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A
L E T T E R

T O T H E

Rev. Mr. AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

Written in great part by himself.

Relative to part of his late printed Letter
to the Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY.



L O N D O N :
PRINTED IN THE YEAR, MDCCLXX.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS



A

LETTER, &c.

Reverend Sir,

 Have just read over a pamphlet written by you, entitled, "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. *John Wesley*, &c." You therein tell that gentleman, in a very military style, that, fond as you seem of war, and disposed to "measuring a sword or breaking a pike with him;" yet, in a certain case, you "shall disdain to give him battle, and that you shall only laugh at him from the ramparts." * Through-

* Mr. Toplady's words are all along enclosed with commas.

out.

out the whole, you seem to stand in armour, with your sword drawn, your "trenches" open, and your "batteries planted," to fight, as you say, "like the French," "with old nails and broken glass."

Whether Mr. *Wesley's* disregard to your letter, his total silence with reference to it, arises from the kind of "disdain" you speak of, or because he deems it beneath his notice, a matter to be "laughed" at, is best known to himself. I however, could not avoid making some remarks as I read it, which was not till this day. No matter who I am: I mean to do little more than transcribe your own words. Hence this letter is said to be written, in great part, by yourself.

I intend not the least disrespect: I reverence your office, as a clergyman, and wish, with all my soul, to see all who bear the sacred character, *united in love and the spirit of meekness*, at least; if not in *the same mind and judgment*: though that is also to be devoutly wished. I shall confine myself wholly to part of the matter of your letter, without following your example, with respect to Mr. *Wesley*, by mustering together, from every quarter,

ter, all you could collect or devise, to render him odious and contemptible.

And first: you say—"An opponent who thinks to add weight to his arguments by scurrility and abuse, resembles the insane person, who rolled himself in mud, in order to make himself look fine."

The seeming inconsistency of this with what follows, must certainly have arisen from the warmth of your temper, at the time you wrote; which made you overlook what, in a cooler hour, must needs strike yourself, and make you wish it had been otherwise. It is evident you highly disapprove "scurrility and abuse," and consider an opponent who deals in it, in a very filthy light; else you would not have drawn the resemblance so strikingly, between such an one and a mad man, "rolled in mud." Now pray Sir, compare your sentiment with your conduct.

"You (Mr. *Wesley*) have endeavoured to palm doctrines on your credulous followers, with all the sophistry of a Jesuit, and the dictatorial authority of a

A 3

"Pope 3

“ Pope ; and have eagerly endeavoured
 “ to distinguish yourself as the bell-we-
 “ ther of your deluded thousands.”

“ You act the part of a sly affassin.
 “ If such an opponent can be deemed an
 “ honest man, where shall we find a
 “ knave ?”

“ Conceal that sectarian spirit, which
 “ betrays itself more or less, in almost
 “ every thing you write.”

“ Renounce your low serpentine cun-
 “ ning.”

“ Dismiss those dirty subterfuges (the
 “ last resource of mean, malicious impo-
 “ tence) which degrade the man of
 “ parts into a lying sophister, and sink a
 “ divine beneath the level of an oyster-
 “ woman.”

“ I do not expect to be treated by
 “ Mr. *Wesley* with the meekness and
 “ tenderness of a Christian,” (not indeed
 if he followed the example you here set
 him) “ but I wish him, for his own re-
 “ putation sake, to write and act with
 “ the honesty of an heathen.”

You

You have, it is plain, shewn a mighty concern for his *reputation*, throughout your whole letter. Could you, Sir, have taken more pains to vilify it, had he in reality been an heathen? But you speak of some who “*say and do not.*” You go on :

“ Possessed of more than serpentine elability, you cast your slough, not once a year ; but almost once an hour.”

“ Your scheme of doctrines is somewhat like the *necromantic soup*, of which you have probably read in the tragedy of *Mackbeth.*”

“ Your doctrines may be stirred into a chaotic jumble ; but witchcraft itself would strive in vain to bring them into co-alition.”

“ I should wonder if you treated any opponent with equity, or cavassed any subject impartially.”

“ I would no more enter into a formal controversy with such a scribbler, than I would contend for the wall

“ wall with a Chimney - sweeper.”

“ I could wish you to keep your hands from literary, picking and stealing.” A friendly wish! Query, whether the following advice is equally so.

“ Go on to chalk hideous figures on your wainscot, and enjoy the glorious triumph of battering your nuckles in fighting them.”

Schoolboys, when they fight, say one to another, *Have you enough?* If either say *yes*, the battle is over. Some readers possibly will be of opinion, here is sure enough of quotation of this kind, at least of nuckle-battery. Here then let it cease for the present.

And yet this short extract, is a specimen only, of your whole letter. Would not a reader, who had never before heard of the existence of Mr. *Wesley* or *Top-ady*, be ready to conclude from hence, that, if it be really, as you say, ———

“ An opponent who thinks to add weight to his arguments by scurrility and abuse, resembles the insane person, who rolled himself in mud, in

“ in order to make himself look fine.”
 ————— would not such an one think,
You have really so besmeared yourself,
 that whether, in your own account,
 you look “ fine ” or foul, you need
 washing all over. For, to every unpre-
 judiced person, it must plainly appear,
 the weight of your arguments consists
 in little else, than “ scurrility and a-
 buse.”

The infanity of the dauber you men-
 tion, it is true, apologized for the im-
 proved finery of his dress. You, sir,
 would not be thought to need such an
 apology ; and happily do not : the
 resemblance is therefore just but in
 part.

It is indeed matter of doubt, whether any
 “ oyster-woman,” (to use one of your own
 comparisons) in the cities of *London* or
Westminster, could have exceeded, in
 debate with a sister of her trade, what
 you, a man of yesterday, in comparison,
 have here written, in point of pertness,
 “ scurrility and abuse,” to a scholar, a
 gentleman, and a divine, grown grey, and
 well nigh worn out, in almost unparalleled
 labours in Christ’s vineyard.

Th

The elegance of your style, and the beauty of your similes, are of a piece with the "feurrility and abuse" with which your letter abounds. Instances might be transcribed from almost every other page. I shall, for brevity's sake, refer to one only.

You had, you say, been informed that Mr. *Wesley* intended to write an answer at large, to your publication; that he had "shut himself up," as you express it, in order thereto: and that the *penny* extract; which has put you into all this commotion, would be followed by a *fourpenny* pamphlet, as a supplement thereto. On this you politely flourish.

"After the teeming mountain had
 "been *shut up*, a competent time, long
 "enough to have been brought to bed of
 "an *Hercules*, forth creeps a puny, tooth-
 "less *mouse*;" (elegant!) "a mouse
 "of heterogeneous kind, having little
 "more than its head and tail from you.
 "If I may judge of the future by the
 "past, and unless you amend greatly in
 "a short time, your *fourpenny* supple-
 "ment, when it appears, will be no less
 "incon-

“ inconsiderable than the *penny sheet*, al-
 “ ready extant.” The *penny sheet*, you
 know, consists of an extract of extraordi-
 naries from your *two shilling* volume of
 rarities. You go on. “ And as *mouse*
 “ is not cheap at a *penny*, I am very ap-
 “ prehensive the *rat*, when it ventures
 “ out, will be far too dear at a *groat*,”
 Was ever any thing more elegant, argu-
 mentative or striking !

“ Possibly this letter may fall into the
 “ hands of some, who are unacquainted
 “ with the merits of the occasion on which
 “ I write ;” and who will therefore, no
 doubt, naturally enquire—What, in the
 name of astonishment, could have given
 occasion to all this foul-mouth’d treatment
 of Mr. *Wesley* ; all this “ scurrility and
 abuse ?” “ For the satisfaction of such,”
 it is meet to give them the necessary in-
 formation. Now reader, the case, as far
 as I can learn, is this.

Sometime ago the Rev. Mr. *Augustus*
Toplady published a book, price *two*
shillings, whose natural and necessary ten-
 dency, (let his intention be what it may)
 is to shew, that the God of the spirits
 of

of all flesh, the universal parent of all, is not a being of universal love.——That he has created great part of mankind, with no other design concerning them, than that they should pass a certain number of years, exposed to numberless calamities in the present world, and be miserable for ever in the next.——That some poor souls, do what they may to prevent it, shall *ipso facto*, be damned, body and soul, to all eternity : And that others, who as far as human penetration can discern, are no better than these, shall however, infallibly go to heaven : And all this for no other reason, than that the Almighty, in his eternal counsels, absolutely decreed to have it so. This is what is understood by the doctrine of *electing love*, and *reprobating vengeance*.

“ The doctrine of God’s eternal and “ unchangeable predestination,” Mr. *Toplady* declares, “ should be *publickly taught* “ from the pulpit and the press; that “ even the meanest of the people may “ not be ignorant of a truth which,” as he says, “ is the very foundation of “ man’s happiness.” He adds moreover, that “ the blessing of the doctrine of *election*, rises in *value*, proportionably

tionably to the fewness of its objects :” that is, in plain english ; By how much greater the number of the damned are, by so much the blessedness of those who are saved is enhanced. O with what different eyes do men see ! At what “ value ” the spirits of darkness may rate this doctrine ; what comfort it may afford them, I will not say : To man, however, it appears to me, to be a doctrine full of discomfort and horror, and foul as the infernal regions ; a doctrine fruitful of enormities, to some at least, and destructive of that holy living, which is the apparent grand object of all the precepts and prohibitions contained in the bible.

Mr. Wesley, who believes the direct contrary to what Mr. Toplady asserts, as above; whose whole life is spent in preaching and teaching, that GOD is loving to every man.—That He willeth not the death of a sinner.—That JESUS CHRIST, by the grace, or love of GOD, tasted death for EVERY MAN.—That He gave himself a ransom for ALL, and would have all men to be saved; and come to the knowledge of the truth.—That, as by the offence of one (namely Adam) judgement came upon all men to condemnation; even so, by the righteousness of One, that

that is, Jesus Christ, *the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.*—

That the reason why any child of Adam perishes everlastingly, is not owing to any want of love in God to that soul, or to any deficiency in, or limitation of, the merit of the atoning blood of the cross; but solely to the obstinacy and persevering rebellions, of those who reject the only means of the salvation of man; who, as an apostle has it, *trample under foot the blood of the covenant, and do despite to the spirit of grace*: In a word, *who will not come to Christ that they may have life.*

Mr. *Wesley*, I say, who thus believes, and thus teacheth, every day of his life, was of opinion, no doubt, that such a book as Mr. *Toplady's*, might be attended with very dangerous and mischievous consequences to many precious souls, *for whom Christ died*. To prevent which, as far as he could, he thought (as I suppose; for I have not spoken a syllable to him on the head) the most effectual method was, to make a short extract from that book, which might come as cheap as possible, that the horrid assertions, as he deemed them, therein contained, might refute themselves.

This

This, reader, seems to be the exact state of the case. Now Mr. *Toplady* has taken huge offence, and treated Mr. *Wesley* in the manner you see, by what I can gather from the whole of his letter, for the following particular reasons.

First, that his *two shilling* volume, should be, by Mr. *Wesley*, reduced to a *penny* pamphlet, which Mr. *Toplady* calls "a puny mouse, with a mangled body, having it's head and tail only from Mr. *Wesley*."

Next, that he should intersperse a word or query of his, with what he, Mr. *Toplady*, had written with his own hand. And

Lastly, that Mr. *Wesley* should subscribe to this puny, *penny* extract, the initial letters of Mr. *Toplady*'s name.

The last three or four lines of the *penny* extract, here referred to, signed with the letters, A. T. it is, it seems, true are not the very identical words of Mr. *Toplady*, for whose name those letters stand. But every reader of his book, who understands plain English, and is capable of draw-

drawing a conclusion from the plainest premises, must allow them to be the *sense*, the obvious *import* of numbers of his propositions, tho' not the *very words* themselves. Now, reader, judge for yourself.

You see, sir, I do not attempt entering into the merits of the controversy, between those who are called *Predestinarians* (many of whom I love and honour) and those whom you style *Armenians*. Such an attempt, would be as vain in me, as it would, I am persuaded, be useless to all the world.

The disagreement on this, and other points, between men equally learned, and equally pious, both at the present time, and in past ages; I consider, among a thousand other reasons, as an argument for endeavouring to maintain a constant spirit of tenderness and moderation, towards all parties, whatever their system may be. Every man has a right to think and judge for himself; and it seems as reasonable for a man to expect another should see with his eyes, as that he should think in all points as he does. Contempt and bitterness, in spirit or expression, are
equally

equally culpable on the one side and the other. *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.* I, for my part, believe there are thousands of *Calvinists*, who love and serve our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and will be with him for ever. The very same I believe concerning thousands of those who are not *Calvinists*. Some of your assertions, it is true, seem an advance on the doctrine, which numbers who style themselves *Calvinists* profess to believe: and I can no more think as you do, than I can believe you are infallible, or that the bible is false.

Yet you certainly *think* you are right; and act, no doubt, from principle, in affirming and teaching as you do. Now can you, sir, think thus favourably concerning those who differ from you? Can you believe the heart of that man to be right with God, who, after using every means in his power; after exercising the faculties which God hath given him, with diligence and integrity, in the search of truth, adopts a system of doctrines, in some particulars, the very reverse of yours? The doctrine of the universal love of God our

Saviour; the all-sufficiency of his atonement, for the salvation of the *whole world* of sinners, appears to me so clear, and has been so often, and so fully demonstrated, that, supposing the bible to be true, I am of opinion, all the Men on earth can never refute it. And yet I truly esteem, and highly honour, numbers of persons who are entirely of another way of thinking; and am of opinion, that difference in sentiment, on the point, will not affect the final state of those, on either side, who truly *fear God, and work righteousness*. Whatever is of man, *love*, we are assured, *is of God*: And *he hath promised eternal life to them that love him*. Surely thousands on each side the present question, love JESUS, and fear to offend him. O why then should they not love each other, *as brethren*, unavoidable difference in sentiment notwithstanding? Surely it is possible to defend a sentiment, and attempt to refute, what one deems an error, with all the plainness, and strength of argument men are capable of, without descending to personal reflection, and treating an opponent with "*scurrility and abuse.*"

The

The gentleman, on whom the letter under consideration, endeavours to fasten so much dirt, has long since published a tract on *predestination*, which the late worthy Archbishop of *Canterbury*, to my knowledge, deemed unanswerable, at least irrefutable ; and which he recommended to a young clergyman, of my acquaintance, among other polemical works, as the best he had ever read on the subject. You, Sir, perhaps may be of a different opinion.

If then you would try your hand, and engage to purpose, as you seem disposed, by your repetition of challenges ; not indeed, to repeat your own words, " like the *French*, with old nails and broken glass ;" but with the approved weapons of scripture, *the sword of the spirit*, and sound reason ; refute that pamphlet, *Predestination calmly considered*, page by page. You will then be acknowledged a champion indeed. Till you do this, neither Mr. *Wesley*, nor any of those who agree with him in sentiment, on that subject, need to say any thing more.

Only

Only see that you "charge fairly," as you recommend on a similar occasion, "and fire as forcibly as you can." But if you persist to employ the weapons of *scurrility* and *abuse*, "the splinters" will not only recoil on yourself," but your cause will be in danger of suffering loss. And remember who has said, and subscribed his name to it; "If I cannot beat you (Mr. *Wesley*) back, I'll freely capitulate, and own myself conquered." Generously spoken!

Before I conclude, I beg leave just to remark upon one point. You vehemently object to Mr. *Wesley*, his not holding and teaching the *doctrine of grace*, and appropriate the holding and teaching that blessed evangelic doctrine, to yourself, and those who think and teach as you do. This really seems a little extraordinary.

If I understand right, *grace* and *love*, applied to God, in scripture, frequently mean the same thing. So do *mercy* and *grace*; several instances might be produced. Now it appears to numbers in these kingdoms, that those who preach and teach, the *love*, the *grace*, the *mercy* of

of GOD to *all* men ; who declare that *every child of Adam* is an object of the divine favour, *grace* or *mercy* ; that *the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men*, and is sufficient for the needs of the whole world of fallen souls ; are, in all propriety of language, the proper maintainers and preachers of the doctrine of *free Grace*, or *salvation by Grace* : And that those, on the contrary, who teach otherwise, who limit the grace or love of GOD, to a *certain number* of souls, exclusively of all the rest, may more properly be styled preachers of absolute, unconditional *decrees*, than of the free, rich, boundless *Grace* of our Lord and Saviour, JESUS CHRIST.

I am, with real desire that your heart, and mine, and the hearts of all christian people, may feel the full import of that divine declaration, GOD IS LOVE.

Rev. Sir, with all due respect,

Your obedient Servant,

A Reader of your Letter.

London,
August 6, 1770.

F I N I S.

The first part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the State to the Governor, dated the 10th of January, 1861. The letter is addressed to the Governor and is signed by the Secretary. The letter contains the following text:

Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th inst. in relation to the application of the State for a loan of \$1,000,000. I have the honor to inform you that the same has been referred to the Finance Committee of the Senate, and they have reported in favor of the same. I have the honor to inform you that the same has been passed by the Senate on the 27th inst. and is now in the hands of the President for his signature. I have the honor to inform you that the same will be signed by the President on the 30th inst. and will be in force on the 1st of February next. I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. M. [Name]

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