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A FULL
D E F E N C E

OF THE

Rev. JOHN WESLEY,

IN ANSWER TO THE SEVERAL
PERSONAL REFLECTIONS
CAST ON THAT GENTLEMAN

By the Rev. CALEB EVANS,

IN HIS

O B S E R V A T I O N S

O N

Mr. WESLEY'S LATE REPLY

PREFIXED TO

HIS CALM ADDRESS:

By THOMAS OLIVERS.

L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year 1776.



A FULL
 D E F E N C E
 OF THE

Rev. JOHN WESLEY, &c

S I R,

MY design is not to enter into the dispute between you and Mr. Wesley concerning our American Colonies; but to make a few remarks on the observations prefixed to the new edition of your letter.

In the advertisement, on the back of your title-page, you say, "The principal arguments of Mr. John Wesley, in his Calm Address to our American Colonies, are taken *verbatim, without acknowledgment, from Dr. Samuel Johnson's pamphlet.*" I answer, they are *not taken verbatim*; for there are, perhaps, above an hundred *verbal* alterations in the arguments taken from Johnson's tract.—However, the arguments, you say, are "taken without acknowledgment." That when they were first taken, they were not acknowledged to be Dr. Johnson's, is true; but it is not true that they were never acknowledged; for in the second edition of the Address, published in London, Mr. Wesley says expressly, "I extracted the chief arguments from that treatise" [Taxation no Tyranny] "and added an application to those whom it most concerns."

Again, "The following extracts," you say, "from a pamphlet, entitled, *Free Thoughts on the present State of public Affairs*, published in 1770, by Mr. John Wesley, may suffice to shew the inconsistency of that gentleman's character. In page 1 of that Treatise, he says, I am no politician; politics lie quite out of my province. And in page 14, I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America: I doubt whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence." To this I answer; when Mr. Wesley said, "I am no politician," he plainly meant, I am not directly and properly one; and when he said, "Politics lie quite out of my province," he meant, they were no immediate part of his province as a divine. Had he meant, that as a divine he had nothing to do, more or less with politics, this would have been totally inconsistent even with the *Free Thoughts on public Affairs* he was at that time writing. And had he meant, "Politics lie so wide of my province," that it does not at all belong to me to speak or write any thing concerning them, he would not only have condemned you, and multitudes of our best divines, but also Christ and his Apostles.

Christ, you know Sir, often reasoned on political subjects, both with his enemies and his friends: you know, he taught the people to render to Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's, and unto God the things which were God's.

The Apostles also (to whose province politics did not IMMEDIATELY belong) often spake and wrote on political subjects. "Let EVERY SOUL, said St. Paul, be subject to the higher powers, for there is NO POWER but of God; the powers that BE are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power, do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister

minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour."

Nor did St. Paul think it enough to be thus far a politician himself, but instructed and commanded Titus to become one also. "Put them in mind (says the great Apostle to this Christian bishop) to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work."

St. Peter also was thus far a politician. "Submit yourselves, said he, to every ordinance of men for the Lord's sake. Whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governors, as unto them who are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King."—In his second epistle likewise he observes, "The Lord knoweth how to reserve the wicked unto the day of judgment to be punished: but CHIEFLY them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government: presumptuous are they, says the Apostle, self-willed, and ARE NOT AFRAID TO SPEAK EVIL OF DIGNITIES." To the same effect is the protest which St. Jude enters against those filthy dreamers who "despise the flesh, AND DESPISE DOMINION, AND SPEAK EVIL OF DIGNITIES."

I have been the more particular in quoting these sacred passages, because, first, they set forth the duty, the indispensable duty, which all owe to kings, and to those in authority under them: and because, secondly, they demonstrate the propriety of Mr. Wesley's conduct, who, though he does

not think it any part of his province to enter minutely into the study of politics, yet thinks it his duty, as a divine, to explain and enforce the importance of obedience to magistrates.

But you ask, "how came Mr. John Wesley, who was then "no politician, to commence one now?" I answer; in the sense that he was no politician then; he remains no politician still: and in the sense that he was a politician when he wrote his Calm Address; he was a politician when he wrote his Free Thoughts on Public Affairs.—You go on: "How comes he now to appear a defender of such measures, as "before he admitted to be indefensible?" Because, since 1770, things in Great Britain and her colonies, wear a quite different aspect; and, because Mr. Wesley since that period, has had many means of farther information, particularly Dr. Johnson's Tract; by which he was convinced of his former mistake.

Again, Mr. Wesley, you say, was "publicly accused of "the grossest inconsistency in publishing Sentiments upon "American Affairs, diametrically opposite to those he had before openly avowed." I answer; Mr. Wesley has of late been publicly accused, by a number of hot-headed Antinomians; of several very unaccountable things, which the public would never have heard of, if he had not differed in religious sentiments from these his meek-hearted antagonists! But no candid man will accuse him of the GROSSEST inconsistency, for altering his sentiments on such a subject, in the space of five years, neither blame him for avowing that alteration. If all among the wisest and best of men, who thus change their sentiments, were to be accused of the grossest inconsistency, how few would escape the accusation!

Again, you accuse him "of the most flagrant want of candour, to say the least, in not telling the world when he first "published his Address, that he was once of a different sentiment, and giving them the reasons of the surprising change." How astonishing is this! Mr. Wesley is publicly accused of the most flagrant want of candour, for not telling the world, when

when he first published his Address, THAT which has no connexion with, or influence on, the matter in hand! Does not every one see, that if he had told the public, "I was once of another mind," this would have had no influence on the argument, either one way or the other?

He is next accused of want of "honesty, in publishing as his own, what he had pilfered from another." To this I answer, First. If he has acted only from a concern for the disorder of his country, and from a desire of contributing a little towards the healing of these disorders, I can see a great deal of HUMANITY, but not the smallest degree of dishonesty in his conduct.

Secondly. Have not you, yourself, Sir, and almost every one who has wrote against the Calm Address, fallen into the very thing you condemn in Mr. Wesley? I have cast my eye over most of the answers published on this occasion; and, if I am not greatly mistaken, most of you have borrowed (I do not say, "pilfered,") one from the other, without telling the public a syllable about it: and yet all this time none of you have done any thing amiss!

Thirdly. The Calm Address, as such, is not Dr. Johnson's, but Mr. Wesley's. It is true, most of its bones (so to speak) were taken from Dr. Johnson's tract. But then these bones were put each into its own place, covered with flesh and skin, and then the whole set in motion by Mr. Wesley. In other words; most of the arguments in this address are borrowed from Dr. Johnson. But, certainly, the introduction is Mr. Wesley's: it was he also who selected the arguments; who disposed them; who abridged them; who altered abundance of their phraseology; and who added to the whole, a large and pointed application to those whom it may concern. On all these accounts, therefore, the Calm Address may with great honesty and propriety be called Mr. Wesley's.

Again, you say, "I have heard it" (your letter) "found fault with as being much too mild, considering the duplicity

“city of the person to whom it was addressed.” I really think, Sir, that considering, first, what you are as related to the state, and, secondly, what as compared to Mr. Wesley, it would have been much more becoming you on this occasion, to have been quiet and to have minded your own business.

And, first, what are you as related to the state? I answer, a dissenter from its establishment—who is not only connived at—but even tolerated! And are you the person who employs his heart, his head, his pen against such a government? Are you, in the same moment that you are sheltered and nourished under its wing, an advocate for those who are tearing out its vitals? who are meditating, and, by all possible means, seeking its destruction? What! cannot an old servant of God, who thinks he lives under the best government in the world, lift up an aged voice or a withered hand in its behalf, but you must take the alarm? but you must kindle into a flame? And is this the return you make for all the tenderness, for all the indulgence, for all the protection, which you and your forefathers have received from the governors of this land?

But, secondly, let us see what you are as compared to Mr. Wesley. And, first, he is an old man, and you are a young one. Secondly, he has had better natural endowments, and better opportunities of improving them. Thirdly, he has laboured in his master's vineyard a thousand times more than you have done. And, fourthly, he has been almost infinitely more useful in his day and generation than you either have been or are likely to be. For you, therefore, to talk of being too mild, considering the duplicity of the person whom you have addressed, how extremely does it become your years, your experience, yea, your whole character!

“He next,” you say, “exhibits to his readers the flowers strewn in my tract, such as Contemptible sophistry! Childish quirks! Pitiful sophisms!” That these flowers are strewn up and down your tract is infallibly certain: the first of which adorns your seventh page, and most of the rest
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the page which follows. "But," you say, "he has very prudently declined referring his readers to the pages these flowers adorn, because they would then instantly see that they are flowers of Mr. Wesley's own cultivation." Flowers of Mr. Wesley's own cultivation! How so? I thought that the arguments you are pleased to call "Contemptible sophistry," &c. were not his own; but "pilfered from another:" that they were "taken verbatim from Dr. Johnson." The case is plainly this; when you would impeach Mr. Wesley's HONESTY, the arguments are not his own, but Dr. Johnson's; hence he is "convicted of the most palpable forgery" in offering them to the world. But when you would expose his incapacity, the arguments are no longer Dr. Johnson's: no; then they are "flowers of his own cultivation," and are presented to him as his UNDOUBTED RIGHT. Nor is this all; for such is your dexterity, that you can not only transfer these arguments from Dr. Johnson to Mr. Wesley, and then from Mr. Wesley to Dr. Johnson again; but, when occasion requires, you can so alter their very nature as to change them from "Arguments" into "Childish quirks," and from "Childish quirks," into "Arguments" again!

Farther, "Mr. Wesley," you say, "is surely the last man in the world that should find fault with mere assertions, because he has all his life-time made use of them instead of arguments." Whoever has looked into Mr. Wesley's Appeals, his answers to Dr. Middleton, Dr. Taylor, &c. his Predestination calmly considered, and fifty other pieces, must know that this is a palpable untruth.

"As to the florid quotations," you say, "I certainly might have saved myself the trouble of telling the readers they were quotations. Mr. Wesley has a shorter way: Like him, I might have made them my own words, and kept my own counsel; and who knows but they might have passed undetected." I answer: if, when you have borrowed sentiments, phrases, and even arguments from others, you have always told that they were borrowed, and also from whom, it is well: but suppose you have not, where

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is the harm? In the case now under consideration, there is none done to Dr. Johnson. A gentlewoman who is intimate with the Doctor told me, that she asked him what he thought of Mr. Wesley's Address? who answered, that he much approved of it; or words to that effect. And as to the public, Mr. Wesley has done them a singular favour, in letting them have the substance of an eighteen-penny book, of such intrinsic value, with additions and improvements, and all at the price of two-pence.

Again, "to be sure," you say, "if Mr. Wesley had recommended Johnson's book, which had imparted such light to him, or candidly informed his readers, upon his first publishing his Address, that it was chiefly extracted from Johnson's Treatise, this would not have answered the end of imparting light to others." I answer: matter of fact shews that it would not have done so well. Dr. Johnson's book had been often recommended before Mr. Wesley saw it; yet it had not the run, no not the hundredth part of it, that the *Calm Address* had, in the short space of a few weeks.

You go on. "The facts relative to Mr. Wesley himself, I had long been possessed of; and should not have wrote at all, as I verily believe, had it not been to expose the shameful versatility and disingenuity of this artful man, and to prevent, as far as I could, the spread of that mischief, his performance might otherwise be productive of." The facts relative to Mr. Wesley himself—Pray, what facts do you mean? If you intend those which relate to Dr. Johnson's Tract and Mr. Wesley's Address, you could not long be possessed of these, unless you possessed them before they existed. For the Address was not thought on, much less was it wrote or published, till a few weeks before your letter appeared; but if you intend any other facts, they are nothing to the purpose. But you say, you should not have wrote, "Had it not been to expose the shameful versatility and disingenuity, of this artful man." And do you call it shameful versatility and disingenuity to have read a tract, which opposed the principles he then believed? and to be so open to conviction as thereby to be convinced of his mistake? and then, without delay, to let the world know his sentiments were changed.

changed. Candid reader, is not this a wonderful proof of “the shameful versatility and disingenuity of this artful “man”?” But whose language is this? It can hardly be Mr. Evans’s! He cannot be so insolent! I see a greater man behind the curtain. Come out then and shew yourself if you dare.

But, to return. The true reason of your writing this letter comes out at last. You say, it was “to prevent the mischief “his performance might otherwise be productive of.” To prevent the mischief — What mischief do you mean? Why, the mischief of being subject to principalities and powers. — The plain case is this: the Americans, who at the beginning of their colonization consisted of a very small handful of people; Great Britain, in a short space of time, raised up to a mighty empire. — This she did at a very large expence both of blood and of money. — By this means she vastly increased her load of public-debt. — At last she required the Colonies to bear a very small part of the enormous burden. — This demand she did not make till they had acquired such power and riches, that they thought themselves able to withstand all the power of the parent state. — Notwithstanding this, when the Mother Country made that reasonable, that equitable, that easy demand, they broke out, first, into tumults, and then into open rebellion. — As it was not consistent with the dignity of a nation, which had so often chastised the greatest powers of Europe, to be bullied by her own children out of so just a requisition, she grew firm in her determinations, and prepared a small force to over-awe, and, if necessary, to chastise their ingratitude. On the information of this; large armies of rebels took the field — and this occasioned the Mother Country to prepare a larger force to withstand them; of consequence, nothing was now expected, but that, in a short time, there would be a most dreadful effusion of kindred blood.

Now this was the situation of affairs between Great Britain and her colonies, when Mr. Wesley wrote his Calm Address; the design of which evidently was, to convince the Americans of the great impropriety of their present conduct; to call them back from an unnatural rebellion, to the duties of

of good subjects ; and, by these means, to prevent the effusion of blood, and the calamities of a civil war.—When this, reasonable, this calm, this humane Address made its appearance, it was read and approved of by thousands and myriads ; and so great was the demand for it, that I believe the like has not been known in England, at least for these hundred years.

But in a short time, the Reverend Mr. Evans wrote against it. And what was his design in this ? He tells us in plain terms : “ to prevent, as far as I could, the spread of that mischief his performance might otherwise produce.” It is then evident, the mischief this gentleman would prevent, is, the mischief of silencing the voice of tumult ! the mischief of weakening the hands of riot ! the mischief of quelling the spirit of faction ! the mischief of preventing all the horrors of a civil war : that is, the mischief of preventing towns and cities from being turned into heaps of ashes ! fruitful fields from becoming barren deserts and fields of blood ! the mischief of preventing the joyful wife from becoming an inconsolable widow, and the hopeful son from becoming an helpless orphan ! above all, the mischief of preventing myriads of immortal spirits from launching, unprepared, into an awful Eternity ! These, good Sir, these are a few of the mischiefs which you, through the tenderness of your compassion, have laboured to prevent !

In the next place, you say ; “ He pretends to give a specimen of my arguments : with what fairness and integrity he does it, I appeal to the public at whose tribunal I stand. This writer (Americanus) asserts, says, Mr. Wesley, twenty times over, he that is taxed without his own consent, that is, without being represented, is a slave. Mr. Wesley answers, no, I have no representative in parliament, but I am taxed ; yet I am no slave. Yea, nine in ten through the kingdom of England, &c.” I answer, when you say, “ He pretends to give a specimen of my arguments,” you mean, your reasonings or arguments, properly so called. Therefore you say in the next sentence, “ Such, candid reader, is the specimen Mr. Wesley exhibits of my ARGUMENTS, and of his own decisive answer to them.” And on supposition that they are your arguments which he has misrepresented

ed your appeal to the public against his unfairness and want of integrity. Yet, (who would believe it!) there is not a word in the place you have quoted concerning your arguments. What is said, is concerning your ASSERTIONS, not your arguments, good or bad. Mr. Wesley's words are, "This writer ASSERTS, &c." Is this, Sir, giving a specimen of your your arguments? And yet you can very gravely exclaim against unfairness and want of integrity!

But though you thus misrepresent Mr. Wesley, he speaks with truth and accuracy, in calling your words mere assertions. For you say, "If you are taxed without your own consent, you are slaves:" and all that you have to support that assertion with, is, "If every man that is taxed without his own consent, is not a slave, wherein is the difference betwixt slavery and liberty?" You therefore are certainly right, that "according to" *this* (not "*his* specimen of "them" [the arguments] "they subsist only in *vacuo*."

"My florid quotations," you say, "are treated just as cavalierly as my own nutshell arguments." "The celebrated Montesquieu, is the fanciful Montesquieu, Mr. Wesley tells us; and because he asserts that all the inhabitants of England have a right of voting at the election of a representative, except such as are so mean as to be deemed *to have no will of their own*, he very cunningly infers, that certainly this right belongs then to every man, woman, and child in England! This, doubtless is to prove how scandalous it is to charge Mr. Wesley with making use of childish quirks." Pray, Sir, in what part of this reasoning lies the childish quirk? Montesquieu says, "Every one who has a will of his own, has a right to vote for a member of parliament." Mr. Wesley answers, but every man, woman and child, has a will of his own. Therefore, according to Montesquieu, every man, woman and child in England has a right of voting. Now, as here is a regular argument, consisting of major, minor and conclusion, let us see, if there be any childish quirk, in which of them it lies. You will not say, it is in the first proposition; for that is Montesquieu's and your own. The second, that every
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man, woman, and child in England has a will of his own, is Mr. Wesley's; and, perhaps, for this very reason, the childish quirk lies here! But does it indeed? Is it not true, that every man, woman and child has a will of his own? You intimate, with a sneer, that married ladies have not. But I ask, have not thousands of married ladies a PROPERTY of their own? And what reason is there why they must not have a will (even a civil, a legal will) of their own, to dispose of it? Does not the constitution of England allow them this privilege? and if it does, can it suppose them to have no will to do it? And what is said of married ladies, will equally hold good in the case of "old maids" and others. Therefore, here is no childish quirk; but a solid truth, built on undeniable matter of fact. If then there is any childish quirk, it must be in the conclusion. But this cannot be, seeing it naturally and regularly flows out of the premises. I am therefore inclined to believe, that the true reason why you called this a childish quirk is, because it was easier to call names, than to answer the argument.

"The answer to judge Blackstone," you say, "is of the same complexion with that to the fanciful Montesquieu." You mean, to be sure, it is an other childish quirk. But let us see it with our own eyes. "Judge Blackstone," says, in the quotation I have made from that great man, in a free state, every man who is supposed to be a free agent, ought to be, in some measure his own governor. But says Mr. Wesley, this argument proves too much. For are not women free agents: yea, and poor as well as rich men? According to "this argument there is no free state under the sun." Now to discover the childishness of this quirk, let the reader take notice, first, of Mr. Wesley's proposition, "This argument proves too much." Next take notice of the argument which supports it. "For are not women free agents? Yea, and poor as well as rich men?" Now, as to the matter of this argument, it consists of undeniable matter of fact. And as to the manner of it, though it be expressed by way of interrogative, every one knows that this is equivalent to a positive affirmation. So far then there is no childish quirk.

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If then there is any, it must be in the consequence. Well, let us see it. "According to this argument there is no free state under the sun." And is not this true? and does not this truth naturally follow? For is there a state under the sun wherein every man and woman, the poor as well as the rich, is his own political governor? If there is, point it out, or you cannot shew that this is a childish quirk.

But be it a childish-quirk or a good argument, let us see how you answer it. You had said, "In a free state every man who is supposed to be a free agent ought to be in some measure his own governor." Mr. Wesley, answered, that "this proves to much. For are not women free agents? Yea, and poor as well as rich men? According to this argument there is no free state under the sun." To this you reply, "Well argued, indeed! The sisters of all this gentleman's societies," (and why not the sisters of Mr. Evans' society?) "will, it is hoped, wait upon him in a body, with Mrs. Wesley at their head, to thank him for thus ably supporting the just rights and franchises of female nature!" Now, reader, judge who has most reason to complain of childish quirks, &c. Mr. Wesley, who answers closely and logically? or Mr. Evans, who replies with an impertinent sneer?

But now comes the great evil of all. "The following paragraph," you say, "is the only remaining one that deserves an answer, and it shall have an effectual and serious one. The book, says, Mr. Wesley, which this writer (Americanus) says, I strongly recommended I never yet saw with my eyes. I reply, the book referred to (see page 22, of my letter to Mr. Wesley) is intitled, An Argument in defence of the exclusive right claimed by the Colonics to tax themselves. Now I solemnly declare that this very book was put into my hands by a particular friend of mine, as a book Mr. J. Wesley had strongly recommended to Mr. Pine, one of his own people, upon the subject of American taxation. Mr. Pine, (printer in Wine-street, Bristol) declares, and will make oath if required, that the Rev. John Wesley, with his own hands put this

“ book into his (Mr. Pine’s) hands, accompanying it with
 “ the strongest recommendations, and requesting him to pub-
 “ lish extracts from it in his Gazette,”—“ that in conse-
 “ quence hereof, he”—“ read this book himself, recom-
 “ mended it”—“ to many of his friends, and published ex-
 “ tracts from it, as desired by Mr. Wesley,”—“ and the
 “ identical book which he received from Mr. John Wesley’s
 “ own hands, Mr. Pine has now in his possession.”—“ The
 “ Rev. Mr. Rouquet,”—“ declares, and will make oath
 “ if required, that the Rev. John Wesley recommended the
 “ aforesaid book to him, in consequence of which he pur-
 “ chased and read it, &c.” The substance of this whole
 paragraph is, Though Mr. Wesley has declared that he
 never saw the book in question, yet it appears from the testi-
 monics of Mr. Rouquet and Mr. Pine, that he had both
 seen and recommended it; and, of consequence he must be
 a notorious liar.

That Mr. Wesley has asserted he never saw this book, is
 granted. It is also granted, that he had both seen and recom-
 mended it. But does it hence follow, that he is a liar? It
 does not. To make this fully appear, let it be observed, that
 a lie is a declaration of any thing to be true or false, which
 he who declares it knows, AT THE TIME OF DECLARING IT,
 to be otherwise. If the thing asserted, be false in itself, if
 the asserter believes, AT THE SAME TIME HE ASSERTS IT,
 that it is true, this is not a lie, but a mistake.—Now, ac-
 cording to this account, if you would prove Mr. Wesley to
 be a liar, you must not only prove that he saw the book which
 he declares he never saw; but, also, that he knew, AT THE
 TIME HE DECLARED THIS, that he had seen it. But this
 you cannot do: of consequence you cannot prove that he is a
 liar.

That he is not, I prove from the absolute improbability and
 absurdity of the supposition, that a person of Mr. Wesley’s
 CHARACTER should, on SUCH AN OCCASION, be guilty of
 SUCH A LIE!

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And, first, a person of Mr. Wesley's CHARACTER, &c. where is the man who has given greater, if so great proof, that he is a teacher come from God? Where is the man who makes more full, if as full proof of his ministry? What he has done for God, and what God has done by him, constrains us to view his character in a very exalted light. And, first, what he has done for God; both late and early, by night and by day; and that not only by fits and starts, but uniformly, for fifty years together, exceeds all that has been done by any five or ten men living, which we have any account of.

Add to this, secondly, what God has done by him. How many thousands has he been instrumental in turning from the evil of their way? If you would see them, go to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south: go to almost every city, town and village, to almost every mountain, valley and common in the three kingdoms. Now, that such a distinguished servant of God, between seventy and eighty years of age, should, after such a series of labours and successes, turn prevaricator and liar, requires an uncommon degree of uncharitableness to believe.

But this will appear yet more unlikely, when we consider, secondly, ON WHAT OCCASION he is supposed to lie. Had he been threatened with the rack, the gibbet, or the flames, this might have been some temptation. Or had he been in danger of imprisonment, banishment, or the loss of all his substance, this might have been some temptation to him. But when we observe, that this was not the case; and that the only difficulty he lay under was, that a young man, of no note, in a poor two-penny pamphlet, about politics, had told him, that he formerly recommended a tract, which contradicts his present sentiments on that subject, how astonishingly absurd is it to suppose, that SUCH A CHARGE should turn SUCH A MAN into a wilful liar!—And this absurdity will appear still greater, when we observe, that he might have extricated himself out of this insignificant difficulty, only by saying, I once thought the Americans were right; but I am now of another mind! Add thirdly, to all that has been

said, the folly of telling **SUCH A LIE**. If a person, but of an ordinary capacity, takes it into his head to turn liar, or prevaricator, he takes care so to contrive matters, that he may not easily be detected. But Mr. Wesley is supposed to lie so unguardedly and foolishly, as if he did it only for the sake of being detected and exposed: that is, he is supposed to recommend a book to Mr. Rouquet and Mr. Pine, and also in public company, and then, while he remembered all this, to declare that he never saw it!

In like manner, he is supposed to utter certain words in various companies, and, in particular, when addressing the members of his society, consisting of many hundred persons; and then, while he remembered this, to deny, in the most public manner, that such words ever came out of his mouth. Could I believe this of Mr. Wesley, I would say, not only that he is the most **WICKED**, but also, the most **FOOLISH** liar that ever lied. For did he not know, that a falsehood told in such a manner, could not fail of being detected and exposed in a few days? To suppose, therefore, that such a person, on such an occasion, would publish such a wilful falsehood, while such consequences stared him in the face, is a most absurd and ridiculous supposition,

But if Mr. Wesley saw this book, and yet declared that he did not see it, how is this to be accounted for, so as to exculpate him from the charge of lying? I answer, by supposing that his memory failed. And this supposition is supported by the greatest degree of probability. Mr. Wesley is now an old man, between seventy and eighty years of age. Add to this, that at this very time he has such a variety and multiplicity of business, as few men could manage, even in the prime of life. For instance, there are few weeks in which he does not travel two or three hundred miles; preach and exhort in public between twenty and thirty times, and often more; answer thirty or forty letters; speak with as many persons in private, concerning things of deep importance; prepare, either in whole or in part something for the press. Add to all this, that often in that short space of time, a variety of tracts on different subjects, pass through his hands, particularly as he travels: and

and that if any tract does not immediately relate to his office as a divine, though he may give it a cursory reading, yet he does not think it necessary to charge his memory with its contents; I say, when all these things are considered, no one will think it strange that his memory should often fail.

And that this is true in fact, is well known to those who are about Mr. Wesley. Many instances of this could easily be produced; but let a single one suffice. Mr. J. B. who travels with Mr. Wesley, told me a few days ago, that Mr. Wesley lately supped in company with a dissenting minister: that this gentleman asked Mr. Wesley, if he had not spoke such words to another dissenting minister, when he dined, some time before in company with him? Mr. Wesley answered, that, to the best of his knowledge, he had never dined with or seen that minister. Yet the next morning, when the former gentleman returned, Mr. Wesley said, "I am glad you are come; for I have recollected that I did dine with Mr. E. and very probably the words you mentioned did pass between us."

I therefore conclude, from all that has been said, that when Mr. Wesley said in his Calm Address, "he never saw the book," it was not owing to any want of varacity; but merely through the defect of his memory.—And this is the account of the matter which Mr. Wesley himself gave, November 12, in a letter to the Rev. James Rouquet. "Dear James," says, Mr. Wesley, "I will now simply tell you the thing as it is. As I was returning from the Leeds Conference, one gave me the tract, which you refer to, part of which I read on my journey. The spirit of it I observed to be admirably good: and I *then* thought the arguments conclusive. In consequence of which, I suppose (though I do not remember it) I recommended it both to you and others: but I had so entirely forgotten it, that even when it was brought to me the other day, I could not recollect, that I had seen it."—You see, Sir, how this account agrees with that which I have given: not, indeed, from any thing I knew of what Mr. Wesley would say for himself, (for he was out of town when most of this letter

letter was drawn up) but from the nature and probability of the thing.

I have only one circumstance more to take notice of. You say in the conclusion of your Observations, "How far these things may serve to give Mr. Wesley more light, I cannot say: but if they do not give the public more light into his real character, I can only say, *Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur*. If the people will be deceived, let them be deceived." So the public, I find, are to look upon Mr. Wesley as a wilful liar, and abominable deceiver, because through forgetfulness he said, he never saw a pamphlet which he had seen! And is it possible, Sir, that you who have been so long almost his next-door neighbour, can find nothing in his whole conduct so characteristic of him as these paultry circumstances? You certainly are no stranger to what he has been doing and suffering on account of religion these last fifty years. You have been an eye or an ear-witness of what he has done and suffered in Bristol, Kingswood, Coleford, Wednesbury, Cornwall, Newcastle, Yorkshire, London, and almost every other part of the kingdom. You have been an eye or an ear-witness of the many thousands whom he has been instrumental in turning from Satan to God. And is all this to be looked upon as no proof of his being a good man? While the trifles you have mentioned are to pass for demonstrations that he is a mere knave? O, Sir, if the candid public will not look upon this as an evidence of something materially wrong in you, I am sadly out in my prognostics.

It is true, in your letter to Mr. Wesley, you say, "I love and honour *all good men*, all men of real principle and INTEGRITY, however they may differ from me in political or religious sentiments." But, I am sadly mistaken if this very declaration does not demonstrate the contrary: suppose by love you mean what St. Paul does in the thirteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians. His account is, that *asann*, love or charity, *thinketh no evil*; but *believeth all things, and hopeth all things*. It thinketh no evil

evil of any one without the most absolute necessity, nor even then without the clearest proof. But you, Sir, without either of these, think evil, extremely evil of Mr. Wesley. For in your profession of love before-mentioned, you mark these words, "*good men*," in Italics, and the word, "INTEGRITY," in capitals; plainly intimating, that you do not think Mr. Wesley is a *good man*, or a man of principle and INTEGRITY.—Again; it believeth and hopeth all things, that are good of every one; and that not only if there be but the smallest degree of evidence in the person's favour, but if there is not the fullest evidence to the contrary. And where it is forced to believe there is a fault, it readily believes any circumstance which has any tendency to extenuate it. It also hopeth all things. Where it is constrained to believe there is an evil, it hopes it was the first, and will be the last; that there was some remarkable temptation to it, or that it has been deeply repented of: and thus a loving heart thinketh, believes, and hopes the best of every one.

If you would see this charity exemplified in a living character, see it in the behaviour of Mr. Wesley towards yourself. When he (through mistake) thought you had asserted what was not true, he drew a veil of true, unaffected charity, over it; saying, "I REALLY BELIEVE he was told so."—Now this charity, as stated by the Apostle, and as exemplified in the Christian behaviour of Mr. Wesley, I am confident you do not possess. For had this been the case, you would not have THOUGHT, you would not have BELIEVED, much less would you have publicly SAID, that Mr. Wesley was an artful, designing, dishonest man: you would not have strained an inconsiderable circumstance or two, to make the world believe, that with silver locks about his ears, and with one foot in the grave, he is commenced a wilful liar: you would not have PRODUCED the declarations, and OFFERED the depositions of several witnesses to drive your improbable and ridiculous charge into the very heart of his reputation: you would not have given him your *decent* advice to become an honest man before he drops into the grave! In short, had you really possessed the charity you
make

make such pompous professions of, instead of teaching you to brand Mr. Wesley with the mark of public infamy, it would have taught you to excuse a mistake, to extenuate a fault, yea, to cover a multitude of them: it would have taught you to say, Though Mr. Wesley declares he never saw the book, which it is certain he has seen, I do not on that account impeach his veracity or doubt the goodness of his heart. But I verily believe, that partly through the hurry of business, and partly through the infirmities of age, his memory has failed.

This, most certainly, is the spirit and language of true, divine, gospel charity. And therefore I leave it to the world to judge, whether the charity which you have displayed on this occasion is any other than that of a censorious bigot, or a furious patriot.

P O S T C R I P T.

I have just seen, in the Gazetteer, your last letter to Mr. Wesley, and have stopped the press while I make a few observations on it.

You say, "As you have at length favoured me with your *public acknowledgment*, our controversy is at an end." I answer: the controversy between Mr. Wesley and you was concerning the right of parliament to tax the Colonies; and the acknowledgment Mr. Wesley made was, that he was mistaken in saying he never saw the book you mentioned. Now, Sir, how does *this acknowledgment* put an end to *this controversy*? Why, truly, just as an American, by shooting a hole through the skirt of an English Corporal, would end the controversy between England and America. But, good Sir, have you not here intended an imposition on your readers, by making them believe that Mr. Wesley has made more acknowledgment than he really has?—You add, "To triumph over the vanquished would be ungenerous." Pray, in what respect have you vanquished Mr. Wesley? Why, in this; in a controversy between you concerning the power of Great Britain

to tax the Colonies; Mr. Wesley, through mistake, denied having seen a certain tract; but on recollecting that he had seen it, acknowledged his mistake. Now this acknowledgment, which has nothing to do with the merits of the cause, vanquishes Mr. Wesley, ends the controversy, and would leave you triumphant, only you are too generous to triumph!

“It is, however, necessary,” you say, “for me to ob-
 “serve, that your insinuating, that I have taken as much
 “from Mr. P.”—“as you have from Dr. Johnson.”—“is
 “not *fact*; and if it were, IT IS NOTHING TO THE
 PURPOSE.” This, Sir, is certainly true. If *your* Argu-
 ments prove the points they are brought to prove, it can be
 nothing to the purpose from whence they are taken. And
 does it not follow, by parity of reason, that if Mr. Wesley’s
 arguments prove the points *they* are brought to prove, it is
 nothing to the purpose from whence *they* are taken? If you
 allow this, see the impropriety of your clamour about “pil-
 “fering” arguments from others: if you do not allow it,
 see your want of *candour* and *impartiality*, in refusing to ano-
 ther such liberty as you take yourself.

“But you intimate,” you say, “my personal charges
 “against you are foreign. I am of a different opinion.”
 Are you so? then certainly your opinion is wrong: for what
 connexion is there between Mr. Wesley’s personal character,
 and the dispute subsisting between Great Britain and America?
 Could you prove Mr. Wesley to be a fool and a knave, would
 it thence follow that the Colonists are wise and virtuous in op-
 posing government? Or could it be proved that you are gen-
 tle towards all *men*, would it follow that our governors are
 mere tyrants in taxing the Colonies?

But you add, “In all logical treatises there is a topic of ar-
 “gument called *AUTHORITY*. Your authority, Sir, with
 “multitudes of your followers”—“is great. My represen-
 “tation to the public, of your amazing political versatility,”
 (versatility! I am told that this is a favourite term of Dr.
 Priestley: surely, Sir, you have not been ploughing with his
 heifer!) “was calculated to weaken that authority.” So,
 Sir, the truth comes out at last.—The case is this: at the
 beginning

beginning of the controversy between England and America, Mr. Wesley thought the Americans were in the right; but having read Dr. Johnson's tract, he was convinced of his mistake, and without delay acknowledged it. This Mr. Evans calls, AMAZING VERSATILITY! as if the like (which is happening every day) had never happened before! And this AMAZING VERSATILITY he dresses up into a scarecrow; that by AMAZING the public, he may weaken Mr. Wesley's authority. In other words, Mr. Evans labours and sweats hard, in straining and torturing an AMAZING circumstance, which, by the bye, has no connexion with the cause in hand, that he may divert the readers from Mr. Wesley's arguments, which do relate to it, by prejudicing them against his person. And so AMAZING is Mr. Evans's modesty, that he tells the public this was his design!

In answer to Mr. Wesley's declaration, that he had totally forgot he ever saw the tract you mentioned, you say, "It is not only possible, but probable, that in a few months you may totally forget that you ever read a tract, intitled, 'Taxation no Tyranny.'" You certainly mean, Mr. Wesley: and not forgot that he saw the tract in question; and that, therefore, he is a WICKED LIAR, let him say what he will to the contrary. Now, reader, is this the *spirit* of MODE-
 RATION, or of BIGOTRY? Is this the *voice* of CANDOUR or of INSULT? Is this the *behaviour* of a GENTLEMAN or of a ———? Oh! Mr. Evans! how soon have you forgot your own maxim, that, "To triumph over the vanquished is ungenerous!"

Once more! "If you perfectly knew, I was the author of Americanus," you say, "where was your candour and integrity, in making the public believe Americanus's letter was wrote by two Anabaptist Ministers, assisted by a gentleman and a tradesman of the Church of England?" I answer: Mr. Wesley knew that you was the person who called himself Americanus; that you was the principal person employed in this affair, and (if his informers did not deceive him) that the other three were your auxiliaries. Here then is no breach either of *candour* or *integrity*.

F I N I S.