freely, which frequently brought her into sore bondage. And she was often ready to believe that if anything should happen to me, she and her children should be a burden to the society. Hence she often told me, very solemnly, 'Oh that it would please God to prepare me for glory, and take me first!' I adore the goodness of God in her behalf! Oh that I may improve the gracious visitation, and always be resigned to his blessed will! I am thankful, very thankful, that the lot fell on me rather than on her. But who can tell the loss of so dear a partner, in the midst of so many children! Where no one can take care of another! No wife and husband to consult together! The tender affectionate helpmate is gone! This only is left, the

continual remembrance of what *has been*! Her dear image starting up continually! Thousands of gold and silver, nay, all the world cannot supply her place!

Yet there is one remedy: glory be to God for the wonderful power of grace!

With tears of joy my eyes o'erflow
At parting with my dearest friend!³

Yea, my children, sing with me,

From us we gladly let her go
To pleasures that shall never end. [...] We cannot murmur or complain;
For our dead we cannot grieve!
Death to them, to us is gain!
In Jesus we believe.⁴

I know not how or where to begin to speak of the wonderful goodness of God at her death. Till within three days of this she had been, all her lifetime. through fear of death subject to bondage. I have known her tremble and quake the whole night after seeing the death of a neighbour. Yet when she was to encounter it herself, glory be to God, he stood by her and gave her such power over it as I never saw in the greatest saint in all my life. She had,

The love, that pain and death defies,
Most vigorous, when the body dies.⁵

Her pains indeed were so exquisite that I myself was sometimes ready to faint and fly away from her bed. But I thought I cannot fly from still beholding her! I lifted up my heart to my loving Saviour, and all my trouble immediately fled away and my soul rejoiced to suffer with her to the last. Yea, my tongue and pen cannot utter the light and power we both possessed together. Every pain was a spring of joy to our souls. I never saw before (no not the ten thousandth part) so far into the invisible world. I beheld the great Three-One, with all the heavenly choirs, smile to see the saints below suffer their various trials with patience! As she was the instrument of my conversion, so my dear Lord made me an instrument of great support to her. For I travelled with her in my very heart and arms through the valley of the shadow of death. I never was before so far out of the body. I went with her to the very threshold of heaven; as when she expired, she with her arms round me seemed to draw me after her. So my soul conducted her to the very presence of the angels, and then fell back again to its poor habitation. Oh how did I long to keep my hold, and return back no more! Oh that all the children of God would pray hard for me, that I may be faithful unto death!

Three days before she died, the great power of God was made manifest all at once. She was loosed from all her temporal concerns: she was loosed from her children: and loosed from her husband, being altogether willing to give him likewise up to God. But she desired me to pray for her, which I did incessantly: my body needing neither food, nor sleep. The same spirit ran through the whole society, and great grace was upon us all. It is thought there was more good done at her death, than had been done for years before. Deep prejudices, which had been long fixed, were now entirely rooted up. Nothing before could make us of one heart and mind; but now we all love as brethren. And we see,

³CW, 'A Funeral Hymn', st. 4a, *HSP* (1742), 126.

⁴*Ibid.*, st. 4b; and CW, 'Another', st. 1b, *HSP* (1742), 127.

⁵Cf. CW, 'Groaning for the Spirit of Adoption', st. 2, *HSP* (1740), 131.

'Tis worse than death, to love my God
And not my God alone.⁶

She often sung,

I travel through the watry deep
With Jesus in my view?⁷

That hymn was her heart's delight,

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise!⁸

Then she would say, 'My Lord suffered a thousand deaths in one for me, that I might not suffer the bitter pains of eternal death. Had I a thousand lives, I would give them all willingly for the sake of my dear Lord.' Then she would give a piercing look on all around her, especially the unawakened, and tell them in the most awful words, to make ready to meet death and judgment. Her words made so deep an impression that their adamant hearts sunk within them. To professors she said, 'Remember we are just dropped into this world, a little moment for our trial. And we are removed as a vapour. O watch and pray, and use every moment to good purpose.' When she fell into a slumber and awoke again, she cried out, 'O I have more need to be doing something than to sleep!' And indeed she did sing, and preach, and pray, and praise God as long as she could speak.

She had the deepest and most penetrating understanding of any woman I ever saw. She settled all my temporal affairs in a wonderful manner. Then she gave her last blessing to her children, and charged them all to meet her again in heaven.

A little before her death, being a while with her alone, I burst out into prayer and besought God, if it pleased him, to spare us a little longer together. Perceiving nature likely to prevail over me, she gave me such an endearing look as entirely melted me down (O that I may never forget her dear dying love!) and said, 'O my dear, let me go freely to him whom my soul loveth. We shall soon be together, where pain and parting are no more. My dear, we have had many a happy day on earth together. Blessed be God, that ever he gave us to each other. We have enjoyed each other near fourteen years, and now it is only like fourteen moments.' Those words are still sounding in my heart,

Follow after she cries,
As she mounts to the skies!
Follow after your friend
To the blissful enjoyment that never shall end.⁹

My children would speak their experience to her much more freely than to me. I am very thankful for the directions to parents in the fourth volume of *Sermons*.¹⁰ I have followed them in every point. To conquer our children at first is certainly the short and easy way. If this method was well followed, all our

⁶Cf. CW, 'The Resignation', st. 2, *HSP* (1740), 76.

⁷Cf. Thomas Olivers *An Hymn to the God of Abraham* (Nottingham: S. Crewell, 1771), st. 10.

⁸CW, 'For the Anniversary Day of One's Conversion', st. 7, *HSP* (1740), 121. Likely taken from shortened form beginning with this stanza in *Hymns and Sacred Songs* (1753).

⁹CW, 'Hymn XV', st. 3, *Funeral Hymns* (1746), 22.

¹⁰I.e., 'Duties of Husbands and Wives', in JW, *Sermons*, Vol. 4 (Bristol: J. Grabham, 1760), 167–215.

children might then be real Methodists. All my children now love me more than they fear me. When they went with me into the room, to give up their dear mother to God, their sweet prayers and expressions made my heart burn within me. It seemed to me as if they were all born of God. Five of them (from thirteen years old to five) prayed mightily that God would keep them from the evil of the world, and make them faithful to death. One of them, seven years old, sat weeping by the fire after her mother was dead; while her sister, five years old, laboured in the most endearing manner to pacify her, telling her, 'Our mammy is in a better place. Do not cry for her.'

A few hours before she died, she sung from end to end, with a clear, loud, melodious voice,

Come let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne.¹¹

After this her pains were most violent. Yet nothing hindered her from praising God and exhorting those that were round about her, the house being full of people. She then desired a little cold water. To them that brought it she gave a pleasant look, and said, 'The Lord will reward you for it.' Holding the cup in her hand, she said, 'Cool water is good to a hot heart. But how much better is the water of life? And I shall soon be at the great fountain, where I shall drink full draughts, and that forever and ever!'

The last hour she was in the body she was in my arms the whole time. The light and love of God were so manifest to us both that it was the happiest hour we ever spent together. The angels were standing round the throne, waiting the word of command when her dear Lord would dismiss them, to separate the soul and body. Till then, she told me she would not want one pain. In her lifetime she was sorely tempted of Satan. But in her death he was utterly chained up. He was not permitted to make the least assault upon her. Yea, I beheld him shrink away with shame.

Not a doubt could arise,
To darken the skies,
Or hide for a moment her Lord from her eyes.¹²

In this hour she could only speak very low. But the sweet promises filled my heart like a river. As fast as I could speak them she drank them in, with a low but hearty Amen! For about the last twenty minutes I made *the whole* house bend their knees, and begged they would all stay their minds on the Lord, and pray and praise him with all their might. So she was sent off with many an earnest prayer.

Thus may we all our parting breath,
Into the Saviour's hands resign!
Oh Jesus, let me die her death,
And let her latter end be mine!¹³

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 592–601.

¹¹Isaac Watts, 'Christ Worshipped by All Creatures', st. 1, in JW, *CPH* (1738), 34.

¹²Cf. CW, 'Hymns for Believers, #18', st. 5, *HSP* (1749), 1:221.

¹³CW, 'A Funeral Hymn', st. 7, *HSP* (1742), 125.

From Beilby Porteus, Bishop of Chester¹

[Chester]
[c. August 1780²]

Reverend Sir,

Although I am not one of your followers, yet I have always entertained a favourable opinion both of your understanding and your heart, especially since your open renunciation of the odious and pernicious doctrines of predestination and antinomianism in your controversy with Mr. [Walter] Shirley and Mr. [Richard] Hill.

But it is with equal surprise and concern that I have lately seen you become an advocate for a doctrine still more pernicious than either of those—I mean that of persecution. What I refer to is a publication of yours in the newspaper some time ago in which you condemn the act lately passed in favour of the Roman Catholics,³ and give it as your opinion that it is dangerous to give them the small indulgence granted by that act, or any other indulgence whatever. And your reason is because it is impossible for a Roman Catholic to give a proper security to the state for his peaceable behavior and allegiance to government. It is not therefore, you say, mainly on account of their religious principles, but their political tenets, that you would show no mercy to papists. And this you contend is not persecution, it is only self-defence. But surely sir, the warmth of your zeal deceives you. The act of William III⁴ ([of] which a part was repealed by the late act) makes it perpetual imprisonment for any popish bishop, priest, or Jesuit to be convicted of exercising any part of his function. Now you would have this punishment⁵ revived. That is, you would imprison a poor popish priest for life for what? Why for saying his prayers, for doing what he thinks his duty to God! If this is not persecution for religion, I know not what is. How can this man saying his prayer in ⟨privacy?⟩ affect the state? What harm will his ‘Pater noster’ and ‘Ave Maria’ do to government? Or how will they hinder him from being a peaceable and inoffensive member of society? This then is plainly persecution not for political but for religious tenets.⁶

But let us examine your position that a Roman Catholic can give no security for his loyalty and allegiance to government. And why can't he? Why [you say], because it is a doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church that the pope has a power of absolving any papist from his oaths, and that no faith is to be kept with heretics. But yet sir, notwithstanding these tenets, papists are tolerated in Holland, are tolerated in Switzerland, are tolerated in some parts of Germany, and therefore must be supposed to give what these governments think sufficient security to the state. But on what grounds do you ⟨support?⟩ that the English Roman Catholics now maintain these doctrines? Why, the Church of Rome, you say, has never openly disclaimed them. You cannot be ignorant that in the Dark Ages of ignorance and superstition the Church of Rome held many doctrines which are now universally exploded, even in Catholic countries, although the Church has never solemnly renounced them. The pope claims many powers which the French and Venetians and many other Catholic states do by no means admit. Do you

¹Beilby Porteus (1731–1809), currently Bishop of Chester, would become Bishop of London in 1787.

²The draft is not dated, but it refers to JW's Jan. 21, 1780 ‘A Letter to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*’, as published ‘some time ago’, and reflects on the Gordon Riots in London in June 1780 as fairly recent events.

³The Catholic Relief Act of 1778 (18 George III c. 60).

⁴The Popery Act of 1698 (11 William III, c. 4).

⁵Porteus actually crosses out ‘punishment’ and provides a replacement between the lines, but it is illegible. The general meaning was likely the same.

⁶No response from JW to Bishop Porteus is known to survive. He would surely have insisted in any response that he supported no political infringement or penalties for practices like prayer; his concern was with providing political influence through the franchise for voting, etc.

think that any government in Europe now allows the former powers of the Church of Rome? That the pope can depose and murder princes at his pleasure? And absolve subjects from their allegiance to their lawful prince? It is ridiculous to suppose it. No government could subsist a moment if its subjects had ^{<?>} of rebelling ^{<?>}, even in popish countries. Much less can you imagine that papists living in so enlightened a country as England, and exercising as they must do every day with men of liberal minds, should now hold such opinions as those above mentioned.

But we need not argue from probability. It is a most undoubted fact that the English papists do not now maintain those pernicious doctrines that the pope can absolve them from their oath of allegiance and that no faith is to be kept with heretics. They have absolutely and solemnly renounced these doctrines. Look into the late act of parliament and you will see that no papist can be entitled to the benefit of that act without taking an oath in which they declare that they reject and detest that unchristian and impious principle that no faith is to be kept with heretics, and that they do not think that they are or can be acquitted before God or man, or absolved of the declaration then made by them, or any part thereof, although the pope or any other persons or authority whatsoever shall dispense with or annul the same, or declare that it be null and void.

Now sir, this oath has been taken by all the principal Roman Catholics in England. Therefore they have solemnly renounced the doctrines you impute to them. To suppose after this that they do ^{<naturally?>} hold these doctrines, would be an opinion more uncharitable, more unchristian, more truly popish than any one tenet of popery. If they are capable of such villany, such treachery, such total want of principle as this, fines and imprisonment are punishments much too light for them. They ought not to be endured or suffered to exist in this or any other kingdom. They ought to be instantly put to death, or driven out of the kingdom by fire and sword, as so many fiends and miscreants of society.

But that the English papists do not deserve such treatment as this, and that they do consider an oath as a sacred thing, from which the pope has no power to absolve them, is evident beyond doubt from this simple consideration: that till an oath was drawn up which they thought they could conscientiously take, they never would take the oaths to government. But what necessity was there for this scruple if they thought that the pope could give them absolution from their oaths and other solemn declarations? Why did not they long ago take the oaths of abjuration, supremacy, and allegiance? Why did not they take the test, and qualify themselves for places of trust and profit, if they could so easily evade such sacred obligations? The fact plainly is that they thought themselves bound to observe inviolably their promises and oaths, and therefore would take none but what they could conscientiously fulfill.

If these arguments appear to you (as I confess they do to me) unanswerable, you will I hope retreat publically what you have said concerning the impossibility of the papists giving any sufficient security to government for their peaceable behaviour as subjects and citizens. I can assure you, sir, that I am no friend to or advocate for popery. I am a sincere Protestant and look upon popery as a most corrupt system of superstition and bigotry. But I cannot for that reason bring myself, against all evidence, to consider them a set of unprincipled miscreants, whom no oaths or promises can bind, and whom therefore no government can safely trust. In this odious light you have been pleased to represent them, and thereby undoubtedly contributed very much (especially amongst your followers) to that rage against papists, and those vain fears about the danger to Protestantism which have fuelled all the late mobs, outrages, and commissions. I have no desire to enter into any controversy with you. What ^{<note?>} you ^{<may make?>} of the public yourself, you have a great deal to answer for to God and to your country. And unless you make the best amends you can to both—by confessing your mistake and setting those deluded people right whom you have unhappily misled—all men will justly entertain a much more unfavourable opinion of you than they have hitherto done.

Source: Porteus manuscript draft, kept for records; Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, Proteus 16, ff. 29–31.

⁷One or two words are illegible here and in the next occurrence.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Bristol]
[c. August 20, 1780¹]

I did not hope by my presence at the Conference to do any good, or prevent any evil. So I told you in London. Yet I accepted your invitation, only because you desired it. And as I came merely to please you, I resolved not to contradict your *will* in anything. Your *will*, I perceived, was to receive Mr. [Alexander] M’Nab, unhumbled, unconvinced, into your confidence and into your bosom. He came uninvited, and openly accused your *curate* for obeying your orders.² You suffered it, and did not give Mr. M’Nab the gentlest reproof for disobeying them, and drawing others into his rebellion; and endeavouring to engage all the preachers in it, making an actual separation at Bath, and still keeping up his separate society. My judgment was never to receive Mr. M’Nab as a preacher *till he acknowledged his fault*. But I submitted and attended in silence. It was much easier for me to say nothing than to speak neither more nor less than you would approve. I was sometimes strongly tempted to speak. But if I had opened my mouth I should have spoiled all. Your design, I believed, was to keep all quiet. I allow you your merit.

*Tu Maximus ille es,
Unus qui nobis cedendo restituis rem.*³

By a very few words I could have provoked your preachers to lay beside the mask. But that was the very thing you guarded against—and, I suppose, the reason for which you desired my presence, that I might be some sort of check to the independents. Still I think it better for the people that they (the preachers) should show themselves before *your* death than *after* it. You think otherwise, and I submit. *Satis jam, satis spectata in te amicitia est mea.*⁴ And I am perfectly satisfied with my own insignificancy. I have but one thing to do. The Lord make me ready for it.

Source: published excerpt; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:380–81.

¹Whitehead describes the letter as written “about a fortnight after” JW’s Conference with his preachers in Bristol, Aug. 1–9, 1780 (which CW attended, at least for part).

²CW is referring to M’Nab’s conflict with Rev. Edward Smyth. See CW to JW, Nov. 28, 1779; and Dec. 6, 1779.

³Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi.845–46: ‘You are he, the mightiest, who could as no one else through inaction preserve our state’.

⁴Cf. Terence, *The Andrian*, V.i.1, ‘*Satis jam, satis, Simo, spectata erga te amicitia est mea*’; ‘Enough, and more than enough have I already shown my friendship towards you’.

From John Mason (autobiography)

Motcombe, Near Shaftesbury
August 31, 1780

Reverend Sir,

I am a person who has neither ability nor inclination to say much of myself, being desirous to be little and unknown.

Nevertheless, if this short account of the mercy of God to a sinner may be of the least use to any, all the praise shall be given to him by whose grace I am what I am. For I always desire to bear in mind that testimony of St. Paul, 1 Timothy 1:15, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.'

I was born in the year of our Lord 1732,¹ in the parish of Hambledon, about eight miles from Portsmouth. When I was about four years old my father died, and soon after my mother. Such was the order of divine providence that I had but little knowledge of or help from them. But almighty goodness provided for me.

When my mother died I was removed to Portsmouth Common, by the care of her own sister, the wife of Mr. Richard Libbard, who had lived there in good credit for many years; and I was to them, as their own child.

I believe my aunt lived in the fear of God, and according to the light she had endeavoured to breed me up in a religious manner. I have great reason to be thankful to God on her account. Many of her instructions I remember to this day, with much comfort. And I have not a doubt but that she is now in Abraham's bosom.

Yet, notwithstanding all the care that was taken of me, I gave way to evil and did many things contrary to the word of God, on account of which I remember to have felt many sharp convictions before I was ten years of age. I was often alarmed with the fear of death and judgment. I trembled at the thought of being cast into the fire of hell. At those times I frequently went alone, and prayed that God would have mercy upon me and save me from my sins. As I grew up I saw more and more into the evil of sin. But although I truly hated sin, I was often overcome by it, which abundantly increased my pain and sorrow.

But it was by hearing a sermon of Mr. [George] Whitefield's, and those of a pious minister whose congregation I now attended, that my convictions deepened. I began to see myself as I never had done before, and to know I was a fallen child of Adam. I felt the burden with deep distress. My sleep departed from me, and I neglected to take my necessary food. I cried to God night and day. I longed for his salvation. But I was afraid Christ did not die for me. When this persuasion prevailed, it cut me off. I was as one that had no hope. I cannot describe the anguish that tortured my poor soul. Sometimes I wished I had never been born; at other times, that I had been an idiot from my birth. And many times, such was my ignorance and the force of temptation I complained against God for making me what I was.

While I was exercised in this gloomy, dejected manner, I one evening took up the New Testament to read, and I hope never to forget the time or place. As I read I felt, I cannot tell how, an unusual going out after God and Christ. At once my eye, and all the powers of my soul were fixed on those words, Hebrews 2:9, 'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory, and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.' The deep silence that rested on me gave way, and I broke out as in an ecstasy of joy, not regarding who might hear, 'For me he liv'd, and for me he di'd.' In a moment, all my burden of pain and sorrow fled away, and all my soul was filled with peace and joy. I was all love to God and man. Truly my delight was in the Almighty, and I began to sing aloud,

O for a thousand tongues to sing,
My dear Redeemer's praise:

¹Mason was baptized in Hambledon on January 7, 1732/3. He was either born late in 1732 or is following old dating for January 1733.

The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of his grace.²

Happy would it have been for me, if I had been careful to grow in the grace of God. But I gave way to a curious spirit, and puzzled myself with doubtful disputations. And by this means I gradually damped the grace of God, and cast the blessing away I had been entrusted with.

Soon after this the Methodist preachers came to Portsmouth. I went to hear them, and the word was made profitable to me. I felt new desires, and was often much comforted, and I once more resolved to give up my body and soul a sacrifice to God. I was admitted into the society by Mr. James Oddie. I continued to meet with them for some time; and many were the blessings I thereby received. But after a time a stumbling-block was laid in my way, and I left the society. But it was chiefly owing to my inexperience, and want of patience. I ought to have minded one thing, whatever others did, and to have pressed on to the prize of our high calling.

After this, I went on for five years in darkness, misery, and distress; yea, many times almost in despair. Yet I constantly attended the preaching, and sometimes was permitted to stay at the meeting of the society. But when my much-esteemed friend, Mr. Robert Roberts came into the circuit, he was informed of me; for I believe both the preachers and people had a regard for me. He gave me a note of admittance again. May I never forget this mercy!

It was not long after, being at a prayer meeting with a few friends, that I recovered the peace and love of God. My soul was humbled in the dust. I became solidly happy in God my Saviour. I was watchful, and spent much time in prayer. The word of God was my daily companion, and it was spirit and life to my soul. My faith was now strengthened. My love to God and man increased abundantly. The Lord held me by my hand, and fed me with the bread of life. He gave me to drink of the water of the river of life, and I was happy all the day long. Such was the blessing I continually enjoyed. I lived near to God, keeping Jesus in my view, as my life, my pattern, and my all.

When Mr. Francis Gilbert appointed me to take care of a class, it was a great trial. But so much the more did the Lord make it a blessing to me. For while I prayed for my brethren, and laboured to help them forward in the way to the kingdom, he gave me great consolation in my own soul. And I began to feel a stronger desire for the salvation of poor sinners. I reproved, advised, and comforted as opportunity served—being, at the same time, particularly careful over my own behaviour. Meantime, by the desire of my friends, I sometimes read a sermon, or some part of the *Christian Library*. I did this, first in our own society, and afterward in that of a neighbouring town. Sometimes also I ventured to give a few words of exhortation; and the people not only bore with my weakness, but urged me to do it more frequently. Some time after, I felt a strong conviction that it was my duty to preach. I did so occasionally; and though it was with much weakness, fear, and trembling, the Lord owned my feeble attempts. The people were profited, and my own soul was helped forward in the grace of God. I advised with the assistant and the other preachers, and being encouraged by them, I went on therein, relying upon God, who giveth strength to them that have no might.

But I was not long satisfied with this. I found a stronger and stronger conviction that it was my duty to give myself wholly up to the work of God and to commence an itinerant preacher. But I shrunk from the thought. I wept, and prayed, and strove against it with all my might, till I had well-nigh lost all the life and peace of God out of my soul. Yet I did not comply. It was so contrary to the plan I had just laid down, having (as I supposed) settled myself for life. It was my desire and design to live and die amongst my first religious acquaintance, and then to lay my bones by the side of my dear and only brother, just torn from me by the hand of death.

But not being able to resist any longer, I laid the matter before Mr. [John] Furz and the other preachers in the circuit. They advised me to fight against God no more, but prepare myself against the next Conference. I did so, and attended at Bristol in August 1764. I can truly say I had no other end in

²CW, 'For the Anniversary Day of One's Conversion', st. 7, *HSP* (1740), 121. Likely taken from shortened form beginning with this stanza in *Hymns and Sacred Songs* (1753).

view but the glory of God, and the good of souls. With regard to this world, I had all I wanted, and to spare. And I had a prospect of easily gaining much more, had I remained in my business, which was steady, and continually increasing. But this I gave up freely, nor have I repented of it one moment since. And if it were to do again, I believe I should do it with the same cheerfulness. For he is worthy of all my service, who has bought me with his precious blood.

You, sir, were pleased to appoint me to labour in the York circuit, with Mr. Furz and Mr. Poole.³ It was a year of much peace and comfort; and I resolved, in the strength of Christ, to continue spending and being spent in the blessed work to my life's end.

It is of little use to say in what parts of England, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, I have laboured; or how many persons have been convinced of sin, or converted to God; or how many have been added to the societies in the circuits wherein I have laboured. Let it suffice that this, and all I am, will be fully known in that great day. But I believe I may be permitted to mention, in the fear of God, that after sixteen years' labour I do not know that either my principles or practice have given you, sir, or any of my brethren, cause to repent for a moment that you received me as a fellow labourer in the house of God. And in this I am the same at this day, as at the first: I still esteem it no small privilege to act with you as a son in the gospel, to be directed by you where, when, and how to act.

I bless God I still daily enjoy a measure of his peace and love. But I am ashamed when I consider how little improvement I have made. I long to have everything taken from me that is not agreeable to the mind that was in Christ.

For many years I have been fully satisfied with regard to the doctrines of the Methodists, and in them I hope to live and die. But from the time that I recovered the favour of God, I have always been averse to disputing. I remember how much I suffered thereby in the beginning of my turning to God. And I believe it would be happy if all the children of God would strive to agree as far as possible, and live in love as brethren, and strive to help each other in fighting the good fight of faith. This is the one desire, and I hope it will be the continual labour of, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

John Mason

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 650–55.⁴

³John Poole (d. 1801) began itinerating in 1759, though his first formal appearance in the *Minutes* is in 1765 (see *Works*, 10:303). Health issues led him to locate in Redruth after his 1789 appointment. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1801), 2:83.

⁴This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 3:307–15; along with the comments on Mason's ministry published in the Conference *Minutes* at the time of his death.

From Richard Whatcoat (autobiography)

c. September 1780

1. I was born in the year 1736, in the parish of Quinton, in the county of Gloucester. My father dying while I was young, left a widow and five children. At thirteen years old I was bound apprentice, and served for eight years. I was never heard during this time to swear a vain oath, nor was ever given to lying, gaming, drunkenness, or any other presumptuous sin, but was commended for my honesty and sobriety. And from my childhood I had, at times, serious thoughts on death and eternity.

2. I served the greatest part of my apprenticeship at Darlaston, in Staffordshire. But at the age of twenty-one I removed from thence to Wednesbury. Here I found myself in continual danger of losing the little religion I had, as the family in which I lived had no religion at all. Therefore I took the first opportunity that offered of removing to another place. And a kind providence directed me to a family that 'feared God, and wrought righteousness'¹.

3. I soon went with them to hear the Methodists, which I did with deep attention. And when the preacher was describing the fall of man, I thought he spoke to me in particular, and spoke as if he had known everything that ever was in my heart. When he described the nature and fruits of faith, I was conscious I had it not. And though I believed all the Scripture to be of God, yet I had not the marks of a Christian believer. And I was convinced that if I died in the state wherein I then was, I should be miserable forever. Yet I could not conceive how I, that had lived so sober a life, could be 'the chief of sinners'.² But this was not long. For I no sooner discovered the spirituality of the law, and the enmity that was in my heart against God, than I could heartily agree to it.

4. The thoughts of death and judgment now struck me with terrible fear. I had a keen apprehension of the wrath of God, and of the fiery indignation due to sinners. So that I could have wished myself to be annihilated, or to be the vilest creature, if I could but escape judgment. In this state I was when one told me, 'I know, God for Christ's sake, has forgiven all my sins; and "his Spirit witnesseth with my spirit, that I am a child of God"'. This gave me a good deal of encouragement. And I determined never to rest until I had a testimony in myself that *my* sins also were forgiven. But in the meantime, such was the darkness I was in, such my consciousness of guilt, and the just displeasure of Almighty God, that I could find no rest day or night, either for soul or body. So that life was a burden, and I became regardless of all things under the sun. Now all my virtues, which I had some reliance on once, appeared as filthy rags. And many discouraging thoughts were put into my mind, as: 'Many are called, but few chosen.'³ 'Hath not the potter power over his own clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?'⁴ From which it was suggested to me that I was *made to dishonour*, and so must inevitably perish.

5. On September 3, 1758, being overwhelmed with guilt and fear, as I was reading it was as if one whispered to me, 'Thou hadst better read no more. For the more thou readest, the more thou wilt know. "And he that knoweth his Lord's will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes"⁵'. I paused a little, and then resolved, let the consequence be what it may, I will proceed. When I came to those words, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God,'⁶ as I fixed my eyes upon them, in a moment my darkness was removed and the Spirit did bear witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. In the same instant I was filled with unspeakable peace and joy in believing, and all

¹Cf. Job 1:1, and Heb. 11:33.

²Cf. 1 Tim. 1:15.

³Cf. Matt. 22:14.

⁴Cf. Rom. 9:21.

⁵Cf. Luke 12:47.

⁶Cf. Rom. 8:16.

fear of death, judgment and hell, suddenly vanished away. Before this I was kept awake by anguish and fear, so that I could not get an hour's sound sleep in a night. Now I wanted not sleep, being abundantly refreshed by contemplating the rich display of God's mercy in adopting so unworthy a creature as me to be an heir of the kingdom of heaven!

6. This peace and joy continued about three weeks, after which it was suggested to me, 'Hast not thou deceived thyself? Is it not presumption to think thou art a child of God? But if thou art, thou wilt soon fall away. Thou wilt not endure to the end.' This threw me into great heaviness. But it did not continue long. For as I gave myself unto prayer, and to reading and hearing the word of God at all opportunities, my evidence became clearer and clearer, my faith and love stronger and stronger. And I found the accomplishment of that promise, 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.'⁷

7. Yet I soon found that though I was justified freely, yet I was not wholly sanctified. This brought me into a deep concern, and confirmed my resolution to admit of no peace, no nor truce, with the evils which I still found in my heart. I was sensible both that they hindered me at present in all my holy exercises, and that I could not enter into the joy of my Lord unless they were all rooted out. These considerations led me to consider more attentively the exceeding great and precious promises whereby we may escape all the corruption that is in the world, and be made partakers of the divine nature. I was much confirmed in my hope of their accomplishment by frequently hearing Mr. [Alexander] Mather speak upon the subject. I saw it was the mere gift of God, and consequently to be received by faith. And after many sharp and painful conflicts, and many gracious visitations, on March 28, 1761, my spirit was drawn out and engaged in wrestling with God for about two hours, in a manner I never did before. Suddenly I was stripped of all but love. I was all love, and prayer and praise. And in this happy state, rejoicing evermore and in everything giving thanks, I continued for some years—wanting nothing for soul or body more than I received from day to day.

8. I began to look round, and to observe more than ever the whole world full of sin and misery. I felt a strong desire for others to partake of the same happiness with myself. I longed to declare unto them what I knew of our Saviour. But I first sat down to count the cost, and being then fully convinced of my duty, I began to exhort those of the neighbouring towns to 'repent and believe the gospel'.⁸ This I did for about a year and a half, but was still convinced I might be more useful as a travelling preacher. This I mentioned to Mr. [John] Pawson a little before the Conference in 1769. A little after it he wrote and let me know that he had proposed me at the Conference, and that I was accepted as a probationer, and stationed in the Oxfordshire circuit. Having settled my temporal affairs with all the expedition I could, I went into the circuit and was received far better than I expected. And I found that affection for the people which never since wore off. After spending some time very agreeably there, I believe to our mutual satisfaction, I removed to Bedford circuit, where I remained till the Conference in 1774.

9. I was then appointed for Enniskillen circuit, in the north of Ireland. This was a trial to me on several accounts. I was an utter stranger to Ireland, of which I had heard little good spoken. I had a great aversion to sea-voyages. And what troubled me more than all was that my mother was on her dying bed. But she knew and loved the work I was engaged in. So she willingly gave me up to the Lord, though she did not expect to see me anymore, till we met in eternity. In this circuit I found many things that were not pleasing to flesh and blood. It took us eight weeks to go through it, and in this time we slept in near fifty different places: some of them cold enough, some damp enough, and others not very clean. We commonly preached two or three times a day, besides meeting the societies and visiting the sick. And very frequently we had no other food than potatoes and a little salt meat. By this means, as my constitution was but weak, my strength was nearly exhausted. But it was an ample amends to see that the work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Upwards of two hundred members were this year added to the society, a great part of whom had found redemption through the blood of the covenant. And I was entirely willing to wear out my body in so blessed a work.

⁷Isa. 40:31.

⁸Cf. Mark 1:15.

10. But I was soon cut short. For before I got into the next circuit where I was stationed, namely, that of Armagh, my labour was at an end. My body quite sunk under me. I was taken with an entire loss of appetite, a violent bleeding at the nose, and profuse night sweats, so that my flesh was consumed from my bones, and my eyes sunk in my head. My sight also failed me, so that I could not distinguish my most intimate acquaintance the breadth of a room. But although my life was quite despaired of, yet it pleased God to raise me up: and after a confinement of twelve weeks at Sydare, I removed into Armagh circuit. But going out before I had sufficiently recovered my strength, the cold seized upon me and caused such a humour to settle in my legs that for some time I could not set my feet to the ground. But my mind being set upon my work, I little regarded the pain of my body, so long as I was able to sit on my horse or stand and speak to the people. So in about a fortnight I went into my circuit again. But in a fortnight more I was again disabled, the humour returning so violently that I was laid up for eight weeks. But these afflictions were not grievous. They were all sweetened by the peace of God which I enjoyed, and the exceeding kindness of my friends where I was. Lord, remember them for good!

11. By my respite from preaching while I travelled to Dublin, and afterwards to London, and by the frequent use of bathing, both in salt and in fresh water, I gradually recovered my health. And I have great reason to bless God, who has preserved me during the eleven years that I have been an itinerant preacher. In this time he has delivered me from many troubles, both of body and mind. He has enabled me to persevere in my labour with a single eye. He has kept my heart disengaged from all creature-loves, and all desire of worldly happiness. And I can still truly say,

Blest with the scorn of finite good,
My soul is lighten'd of her load;
And seeks the things above.⁹

With the same work, and in the same spirit, may I fill up the remnant of my days! Then may I join the choirs around the throne, and give blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto God and the Lamb forever and ever!

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 190–95.¹⁰

⁹CW, 'The Pilgrim', st. 2, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 67.

¹⁰This account is reproduced in Jackson, *EMP*, 5:312–20; along with the obituary published in the *Minutes* of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the time of Whatcoat's death.

From Francis Asbury

Virginia
September 3, 1780

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

This is the fourth letter I have wrote to you within the space of six months, not without some doubts whether either will reach you.¹ Since my last I have been travelling through the circuits of Virginia and North Carolina, and according to my abilities have been confirming the souls of them which have believed, that they may walk by the same rule and mind the same thing. That violence for assistants introducing the ordinances is much cooled.² But yet I must say our people are under great disadvantages, though not such as will vindicate an alteration of old Methodism and weak laymen acting as ministers. I think the want of opportunity suspends the force of duty to receive the Lord's supper. And it appears more and more plain to me that I ought to continue in the station of a preacher because God called me to and blessed me in this way, and not move one step forward or backward. I am oft times faint in body and mind, yet pursuing.

The climate, seasons, and entertainment of this country make some difference with regard to my health. But still I keep God's glory in view and am ready to say all shall be alike to me if in my Lord I can live and die. I have been much blessed in my own soul for this six months past, nor could I have thought it possible for my frame to have stood such labours that I trust have not and will not be in vain in the Lord. Many in the north and some in the south are coming home to God, and believers grow in grace, and that greatly under temptation and trials, and this shall comfort us concerning our trial and sorrow.

If we had an itinerant clergyman all our wants of ordinances would be supplied. But such a clergyman is a miracle. We have had but two in an age—yourself and Mr. [George] Whitefield. The latter has left the world without a successor; so, I fear, will the former. I hope, dear sir, if ever there should be peace between Britain and America, if you should live to see that blessed period, nothing will prevent your coming and laying your bones in America, as dear Mr. Whitefield has done.³

Be assured the people of God in America are dear to me. With them I have laboured much and long, and hope with some success. The very afflictions and sufferings I have had among them endear them to me, strange as it may appear, and binds me to the continent.

You have enclosed a bill and a letter to the society, as the first and best return I could make. It will take me sometime to collect, sell, and realize the books—as some are very unsaleable, others sold in times past and now to be paid for in currency. But be that as it may, it shall not be your loss. If Mr. Magaw's bill is answered,⁴ be pleased to pay or order the sum of ten pounds to my trusty, tried friend and dear brother [George] Shadford as a discharge of part of the trust and care of the books and clothing left in my hands. To my father or mother,⁵ if in time, ten pounds, one [shilling], and 7 ½ [pence], as some small atonement for my neglect of personal and filial duty. And God is my witness, I constantly and faithfully remember them at a throne of grace. That nothing but the work of God, that is dearer to me than life, and all things, persons, and places, keeps me from them and you.

May I print any of your books? We are in great want. If ever the way should be open to send books, I would have none sent but the Sermons in sets, Old and New Testament Notes (pocket volumes in sets), yours and Mr. Fletcher's *Appeals* and the *Checks*, the journal (in sets). As to the *Plain Account* and Rules, these may be printed here, and hymnbooks. The last assortment was huddled and improper.

¹This the first known letter of Asbury to JW with full text surviving; but see the description of a letter on May 12, 1780.

²I.e. for unordained Methodist preachers to offer the sacraments.

³Whitefield died in Newburyport, Massachusetts colony, in 1770 and was buried there.

⁴Rev. Samuel Magaw, the Anglican minister at Dover, Delaware, and Asbury's friend.

⁵Joseph and Elizabeth ('Eliza') Asbury, of Great Barr, Staffordshire.

I hope you will let me parents know when you hear from me. I am yours in due respect and such bonds as death can only break. I want your friendly advice, and shall receive it in love, both for myself and others while

Francis Asbury

N.B. I have sent the account at large of all you have here. Mr. [Thomas] Rankin's account will prove it is just. Enclose and direct your letters to either Mr. Gressett Davis, in Petersburg, Virginia, merchant; or to Mr. Jesse Hollingsworth of Baltimore in Maryland, merchant. You may address them to the care of Mr. Thomas Shore, merchant, in Saint Estalia.

Addressed: 'The Revd. Mr John Wesley / London'.

Source: manuscript copy by W. G. Davies; University of Virginia, Library, Special Collections⁶

⁶Published transcription in Elmer T. Clark (ed.), *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1958), 3:24–27.

From John Henderson

[Kingswood]
[c. September 25, 1780]

[...¹] your past candour and kindness I may hope you will be disposed thus to oblige me, if opportunity serve. I shall consider it an important addition to your past favours. I believe you are as ready to give as receive knowledge. And I shall be thankful if nothing prevent my receiving advantage from such a good disposition. I will presume to hope, conscious of an honest and humble meaning, that nothing in this letter will offend you, or make you at all averse to answer me. Whether such a favour as an answer happen to me or not, grateful for every other favour, respectful of your high worth, and most heartily affectionate to your person, I shall be still

Your

J. Henderson

Source: holograph (imperfect); MARC, WCB, D6/1/232a.

¹Only the final page of this letter remains. In it Henderson engaged the debate caused by JW's argument in his letter 'To the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*', Jan. 21, 1780 (vol. 15 in *Works*) that Protestants could not trust oaths by Roman Catholics because of the stance of the Council of Constance that 'no faith was to be kept with heretics'. It is likely, given his linguistic skills, that Henderson quoted in (the prior missing pages of) his letter the Latin text of the Council of Constance, Session 19 (Sept. 23, 1415), Decree 1, which set aside King Sigismund's promise of safe passage for Jan Hus, stating that no law natural or divine required one to observe promises made in prejudice of the Catholic faith. He then argued for a milder interpretation of this decree than JW had given. JW's reply, dated Sept. 28, 1780, survives in its entirety.

From William Green¹

c. October 1780

I was born in London, September 22, 1739. My mother being pregnant with me, heard the first sermon which Mr. Wesley preached at the Foundry. Soon after she found peace with God, and walked worthy of the gospel to the day of her death, having been a member of the society upwards of thirty years.

I had the first part of my education at the Foundry school, so that I was early instructed in the principles of religion. But I was no better than if I had not been instructed at all; for God was not in all my thoughts. Between thirteen and fourteen I was put apprentice to a man who had some degree of the fear of God. For about three years he was able to manage me. But afterwards I neither regarded the threatenings of my master, nor the counsels of an affectionate mother, but ran on in my own ways. When my apprenticeship was out I was for ten years a faithful servant of the devil. But for the last two years I was very far from being a willing captive; one hour praying against sin, the next falling into it. I could truly say, 'The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.'²

About July 1770 a person lent me one of Mr. Wesley's *Journals*. I read it with prayers and tears, seeing much beauty in being persecuted for righteousness sake. Soon after, I read Bishop [Jeremy] Taylor's *Rules for Holy Living and Dying*, one passage struck me much: 'A true lover of God is more grieved on account of an impure dream, than one who does not love him is, on account of a gross outward sin.' And it put me upon praying earnestly, that God would give me his love.

In August following, Mr. [John] Wesley coming to town, I went with eagerness to hear him. His text was, 'My son give me thy heart.'³ But he shot over my head; I understood nothing about it. However I went in the evening to Moorfields and heard Mr. [John] Murlin preach. And there it pleased God to touch my heart. I went directly home greatly affected—so that my wife, though a serious woman, could not imagine what was the matter with me. But these impressions wore off, and I still continued a slave to gaming, my besetting sin. However I continued to hear on Sundays, and was much pleased with what I heard. And after a time my dear mother, by much persuasion, prevailed upon me to meet in a class. From this time my chains began to fall off. I think I had not met above three times before all my outward sins left me, and I shook off all my old companions.

I was now a close attendant on all the means of grace. I clearly saw that I was a fallen spirit. And I as clearly saw that religion was to restore me to that image of God from which I fell. It was now the fear of God took place in my soul. But in this I was greatly mistaken. I thought myself a good believer, whereas I was then as ignorant of the nature of faith as I am now of Greek. Soon after, I heard Mr. Wesley preach on, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'⁴ I listened very attentively, but still could not find out what faith was.

The same evening I went to Mr. [Thomas] Maxfield's chapel. He was preaching upon the same text. He said, 'Faith is a divine conviction that Christ died for *me*.' But I found I could no more give myself this conviction than I could make a world. It was now the Holy Ghost convinced me of sin, because I believed not in Jesus. I went home in deep heaviness and told my wife I was an unbeliever, and that if I died as I was I should go to hell. I was utterly slain by those words, 'He that believeth not, shall be damned.'⁵ For want of this conviction of unbelief, how many thousands stop short of saving faith?

¹As he describes in this account, Green was admitted 'on trial' as an itinerant at the 1780 Conference (see *Works*, 10:496). He moved to regular status and served for ten years, choosing to leave the connexion in 1790 (see 10:711).

²Rom. 7:19.

³Cf. Prov. 23:26.

⁴Acts 16:31.

⁵Mark 16:16.

But though I was so fully convinced of sin, I was so far from being discouraged that I was all hope, knowing that if all the sins of the world were upon me, the mercies of God infinitely surpassed them all.

About Christmas I went to hear the letters read. One of which gave an account of a wonderful work among the children at Kingswood, some of whom were determined not to eat or sleep till they knew their sins were forgiven. I went home full of the spirit of mourning, and yet big with earnest expectation. The next day my sorrow was so great that I could do no work; till upon praying with a friend, the cloud began to disperse and light broke into my soul. But I was determined not to be satisfied with anything short of an assurance of pardon. In this situation of mind I went to bed. About two o'clock the next morning, December 30, 1770, I was waked by a full sense of the love of God. The skies poured down righteousness into my soul, and I could boldly say,

For me, I now believe he died!
He made my ev'ry crime his own.⁶

I was now happy in God; his Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. But about three days after, I was sorely tempted, and a thought striking into my mind that I was to be a preacher, this put me upon many reasonings, which strengthened the temptation. I believe the thought was from God. Yet for six weeks I was greatly perplexed. However, I never lost for one moment the sense of my acceptance. Yea, and I knew the work of the Spirit was going on, and felt the blessedness of enduring temptation.

Being at Spitalfields on Sunday, I was greatly strengthened while those words were singing,

Even now the Lord doth pour
His blessing from above,
A kindly gracious show'r
Of heart-reviving love:
The former and the latter rain,
The love of God and love of man.⁷

My faith was strengthened, my peace flowed as a river, and I had a clearer view of a crucified Saviour. About this time, a hymnbook of Mr. Charles Wesley's fell into my hands, which speaks largely and particularly concerning entire sanctification. I read it with attention, and comparing it with the Scripture, a fair prospect opened to my view. At the same time I saw my vast distance from it, in a manner I never did before. And yet I wanted to see it more, and I could not bow my knee, but words to this purpose flowed from my lips,

Show me, as my soul can bear,
The depth of inbred sin:
All the unbelief declare,
The pride that lurks within.⁸

⁶CW, 'Hymn on Micah 6:6', st. 11, *HSP* (1740), 90.

⁷Cf. CW, 'Hymn on Psalm 133', st. 9, *HSP* (1742), 175.

⁸CW, 'Waiting for Christ the Prophet', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 209.

My prayer was answered. I had a surprising view of the total sinfulness of my heart. I knew this discovery was from God. I believed it possible to be saved from all sin before death. I believed it possible to be thus saved in a moment. And I believed that moment was near. So that I could cheerfully sing,

The glorious crown of righteousness
To me reach'd out I view:
Conqu'ror through him, I soon shall seize
And wear it as my due.⁹

In this state of mind I went to Spitalfields chapel. Mr. Wesley's text was, 'Now is the day of salvation.'¹⁰ He addressed himself chiefly to believers. I found I was one to whom this word of salvation was sent. An inexpressible hunger and thirst after full salvation took place in my soul. And I thought, surely I shall be filled therewith. But the question is, when? The answer was, if thou canst believe, now is the day of salvation. And I was as clearly convinced of unbelief as I was before my justification. God told me his time was now. Unbelief told me it was not now! O the wickedness of a heart that is but partly renewed in the image of God!

As I formerly felt that I only wanted faith in order to be justified, so I now felt that I only wanted faith in order to be sanctified. But I knew, everyone that asketh receiveth.¹¹ I therefore gave myself to prayer, nothing doubting but God would answer. For two days I prayed continually. I prayed in my shop. I prayed in the street. I prayed rising up. I prayed lying down. The Lord heard and answered me. At the end of two days it seemed as if my strength failed me, and I could only say, 'Lord, I will believe. Help thou my unbelief!'¹² I was enabled to bring the words to the present moment. I felt that faith which bringeth salvation, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. In that moment I was as clearly saved from sin as ever I was justified. And this blessing was bestowed upon me only eight weeks after the former.

Surely when God gives any blessing, it is his will that we should keep it. But I did not keep this long. I fancied, because I had much love I had much knowledge, and that therefore few could teach me. I forgot that I had need every moment of the intercession of Christ. And I fixed my own meaning on several texts of scripture, which exposed me to a flood of enthusiasm. This brought on some loving opposition from my brethren, which was not always received in the spirit of meekness. And I sunk lower and lower, till I had no longer any pretence to perfect love. But notwithstanding my great unfaithfulness, God did not wholly withdraw himself from me. I still retained a sense of acceptance, which indeed I have not lost an hour since I first received it. But yet I sensibly felt that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God. My natural tempers again prevailed, and I could not keep myself from idols. I was barely kept from outward sin. And this, I knew, was not by my own strength.

Toward the latter end of the year 1774 it pleased God to stir me up anew. I was deeply convinced of my fall. I again felt foolish desires, the fear of man, and various other evils in my heart. And I could truly say,

'Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone!¹³

⁹CW, 'The Spirit and the Bride say Come', st. 14, *HSP* (1742), 303.

¹⁰2 Cor. 6:2.

¹¹Matt. 7:8; Luke 11:10.

¹²Cf. Mark 9:24.

¹³CW, 'The Resignation', st. 2, *HSP* (1740), 76.

Till that memorable day, December 12, 1774. Yea, on the former part of that day I was torn by unruly passions, by the love of the world, and a train of evils. Yet in the midst of all, I poured out my soul to God in much prayer. In the midst of all, a thought sprung up, 'I will go to the tabernacle.'¹⁴ I went, being still in the spirit of prayer. Mr. Foss¹⁵ preached from part of the fourth chapter to the Romans. Although I could not agree with him that 'all believers are staggerers', yet his preaching so much below my experience was sanctified to me. I looked to God, and the Spirit of supplication was poured into my soul. I was athirst for God, I opened my mouth wide, and indeed he filled it. He spoke to my heart, 'I will cleanse thee from all thy filthiness and from all thine idols.'¹⁶ These words passed my mind several times, before I attended to them. At length I started and thought, surely this is the voice of God to my soul. I determined to hold the promise fast, though Satan endeavoured to tear it from me. This was about the middle of the sermon, the latter part of which was made very useful to me, the Spirit of God applying it in a higher sense than the preacher intended it. I went home, praying all the way, my whole attention being fixed upon,

The sure prophetic word of grace,
That glimmer'd through my nature's night.¹⁷

I was not sensible what the Lord had done for me till I entered my room. The first thing I saw there was my snuff-box. This idol had long divided my heart (though I never took it with me to the house of God) and had given me inexpressible pain. But I now felt all desire of it was gone. I know not anything wherein I could have been more sensible of my liberty. It was a right eye,¹⁸ and I had been wedded to it as much as I formerly was to a pack of cards. I felt unspeakable happiness in my deliverance. But a query came, 'How will it be tomorrow?' It was answered in my heart, 'Tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.'

The next morning I rose to the preaching with ease, which before seemed an impossibility. In the course of a day there are not wanting in a family many little trying circumstances. Some temptations also to pride, to anger and to self-will, presented themselves. But in all things I was more than conqueror. The fear of man likewise was removed, so that I could reprove, warn, and exhort everyone. Meantime the promises flowed into my heart without obstruction. I easily perceived the change was universal, and felt that I was 'cleansed from all my idols, and from all my filthiness'.¹⁹ And I seemed to have light equal to my love; so that in one week I had a clearer insight into the life of faith than I had for several years. Thus Jesus saves his people from their sins.

My heart being thus set at liberty, a thought which I had had years before, that it was the will of God I should be a preacher, returned with greater force than ever. But I remembered 'he that believeth shall not make haste',²⁰ and was thoroughly willing to wait God's time. I knew it was God's work and his only, to make a preacher of the gospel; and that the more passive I was, the more fit I should be for the Master's use. In this peaceful frame of mind I remained, attending to the leading of his Spirit and the opening of his providence, till not long after I went with some of our friends to a workhouse where one of them preached. I felt great love to the poor people. As we were coming back one of our brethren asked me, 'Are you willing to give them a sermon next Sunday morning?' I looked upon this to be a call of

¹⁴Cf. Ps. 132:7.

¹⁵Apparently a local preacher.

¹⁶Cf. Ezek. 36:25.

¹⁷Cf. CW, 'Watch in All Things', st. 12, *HSP* (1742), 218.

¹⁸Cf. Matt. 5:29.

¹⁹Cf. Ezek. 36:25.

²⁰Isa. 28:16.

providence, and therefore durst not refuse it. So I went and spoke to them from those words, 'Ask and it shall be given you.'²¹ And I had a testimony within, that I pleased God.

Nor long after, being exceeding weary in body, and having much business upon my hands, my spirits sunk, and I thought, 'How is it possible for me to work till twelve o'clock at night? Besides, I am to preach at the workhouse in the morning.' Just then the power of the Highest overshadowed me, and God spoke with power, 'Lo! I am with thee always.'²² The words pointed me at first to the work I had to do the next morning. But I thought also, should not I expect power *now*, to carry me through my business? Weariness vanished away and I went on swiftly, for the grace of God carried me.

In the morning I preached as I had appointed. When I had done, I thought, I have made a stammering piece of work. But that word was immediately applied, 'The tongue of the stammerer shall speak plainly.'²³ From this time, I constantly attended the workhouse, but was particularly careful to keep the life of God in my own soul. I saw religion was neither more nor less than the constant union of the soul with God, and used all diligence to shun those rocks on which I had split before. I laboured to retain a sense of the littleness of my understanding, that I might always be open to instruction. And I depended not on my graces or gifts, but upon the Giver, living by faith on the Son of God.

As to the acting in a more public manner, I was entirely passive. I thought, if ever I do speak in public, I will be a preacher of God's making. In this spirit I continued, till going to the Foundery one Saturday evening, I was informed, that Mr. Wesley had appointed me to preach there the next morning. I was surprised. But I thought, how can I honour my spiritual father unless I do what he orders me? So I went and preached on, 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple.'²⁴ For a minute after I had named my text, I trembled and could hardly utter a word. But I then found help, and spoke about forty minutes without any difficulty. Afterwards I preached at Bow,²⁵ on, 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.'²⁶ And after a few trials, I was thoroughly convinced that, provided his soul be truly alive to God, the life of a preacher of the gospel is the happiest life under heaven.

I was now received into the number of local preachers. But I was fearful of putting myself forward, lest I should run before the Spirit. I never asked to preach at this or the other place, receiving the appointment of the assistant as a call from God. How happy would it be for the preachers if they were all to follow the guidance of the Spirit, rather than their own will! Then nothing would come amiss. In a few months I preached in all the chapels in London; and when summer came on, in Moorfields, Marylebone Fields, and on Tower Hill—all the time blessing God for being kept from that false humility which shackles so many! My unfitness never stood in my way. Indeed I cannot but think all who are called of God to preach are some way fitted for the work. If not, the Lord of the vineyard does not know his business! However, sure I am that humility of this kind is inconsistent with perfect love. I believe genuine humility makes a man invulnerable, by the praise or dispraise of men.

From this time I continued to preach, and to labour diligently with my hands, that I might provide things honest in the sight of all men. Till in August 1777 I was called to suffer the will of God, being about three months under a surgeon's hands. He at last pronounced the case desperate, of which my wife informed me with tears in her eyes. In that instant, three scriptures came to my mind, 'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.'²⁷ 'The things impossible with men are possible with God.'²⁸ 'The right

²¹Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:9.

²²Cf. Matt. 28:20.

²³Cf. Isa. 32:4.

²⁴Mal. 3:1.

²⁵An area of east London, within Tower Hamlets.

²⁶Cf. Heb. 12:14.

²⁷Cf. Matt. 28:18.

²⁸Cf. Luke 18:27.

hand of the Lord hath the preeminence.²⁹ And I was fully assured I should not die. Meantime I suffered the will of God willingly, cheerfully, joyfully. By this illness I was cured of another disorder, which otherwise must have been my death, and was made more capable both inwardly and outwardly of doing the work I was called to.

When I gathered strength, I was advised to go into the country. And being recommended to our friends at Dorking, I spent sixteen days with them. May God repay them for the love they showed me! When I came back I was quite capable of my business, which I cheerfully entered upon, being equally willing to work at my trade, or to preach the gospel. But in the latter end of July 1780, one asking me whether I had no thoughts of being a travelling preacher, I owned I had. And having just buried two of my children, I thought the time was come. I was accordingly proposed at the Bristol Conference, and appointed for the Salisbury circuit. Many of my *prudent* friends blamed me much for leaving a quiet, comfortable business. But I had counted the cost. So on Monday, September 11, I set out for Salisbury. When I left my wife and three children, I felt a mixture of joy and grief, but with a full resignation to the will of God. I have been about five months in my circuit, and am more convinced that this is the pleasantest life under heaven. Though I have left my wife, and children, and dearest friends, and house, and business, and wander about, chiefly on foot, through cold and rain, I find my mind uninterruptedly happy. I feel a constant witness of the work wrought in my heart by the Spirit of holiness. I have received in this world a hundredfold. And I know that when my earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, I have a building of God; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!³⁰

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 251–55, 304–09.

²⁹Cf. Col. 1:18.

³⁰Cf. 2 Cor. 5:1.

From Elizabeth Ritchie

New House¹
November 11, 1780

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your kind letter did not come to hand until the day before we left Bristol,² owing to Miss [Ann] Chapman's name being omitted in the direction. It was a word in season. The danger you mention my God has for some months been giving me an excellent antidote against. But I have need to be continually on my guard, and nothing I feel but a power to live every moment in his presence, which enables me to behold myself in *his light*, can save me from it. This, glory be to my gracious Lord, I am enabled to do. And such self-abasement my spirit feels as words cannot describe. I really wonder how it is that my friends bear with me, and the daily proofs of love I receive from them sinks me into the dust at my saviour's feet. May he reward them a thousand fold into their own bosoms.

I owe the dear Bristol people much love and shall, I believe, eternally praise my Lord from bringing me thither. On a review of all that passed while I was in that part of the world, my heart is filled with grateful adoration. I believed before I left Yorkshire that my God would be with and abundantly bless me. But he has exceeded my largest expectations. He has dealt with me according to his wonted mercy. O how am I indebted to infinite love! Fresh obligations are laid on me to praise, adore, and love. And sure from this time forward.

In blessing God with grateful heart,
My happy life shall glide away;
While hourly with uplifted hands,
My heart its thankful tribute pays.³

We spent a week very comfortably with dear Mrs. [Rebecca] Scudamore, and last week were kindly received by dear Mr. and Mrs. Wathen into this hospitable dwelling. I have found much tranquillity of mind here and have a little time for reflecting on past mercies. I find myself oft[en] so 'closed around on every side the prisoner of amaze',⁴ that I am lost in speechless awe and holy astonishment at the unfathomed love of my dear Lord. We have with us a dear young lady from Gloucester who truly loves the Lord Jesus, but it is at present when at home quite among worldly people. She rejoices much at this opportunity, and bids fair to be a devoted soul. Dear Miss [Elizabeth] Morgan is also with us. She purposes staying either here or at Stroud until we leave Gloucestershire. I must thank you, my dear sir, for this valuable acquaintance. We are much united in the Spirit's bonds, and I seem to expect this is but a prelude to our farther knowledge of each other. Dear Nancy Bolton came to us the day you left Whitney, and Penny Newman and sister (who is on a visit at Cheltenham) are to be with us before the week is out. So that we have quite an assemblage of Christian friends, and truly our God is with us. He crowns our meeting with his presence.

With the Lord's leave we purpose leaving Stroud next week, but shall at the request of our friends stop at Worcester, Birmingham, and Derby. So that I don't suppose we shall reach home until near Christmas. Soon after you left Bristol, Mr. Robert Roe⁵ heard his father was dangerously ill at Matlock,

¹The home of Joseph and Ann Wathen, in Far Thrupp, Gloucestershire.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³This is apparently Ritchie's adaptation of the stanza quoted in her previous letter: JW, 'Psalm 63' (translated from the Spanish) st. 6, *CPH* (1738), 7.

⁴Cf. Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, Night 1, lns. 267–68.

⁵Robert Roe, son of Charles and Mary (Stockdale) Roe of Macclesfield, was a cousin of Hester Ann Roe and helped draw her into Methodism; see his autobiographical letter to JW dated Sept. 28, 1782.

on which he set of[f] immediately, and though at the first the old gentleman was much displeased and would not for some time see him, yet at last he did, and is now reconciled unto him.⁶ Robert is returned to Bristol with his brother Samuel,⁷ who is going off in a consumption, and the father is going to Bath for the recovery of his health. Dear Hetty⁸ is well, and though much tired from many quarters, finds sweet rest in the arms of Jesus.

Miss [Mercy] Marshall desires her love. We both join wishing you an increase of every purchased and promised blessing. O may that God whose you are and whom you serve fill you with all his fullness, and be your shield and your exceeding great reward in time and through all eternity, prays, my dear sir,

Your unworthy, but truly affectionate, daughter

E. Ritchie

Annotation: another hand, '31st'.

Source: manuscript draft, kept for records; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Elizabeth Ritchie papers (Box CO 6).

⁶Robert's father was Charles Roe (1715–81). See Dorothy Bentley Smith, *A Georgian Gent & Co.: The Life and Times of Charles Roe* (Ashbourne: Landmark Publishing, 2005).

⁷Samuel Roe (1749–80) was the son of Charles Roe and his first wife Elizabeth (Lankford) Roe (1724–50).

⁸I.e., Hester Ann Roe; Charles's niece and Robert's cousin.

From William Black¹

Lisburn
November 20, 1780

From the time that my wife [Charlotte] took her disorder, she had very little hopes of recovery. I believe she was at times sincerely seeking the favour of God. But from the time she went to Larne her convictions seemed to increase. Yet still she had not the faith that justifies. For this she mourned like a dove, and would not be comforted. When I spoke of God's willingness to make known his love to her, she replied, 'I know he is willing; but I see I can no more believe to the saving of my soul than I can fly.' I then spoke of what Christ had done for her. 'All this I know too', said she, 'but I feel I can no more believe that he did these things in particular for *me*, than I can remove a mountain.' I then inquired particularly if there were any sins (mentioning those things which I thought were most likely to cleave to her) that she loved? She declared there was not a sin she did not hate with a perfect hatred! I then inquired if she did not feel an unwillingness to give me and the children up? 'No', said she, 'for I have long ago given you all to God.' This was about ten days before she found a full assurance of the favour of God. From that time the cry of her heart was, 'When will the blessed moment arrive!'

On the 27th of November, about seven o'clock at night, the day star arose on her benighted soul! I was standing at her bedside, when she broke out, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth! I know that God loves me! For I feel his love! *For I feel his love in my heart.*' She then took me in her arms, most affectionately triumphing at the same time in the salvation of God! Soon after, the enemy endeavoured to persuade her that her experience was a delusion. But by faith in the blood of Jesus she soon repelled the fiery dart. After this I often heard her say, 'My Beloved is mine, and I am his! Oh, how shall I praise him for such undeserved mercies! Praise the Lord, O my soul!'

A few days before her death she expressed the most longing desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, and would often say, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!' ² 'Oh why tarrieth my Beloved! and why are his chariot wheels so long in coming!' 'Come! Oh come, thou fairest among ten thousand! Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!'

About this time, as her sister was weeping at the bedside she said, 'Why do you weep Harriot? Do you see any alteration in me?' She replied, 'I do my dear; I think you will not be long here.' She answered, 'Glory be to God for that! That is good news indeed!' One night, all being in bed but myself, when I thought she was dozing, she suddenly broke out, 'I shall see my dear father there! And I shall see my three sweet children there! Glory! glory! glory be to God forever!'

The night before she died her desire was greatly increased to be with him whom her soul loved. As this seemed almost to border on impatience, I put her in mind of an expression that had been of great use to her. She then prayed for patience and resignation. A little after, her cry seemed to increase for the full enjoyment of God: and her language was again, 'Come! O come!' I said, it seems as if God was determined to make you willing to suffer. She replied, 'Well! well!' 'I hope', said I, 'that the language of your heart is, thy will be done.' She answered, 'Yes, blessed be God it is. Yet I cannot help longing to be gone from this world of pain and misery.'

Presently after this, she resigned herself unto him whom her soul loved.

W. Black³

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 6 (1783): 584–86.

¹William Black (1746–1835), a stocking weaver, was born in Belfast, first heard the Methodists at an old slaughterhouse at Malone in 1764, and joined the society soon after. In 1766 Black married Charlotte Cumberland (d. 1779), daughter of Hans and Jane (Duprey?) Cumberland, leading Methodists in Lisburn, and relocated there. He served for years as a class leader and opened his home to visiting Methodist preachers. See Crookshank, *Ireland*, 177, 189, 202, 321–23.

²Ps. 42:1.

³Orig., 'Blake'.

From Thomas Wride¹

Welburn²

December 8, 1780

Reverend Sir,

A long preface would not be agreeable to you, and painful to me. But I hope that you will excuse my method of placing an old plan in the front of this letter. The plain reason is to prove that I *had* an account of the circuit and could give what I doubt not will have your approbation, at least so far that you will judge that I did take some notice, and keep some account, of what you committed to my care.

Nothing short of a steady persuasion of duty towards God would ever have made me, so contrary to my natural disposition, to offer myself unto you as a son in the gospel. And nothing short of black ingratitude will make me deny that for several years I received several tokens of your favour. Yea and, unknown to you, I have had intimations of your satisfaction in my labours. This was to me no small encouragement, and it is not hard to prove that, while it was known that you was my support, I did attempt and carry supposed impossibilities. For instance, at Whitehaven no preacher for several (I think ten) years had dared to have a band love-feast. And probably you will remember that you had dispensed therewith, supposing that the point could not be gained. But sir, the point was gained. We had that year three general love feasts for the bands alone. For several years band tickets were give to *some* who refused to meet in band for this plain express reason: 'I'll have a band ticket or none'. This was also ended, by refusing band tickets to all who would not meet in band. I take liberty, sir, to bring to view these instances, to show that I was not so loose a disciplinarian as some would represent me to be.

It was at York, the latter end of the year, that I became an object of your displeasure.³ Why? Lay aside all disguises and it will appear plainly that it was because I was honest to Mr. [John] Wesley, to the Methodist doctrine, and discipline—while all three were directly and indirectly opposed and betrayed by avowed Calvinists without and semi-Calvinists within.

I know, sir, it was by other *pretenses* they imposed upon you. For it would not do to say 'Although that fine man Mr. Richardson at Belfrey church preaches up Calvinism, imputed righteousness, and point blank antinomianism,⁴ yet Thomas Wride is so self-conceited as to preach down all three. And although William Ramsden had made and printed such fine new hymns,⁵ yet Thomas Wride refuses to sing them or sell them. Yea, and although he has been told that perfection ought not to be spoke of except in close society, yet he has persisted to preach upon it at *large* in Sunday morning congregations.' I write as I expect to answer it before God, that I do verily believe the above were the chief *real* objections. But undisguised they would not pass, therefore dared not to appear in their own shape. Sir, I do not think you my debtor for this. I preached what I believed, therefore I must be a sinner before God if I preached otherwise; and a knave to you if I passed for one of your sons in the gospel and betrayed that trust you committed to me.

I have hitherto dwelt on old matters. But as it appears you are not willing to go over particulars, I consent to let them lay—believing the day will come when disguises will vanish and persons and actions meet a unerring judge.

I cannot help thinking that if I had been at Conference and allowed to speak for myself, you would have seen things in another light. And I must say that I think myself cruelly used to be accused by I

¹In 1780 Wride stood down from the itinerant ministry in the light of charges brought before the 1780 Conference that he was 'droll, light, trifling and slothful'; see *Works*, 10:497.

²Hometown of his wife.

³Wride was appointed to York for the 1773–74 appointment year (*Works*, 10:417).

⁴William Richardson was vicar of Michael le Belfrey Church in York 1771–1821.

⁵William Ramsden, *Hymns on the Nativity: also New Year's Day, Love Feast, and the Passion, to the Trinity* (York: A. Ward, 1775). See Wride to JW, c. Jan. 15 1774.

know not who (and as to particulars I know not of what), and by an express rule forbidden to be present to answer for myself.

The charges as ranged by Mr. [Thomas] Coke are, 'You are droll, light, trifling, and slothful.' As to the first, I am not conscious of it, therefore in general I deny it. Although in some epistolary correspondence between the Rev. James Metcalfe and John Cass, one of his pupils, and me there was something like drollery,⁶ but not what you will esteem criminal on my part. I endeavoured to answer fools according to their folly. How well or ill executed my part, I will not say. However they were so incapable of keeping their ground that the Calvinian standard-bearer was obliged to give up with loss of credit. These letters on both sides I read to several, and it may be that the obscenity and wretched lightness of Mr. Metcalfe, which I sincerely reprehended, may be laid to my charge by such as were tainted with Calvinism and not overlaid with understanding. These papers are still in being and shall be submitted to your censure or approbation when you please to demand them.

As to my being 'light' [and] 'trifling', I here own myself in fault. To deny it is to double it. I do not attempt to excuse it. I wish it had been otherwise. And by the help of God I do not fear but it will. Yet if I wanted to justify myself in this point, it would not be difficult to tell time, place, and person when and where one of my fellow labourers and me were slightly spoken of because we did not laugh like unto our other fellow labourer.

As to my being 'slothful', I deny it absolutely. And I defy all the men in the world to prove it. My efforts *last* year were full proof to the contrary. For at the time when I was so ill that I could not eat, and at the times of deep snow and I among the Dales where I could not ride on account of the snow, yet I pursued my way by leading my horse through such difficulties as my fellow labourers at the same places did not dare to follow my steps. Indeed, if 'sickness' and 'sloth' are the same, I shall find it hard to escape censure. For it is an undeniable fact that for more than a year before my fever I had a very poor state of health, being asthmatic to a considerable degree, and was often obliged to lay down for weakness even when I had been up but few hours. Now if such as are strangers to sickness will call this 'sloth', let them—until sickness teach them a little more compassion.

Twenty months ago one pronounced brother Saunders⁷ to be diseased 'in his imagination'. But I would hope that a bed of sickness has taught him more brotherly kindness.

I was also paralytic in my left thigh and leg. But few knew of this because it seldom troubled me much but on horseback. My fever was a remedy for both complaints, so that I am [now] as free as I was twelve years ago.

It is well known that I did my work when I might well have been excused, even when I have been obliged to use my hands to keep from falling at the time of preaching. Now sir, if you can admit these facts, you will easily excuse me from the charge of slothfulness.

Brother Tunney,⁸ in his letter, tells me (not as his own words, but in the third person) that my 'soul is not alive to God'. That is abundantly too strong. Indeed I own that I am far short of what I was in the years 1762–65. But yet sir, I doubt not to say that I have more grace now than I had in the year 1768, at which time you had so favourable an opinion of me as to say that I had more grace than all Salisbury society.

⁶Rev. James Metcalfe was curate of Bilsdale, Yorkshire. Wride had written condemning him of being a drunk, a reprobate, and a Calvinist; and received responses from Metcalfe and Cass in kind. See discussion in Clive Murray Norris, *Thomas Wride and Wesley's Methodist Connexion* (London: Routledge, 2020), 43–47.

⁷Orig., 'Sanders'; but Wride surely means William Saunders (1745–1815), who began itinerating in 1777, was accepted into full status in 1778 (see *Works*, 10:473), and was currently serving in the Dales (10:499). Saunders continued to itinerate until 1806. See *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1815), 4:90.

⁸William Tunney entered the itineracy in 1774 (*Works*, 10:427). After two years on trial he was admitted to full status in 1776 (10:451). He served some difficult appointments, including Salisbury in 1780–81. At the 1781 Conference he desisted from travelling (10:507).

Sir, I should be glad, if you thought well of it, to be restored to your favour and my former labours. If my present situation was my own choice, I believe that I should lose my soul eternally.

It may be that there is no real vacancy. But yet sir, if you please, I am persuaded you can find me work enough. And it is only work that I want, because you have been so kind to supply me with money more than enough.

I am, reverend sir,

Your devoted son,

Thomas Wride

Source: Wride's manuscript draft, kept for his records; MARC, PLP 115/9/40.