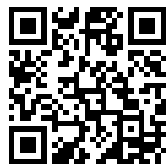

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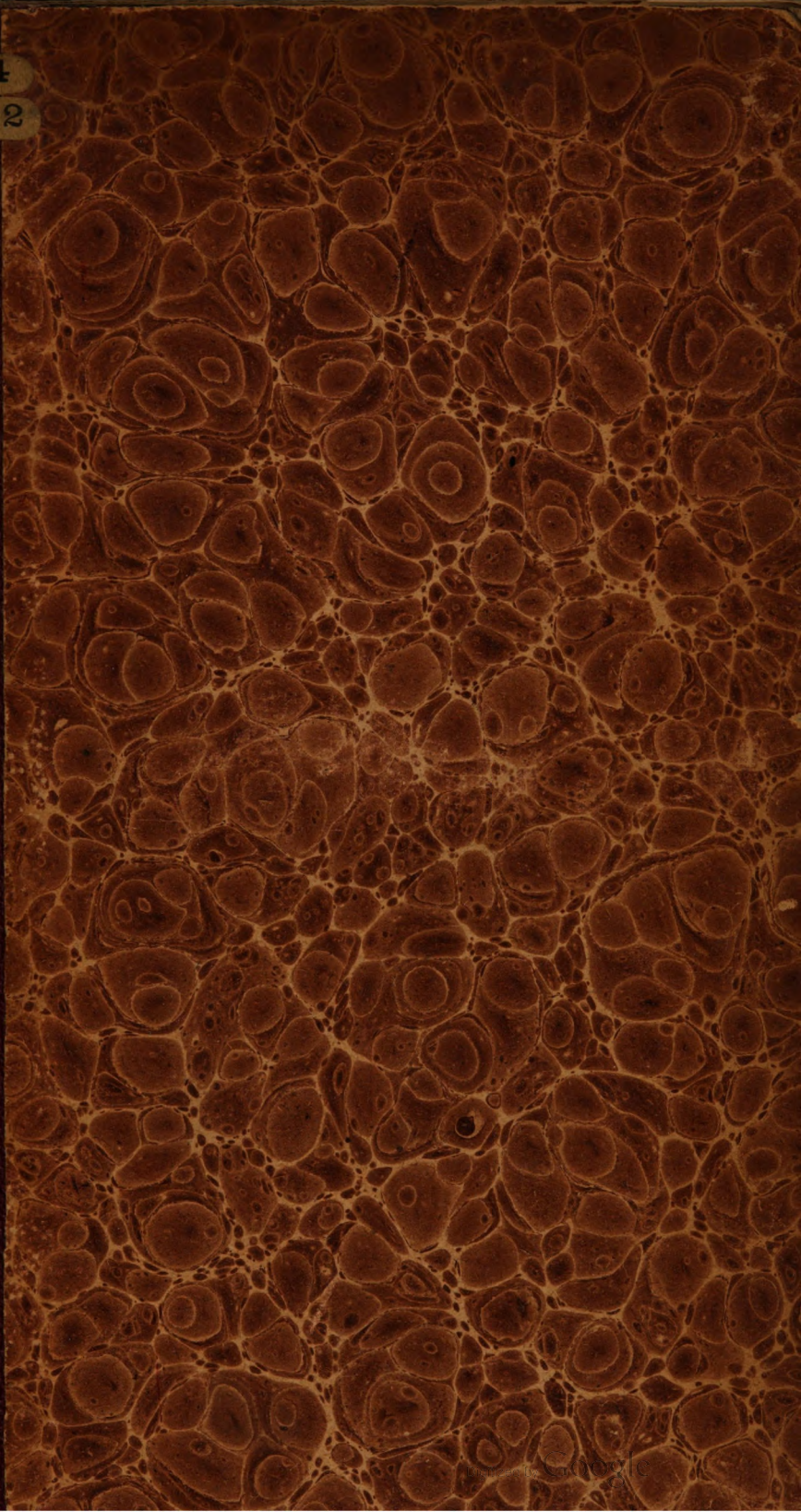
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Political Empiricism :

A

L E T T E R

TO THE

Rev. Mr. *John Wesley.*

Fugere pudor, verumque, fidesque :
In quorum subière locum, fraudesque, dolique,
Infidizque, et .vis, et amor sceleratus habendi.

OVID.

" Alas, Master ! for it was borrowed."

S. S.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. JOHNSON, No. 72, ST. PAUL'S
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A
L E T T E R, &c.

Rev. S I R,

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
A 2 matters

matters of controvery-----“ *Nothing extenuate, nor set down ought in malice.*”

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 wife and provident man. It is true, you had not the fore-sight 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**. This was, indeed, an unlucky instance of your inattention; but -----*Aliquando bonus dormitat John Wesley*.----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 chymical process, and having been
simplified

* 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. W.'s *Calm Address*, are borrowed from Dr. J.'s *Taxation no Tyranny*.

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:---*Yours*, "the delirious dream" (I cannot say, of *republican*, but) "of *monarchical FANATICISM* *".

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 risque 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 Property*.

* Vid. *Taxation no Tyranny*, p. 35.—"It is the unmeaning clamour of the pedants of policy, the delirious dream of republican fanaticism."

Property. In either case, how would you be able to stand before the indignation of the huge Lexicographer, "or answer his waked wrath?" Methinks I see him, with terrific frown, and direful intent, brandishing in either hand a * Folio of tremendous size---*Oh Dii avertite Omen!* 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." 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 risque, 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. But

* Vid. a Dictionary of the English Language, in two Volumes Folio, by S. Johnson, L. L. D.

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, tho' it be (as our sagacious friend himself expresses it) "An expedient which argues no great profundity of politics"†? Yet, the *compressibility* of the Doctors 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 *convenience*;

† See Dr. Johnson's Journey to Scotland, p. 224.

ence ; and discovered a very happy method of uniting *the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.* 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 reply to the upbraiding adversary, with *Macbeth* in the play,-----“ *Thou canst not say I did it.*”

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 American*.” 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 idol

* See a Letter to the Rev. Mr. WESLEY, by Caleb Evans, M. A. page 22.

idol of the children of this world. *Nondum laurus erat.*-----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* &c. 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!*---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

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prediction

§ See Mr. WESLEY'S Journals, 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.

prediction, which I shall here 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!*) 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*||".

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 mean time 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 *minutiæ* of verbal precision. My mind dwells upon the Idea which this prophetic sage has suggested of the

|| Taxation no Tyranny, page 4.

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!"

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 (1st.) that you did not publish your "*Calm Address* to the American col-
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nists

nists with a view to get money †," if this had been your object, you would have swelled it to the size of "a shilling pamphlet." 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* 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*--- which

† See a Letter to the Printer of the London Chronicle, in the paper of Nov. 28.

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 stile, and the elevated, sonorous language, the *sesquipedalia verba* of that *Boanerges* in the cause of administration, the venerable POMPOSO †. 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, (2dly) you alledge that you did not write the *Calm Address* “to get preferment to yourself, or your brother’s children ||.”-----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;” 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
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† See Churchill’s Ghost, a poem.

|| N. B. These and the following passages mark’d thus (“) are cited from Mr. Wesley’s Letter to the Printer of the London Chronicle, above-mentioned.

or I fought it for them, we have only to shew 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 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." Should this be the fate of your Brother's poor children, (God help 'em!) 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.

3dly. 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
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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! 'tis 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, forgotten

forgotten that moderation and *calmness* you profess. *Tantæne in animis cælestibus iræ?*

As to your next assertion, 4thly, 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 publickly 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 insolence,

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 dæmon of civil discord, to unsheath the murdering sword, and put in motion the gloomy engine of tyranny and oppression.

You alledge that "the Americans are not used either cruelly or unjustly-----that they are not injured at all-----that they are not contending for liberty," &c.----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 to promote the purposes of popular delusion, by affirming every thing with an unembarrassed countenance, and a confident, dictatorial air.-----" Whatever you do, do not risque a single *argument*; that would ruin
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every thing. 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?"

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,
upon

upon the authority of a man (however capable, perhaps, in many other respects, and tho' 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 †." I must 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 a-propos (in their present accommodated sense) so expressive 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

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† Taxation no Tyranny, p. 4.

the most unreserved approbation of their Refiftance.---It is furely, not a little extraordinary that *you* fhould now fo fuddenly rife up to condemn them. “ Shall I praife “ you in this? I praife you not*.” It is reported that you have been difappointed in your hopes of an American Bifhoprick ; and when I confider your conduct, “ I partly believe it †.” It is likewise faid, that you have now fome other object in view : and this we alfo may take for granted, becaufe you do not abfolutely contradict it. You adopt the fafer method of endeavouring to *evade* what you do not think fit to *deny*. I do not expect you to acknowledge that you have bafely offered yourfelf to hire, that you have actually received the wages of prostitution. Though we know it to be an undoubted fact, that your *Calm Adrefs to the American Colonies* has been circulated from the firft office in the kingdom; yet I think you cannot be quite fo abandoned as to fuppofe that this circumftance does you any great honour: to me it affords a ftrong prefumptive evidence of your fhame. You probably have found it convenient to oblige a certain *pious* Lord in Adminiftration, whom it was impoffible to refufe. That this might not much interfere with your apoftolical labours and purfuits, it was alfo convenient to have recourfe to Dr. Johnson, and to pilfer the moft contemptible
of

* 1 Cor. xvii. 22. ——— † 1 Cor. xi. 18.

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

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*. 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
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* See Postscript of Mr. Wesley's Letter to the Printer of the London Chronicle, before referred to.

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 life-time, that in the reign of his illustrious grand-son, the politics of England would have found a resource in the pharisaical cant and grimace of *Methodism*!

It is a truly singular and curious phænomenon 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 Re-
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verend *Dean** 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 suggest,

* "If it was not [says an ingenious writer, in relation to the Dean of Gloucester] for a seeming disclaimer, the sincerity of which I do not question; I should shrewdly suspect myself to see in the writings of this Gentleman, the very strongest outward signs of seeking preferment." See *A Further Examination of our present American Measures*; by the Author of *Considerations*, &c. page 176.

gest 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 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 flesh-pots of Egypt; or are you afraid least that the light of reason

reason and of liberty should banish your cant and your jargon out of America *?"

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* †". Upon being reminded of this, you at first absolutely deny your having ever seen the book ‡. 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 ||".-----To be sure, there

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is

* See *A Further Examination of our present American Measures*, &c. page 188—Where the Author, in the course of his animadversions on Mr. Wesley's conduct, expresses himself as above.

† See Preface to the ad. Edit. of Mr. Evans's Letter to Mr. Wesley, page 7.

‡ See Preface to a new Edition of the *Calm Address*.

|| See Mr. Wesley's Letter to the Rev. Mr. Caleb Evans, in the *Gazetteer* of December 13th.

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? *A propos*-----"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*."-----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*.

The *motives* of your conduct in publishing your *Calm Address*s, have hitherto principally engaged my attention.-----I must, before I conclude, bespeak your indulgence, whilst I make a few remarks on the
 general

* See Johnson's Journey to Scotland, page 274.

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 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!*

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*, of *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 re-

presents 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*." 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 risque 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!* , 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?*"

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 arbitrary

* See Dr. Price's *Observations on Civil Liberty*, &c. page 16.

trary 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.*

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," 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 could

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 *labour, both in season and out of season.*

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 capable of 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 your own conscience-----accountable to the violated rights of an injured people-----and,
above

above all, accountable to *Him who is the Prince of the kings of the earth?*

For God's sake, Sir, let me intreat 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*, 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 *?-----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 SACHEVERELL*? Do you aspire to stand conspicuous on the ignoble list of infamy and venality----amongst those *slaves of state* †, the *pensioned* Jacobites and Tories, of whatever rank of precedency in guilt----the *Johnsons*, the *Shebbeares*, the *Macphersons*, and the *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 most

* Dr. Price's Observations, &c.

† See *Johnson's Dictionary*—Art. *Pensioner*. "A slave of state hired by a stipend to obey his master."

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*. 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, &c.



