

A LETTER

TO

THE REVEREND MR. BAILY, OF CORK.

IN ANSWER TO

A LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

LIMERICK, *June 8, 1750.*

REVEREND SIR,

1. Why do you not subscribe your name to a performance so perfectly agreeing, both as to the matter and form, with the sermons you have been occasionally preaching for more than a year last past? As to your seeming to disclaim it by saying once and again, "I am but a plain, simple man;" and, "The doctrine you teach is only a revival of the old Antinomian heresy, I think they call it;" I presume it is only a pious fraud. But how came so plain and simple a man to know the meaning of the Greek word *Philalethes*? Sir, this is not of a piece. If you did not care to own your child, had not you better have subscribed the Second (as well as the First) Letter, *George Fisher*?*

2. I confess you have timed your performance well. When the other pointless thing was published, I came unluckily to Cork on the self-same day. But you might now suppose I was at a convenient distance. However, I will not plead this as an excuse for taking no notice of your last favour; although, to say the truth, I scarce know how to answer it, as you write in a language I am not accustomed to. Both Dr. Tucker, Dr. Church, and all the other gentlemen who have wrote to me in public for some years, have wrote as gentlemen, having some regard to their own, whatever my character was. But as you fight in the dark, you regard not what weapons you

* The Letter thus subscribed was published at Cork, on May 30th last.

use. We are not, therefore, on even terms; I cannot answer you in kind; I am constrained to leave this to your good allies of Blackpool and Fair-Lane.*

I shall first state the facts on which the present controversy turns; and then consider the most material parts of your performance.

First. I am to state the facts. But here I am under a great disadvantage, having few of my papers by me. Excuse me therefore if I do not give so full an account now, as I may possibly do hereafter; if I only give you for the present the extracts of some papers which were lately put into my hands.

1. "THOMAS JONES, of Cork, merchant, deposes,

"That on May 3, 1749, Nicholas Butler, ballad-singer, came before the house of this deponent, and assembled a large mob: That this deponent went to Daniel Crone, Esq., then Mayor of Cork, and desired that he would put a stop to those riots; asking, at the same time, whether he gave the said Butler leave to go about in this manner: That Mr. Mayor said, he neither gave him leave, neither did he hinder him: That in the evening Butler gathered a larger mob than before, and went to the house where the people called Methodists were assembled to hear the word of God, and, as they came out, threw dirt and hurt several of them.

"That on May 4, this deponent, with some others, went to the Mayor and told what had been done, adding, 'If your Worship pleases only to speak three words to Butler, it will all be over:' That the Mayor gave his word and honour there should be no more of it, he would put an entire stop to it: That, notwithstanding, a larger mob than ever came to the house the same evening: That they threw much dirt and many stones at the people, both while they were in the house, and when they came out: That the mob then fell upon them, both on men and women, with clubs, hangers, and swords; so that many of them were much wounded, and lost a considerable quantity of blood.

"That on May 5, this deponent informed the Mayor of all, and also that Butler had openly declared there should be a greater mob than ever there was that night: That the Mayor promised he would prevent it: That in the evening Butler did bring a greater mob than ever: That this deponent, hearing the

* Celebrated parts of Cork.

Mayor designed to go out of the way, set two men to watch him, and, when the riot was begun, went to the ale-house, and inquired for him : That the woman of the house denying he was there, this deponent insisted he was, declared he would not go till he had seen him, and began searching the house : That Mr. Mayor then appearing, he demanded his assistance to suppress a riotous mob : That when the Mayor came in sight of them, he beckoned to Butler, who immediately came down from the place where he stood : That the Mayor then went with this deponent, and looked on many of the people covered with dirt and blood : That some of them still remained in the house, fearing their lives, till James Chatterton and John Reilly, Esqrs., Sheriffs of Cork, and Hugh Millard, junior, Esq., Alderman, turned them out to the mob, and nailed up the doors.

2. "ELIZABETH HOLLERAN, of Cork, deposes,

"That on May 3, as she was going down to Castle-Street, she saw Nicholas Butler on a table, with ballads in one hand, and a Bible in the other : That she expressed some concern thereat ; on which Sheriff Reilly ordered his bailiff to carry her to Bridewell : That afterward the bailiff came and said, his master ordered she should be carried to gaol : And that she continued in gaol from May 3, about eight in the evening, till between ten and twelve on May 5.

3. "JOHN STOCKDALE, of Cork, tallow-chandler, deposes,

"That on May 5, while he and others were assembled to hear the word of God, Nicholas Butler came down to the house where they were, with a very numerous mob : That when this deponent came out, they threw all manner of dirt and abundance of stones at him : That they then beat, bruised, and cut him in several places : That seeing his wife on the ground, and the mob abusing her still, he called out and besought them not to kill his wife : That on this one of them struck him with a large stick, as did also many others, so that he was hurt in several parts, and his face in a gore of blood.

4. "DANIEL SULLIVAN, of Cork, baker, deposes,

"That every day but one from the sixth to the sixteenth of May, Nicholas Butler assembled a riotous mob before this deponent's house : That they abused all who came into the shop, to the great damage of this deponent's business : That, on or about the fifteenth, Butler swore he would bring a mob the next day, and pull down his house : That, accordingly, on

the sixteenth he did bring a large mob, and beat or abused all that came to the house: That the Mayor walked by while the mob was so employed, but did not hinder them: That afterwards they broke his windows, threw dirt and stones into his shop, and spoiled a great quantity of his goods.

“DANIEL SULLIVAN is ready to depose farther,

“That, from the sixteenth of May to the twenty-eighth, the mob gathered every day before his house: That on Sunday, 28, Butler swore they would come the next day, and pull down the house of that heretic dog; and called aloud to the mob, ‘Let the heretic dogs indict you: I will bring you all off without a farthing cost.’

“That, accordingly, on May 29, Butler came with a greater mob than before: That he went to the Mayor and begged him to come, which he for some time refused to do; but after much importunity, rose up, and walked with him down the street: That when they were in the midst of the mob, the Mayor said aloud, ‘It is your own fault for entertaining these Preachers: If you will turn them out of your house, I will engage there shall be no more harm done; but if you will not turn them out, you must take what you will get:’ That upon this the mob set up an huzza, and threw stones faster than before; that he said, ‘This is fine usage under a Protestant Government! If I had a Priest saying mass in every room of it, my house would not be touched:’ That the Mayor replied, ‘The Priests are tolerated, but you are not; you talk too much: Go in, and shut up your doors!’ That, seeing no remedy, he did so; and the mob continued breaking the windows and throwing stones in till near twelve at night.

“That on May 31, the said Sullivan and two more went and informed the Mayor of what the mob was then doing: That it was not without great importunity they brought him as far as the Exchange: That he would go no farther, nor send any help, though some that were much bruised and wounded came by: That some hours after, when the mob had finished their work, he sent a party of soldiers to guard the walls.

5. “JOHN STOCKDALE deposes farther,

“That on May 31, he with others was quietly hearing the word of God, when Butler and his mob came down to the house: That as they came out, the mob threw showers of dirt and stones: That many were hurt, many beat, bruised, and cut: among whom was

this deponent, who was so bruised and cut, that the effusion of blood from his head could not be stopped for a considerable time.

6. "JOHN M'NERNY, of Cork, deposes,

"That on the 31st of May last, as this deponent with others was hearing a sermon, Butler came down with a large mob: That the stones and dirt coming in fast, obliged the congregation to shut the doors, and lock themselves in: That the mob broke open the door; on which this deponent endeavoured to escape through a window: That not being able to do it, he returned into the house, where he saw the mob tear up the pews, benches, and floor; part of which they afterwards burned in the open street, and carried away part for their own use.

7. "DANIEL SULLIVAN is ready to depose farther,

"That Butler, with a large mob, went about from street to street, and from house to house, abusing, threatening, and beating whomsoever he pleased, from June 1st to the 16th, when they assaulted, bruised, and cut Ann Jenkins; and from the 16th to the 30th, when a woman whom they had beaten, miscarried, and narrowly escaped with life."

Some of the particulars were as follows:—

"THOMAS BURNER, of Cork, nailer, deposes,

"That on or about the 12th of June, as this deponent was at work in his master's shop, Nicholas Butler came with a great mob to the door, and seeing this deponent, told him he was an heretic dog, and his soul was burning in hell: That this deponent asking, 'Why do you use me thus?' Butler took up a stone, and struck him so violently on the side, that he was thereby rendered incapable of working for upwards of a week: That he hit this deponent's wife with another stone, without any kind of provocation; which so hurt her, that she was obliged to take to her bed, and has not been right well since.

"ANN COOSHEA, of Cork, deposes,

"That on or about the 12th of June, as she was standing at her father's door, Nicholas Butler, with a riotous mob, began to abuse this deponent and her family, calling them heretic bitches, saying they were damned and all their souls were in hell: That then, without any provocation, he took up a great stone, and threw it at this deponent, which struck her on the head with such force that it deprived her of her senses for some time.

"ANN WRIGHT, of Cork, deposes,

"That on or about the 12th of June, as this deponent was

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in her own house, Butler and his mob came before her door, calling her and her family heretic bitches, and swearing he would make her house hotter than hell-fire: That he threw dirt and stones at them, hit her in the face, dashed all the goods about which she had in her window, and, she really believes, would have dashed out her brains, had she not quitted her shop, and fled for her life.

“ MARGARET GRIFFIN, of Cork, deposes,

“ That on the 24th of June, as this deponent was about her business, Butler and his mob came up, took hold on her, tore her clothes, struck her several times, and cut her mouth; that after she broke from him, he and his mob pursued her to her house, and would have broken in, had not some neighbours interposed: That he had beat and abused her several times before, and one of those times to such a degree, that she was all in a gore of blood, and continued spitting blood for several days after.

“ JACOB CONNER, clothier, of Cork, deposes,

“ That on the 24th of June, as he was employed in his lawful business, Butler and his mob came up, and, without any manner of provocation, fell upon him: That they beat him till they caused such an effusion of blood as could not be stopped for a considerable time: And that he verily believes, had not a gentleman interposed, they would have killed him on the spot.

9. “ ANN HUGHES, of Cork, deposes,

“ That on the 29th of June, she asked Nicholas Butler, why he broke open her house on the 21st: That hereon he called her many abusive names, (being attended with his usual mob,) dragged her up and down, tore her clothes in pieces, and with his sword stabbed and cut her in both her arms.

“ DANIEL FILTS, blacksmith, of Cork, deposes,

“ That on the 29th of June, Butler and a riotous mob came before his door, called him many abusive names, drew his hanger, and threatened to stab him: That he and his mob the next day assaulted the house of this deponent with drawn swords: And that he is persuaded, had not one who came by prevented, they would have taken away his life.

10. “ MARY FULLER, of Cork, deposes,

“ That on the 30th of June, Butler, at the head of his mob, came between nine and ten at night to the deponent's shop, with a naked sword in his hand; that he swore he would cleave

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the deponent's skull, and immediately made a full stroke at her head; whereupon she was obliged to fly for her life, leaving her shop and goods to the mob, many of which they hacked and hewed with their swords, to her no small loss and damage.

“HENRY DUNKLE, joiner, of Cork, deposes,

“That on the 30th of June, as he was standing at the widow Fuller's shop window, he saw Butler, accompanied with a large mob, who stopped before her shop: That after he had grossly abused her, he made a full stroke with his hanger at her head, which must have cleft her in two, had not this deponent received the guard of the hanger on his shoulder: That presently after, the said Butler seized upon this deponent: That he seized him by the collar with one hand, and with the other held the hanger over his head, calling him all manner of names, and tearing his shirt and clothes: And that, had it not been for the timely assistance of some neighbours, he verily believes he should have been torn in pieces.

“MARGARET TRIMNELL, of Cork, deposes,

“That on the 30th of June, John Austin and Nicholas Butler, with a numerous mob, came to her shop: That, after calling her many names, Austin struck her with his club on the right arm, so that it has been black ever since from the shoulder to the elbow: That Butler came next, and with a great stick struck her a violent blow across the back: That many of them then drew their swords, which they carried under their coats, and cut and hacked her goods, part of which they threw out into the street, while others of them threw dirt and stones into the shop, to the considerable damage of her goods, and loss of this deponent.”

11. It was not for those who had any regard either to their persons or goods, to oppose Mr. Butler after this. So the poor people patiently suffered whatever he and his mob were pleased to inflict upon them, till the Assizes drew on, at which they doubted not to find a sufficient, though late, relief.

Accordingly, twenty-eight depositions were taken, (from the foul copies of some of which the preceding account is mostly transcribed,) and laid before the Grand Jury, August 19. But they did not find any one of these bills. Instead of this, they made that memorable presentment which is worthy to be preserved in the annals of Ireland to all succeeding generations:—

“We find and present Charles Wesley to be a person of ill

fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of His Majesty's peace; and we pray he may be transported.

"We find and present James Williams," &c.

"We find and present Robert Swindle," &c.

"We find and present Jonathan Reeves," &c.

"We find and present James Wheatly," &c.

"We find and present John Larwood," &c.

"We find and present Joseph M'Auliff," &c.

"We find and present Charles Skelton," &c.

"We find and present William Tooker," &c.

"We find and present Daniel Sullivan," &c.

12. Mr. Butler and his mob were now in higher spirits than ever. They scoured the streets day and night; frequently hallooing, as they went along, "Five pounds for a Swaddler's head!"* their chief declaring to them all, he had full liberty now to do whatever he would, even to murder, if he pleased; as Mr. Swain, of North Abbey, and others are ready to testify.

13. The Sessions, held at Cork on the 5th of October following, produced another memorable presentment.

"We find and present John Horton to be a person of ill fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of His Majesty's peace; and we pray that he may be transported."

But complaint being made of this above, as wholly illegal, it vanished into air.

14. Some time after, Mr. Butler removed to Dublin, and began to sing his ballads there. But having little success, he returned to Cork, and in January began to scour the streets again, pursuing all of "this way," with a large mob at his heels, armed with swords, staves, and pistols. Complaint was made of this to William Holmes, Esq., the present Mayor of Cork. But there was no removal of the thing complained of; the riots were not suppressed: Nay, they not only continued, but increased.

15. From the beginning of February to the end, His Majesty's peace was preserved just as before; of which it may be proper to subjoin two or three instances, for the information of all thinking men:—

"WILLIAM JEWELL, clothier, of Shandon Church-Lane, deposes,

"That Nicholas Butler, with a riotous mob, several times

* A name first given to Mr. Cennick, from his first preaching on those words; "Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

assaulted this deponent's house: That particularly on the 23d of February, he came thither with a large mob, armed with clubs and other weapons: That several of the rioters entered the house, and swore, the first who resisted, they would blow their brains out: That the deponent's wife, endeavouring to stop them, was assaulted and beaten by the said Butler; who then ordered his men to break the deponent's windows, which they did with stones of a considerable weight.

"MARY PHILIPS, of St. Peter's Church-Lane, deposes,

"That on the 26th of February, about seven in the evening, Nicholas Butler came to her house with a large mob, and asked where her husband was: That as soon as she appeared, he first abused her in the grossest terms, and then struck her on the head, so that it stunned her; and she verily believes, had not some within thrust to and fastened the door, she should have been murdered on the spot."

It may suffice for the present to add one instance more:—

"ELIZABETH GARDELET, wife of Joseph Gardelet, Corporal, in Colonel Pawlet's regiment, Captain Charlton's company, deposes,

"That on February 28, as she was going out of her lodgings, she was met by Butler and his mob: That Butler, without any manner of provocation, immediately fell upon her, striking her with both his fists on the side of the head, which knocked her head against the wall: That she endeavoured to escape from him; but he pursued her, and struck her several times in the face: That she ran into the school-yard for shelter; but he followed, and caught hold of her, saying, 'You whore, you stand on consecrated ground,' and threw her with such force across the lane, that she was driven against the opposite wall: That when she had recovered herself a little, she made the best of her way to her lodging; but Butler still pursued, and overtook her as she was going up the stairs: That he struck her with his fist on the stomach; which stroke knocked her down backwards; that falling with the small of her back against the edge of one of the stairs, she was not able to rise again: That her pains immediately came upon her, and about two in the morning she miscarried."

16. These, with several more depositions to the same effect, were, in April, laid before the Grand Jury. Yet they did not find any of these bills! But they found one against Daniel

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Sullivan, the younger, (no Preacher, but a hearer of the people called Methodists,) who, when Butler and his mob were discharging a shower of stones upon him, fired a pistol, without any ball, over their heads. If any man has wrote this story to England, in a quite different manner, and fixed it on a young Methodist Preacher, let him be ashamed in the presence of God and man, unless shame and he have shook hands and parted.

17. Several of the persons presented as vagabonds in autumn appeared at the Lent Assizes. But none appearing against them, they were discharged, with honour to themselves, and shame to their prosecutors; who, by bringing the matter to a judicial determination, plainly showed, there is a law even for Methodists; and gave His Majesty's Judge a full occasion to delare the utter illegality of all riots, and the inexcusableness of tolerating (much more causing) them on any pretence whatsoever.

18. It was now generally believed there would be no more riots in Cork; although I cannot say that was my opinion. On May 19, I accepted the repeated invitation of Mr. Alderman Pembrock, and came to his house. Understanding the place where the preaching usually was, would by no means contain those who desired to hear me, at eight in the morning I went to Hammond's Marsh. The congregation was large and deeply attentive. A few of the rabble gathered at a distance; but by little and little they drew near, and mixed with the congregation. So that I have seldom seen a more quiet and orderly assembly at any church in England or Ireland.

19. In the afternoon a report being spread abroad, that the Mayor designed to hinder my preaching on the Marsh, I desired Mr. Skelton and Jones to wait upon him, and inquire concerning it. Mr. Skelton asked if my preaching there would be offensive to him; adding, "If it would, Mr. W. would not do it." He replied warmly, "Sir, I will have no mobbing." Mr. S. said, "Sir, there was none this morning." He answered, "There was. Are there not churches and meeting-houses enough? I will have no more mobs and riots." Mr. S. replied, "Sir, neither Mr. W. nor they that heard him made either mobs or riots." He answered plain, "I will have no more preaching; and if Mr. W. attempts to preach, I am prepared for him."

I did not conceive till now, that there was any real meaning in what a gentleman said some time since; who being told,

“Sir, King George tolerates Methodists,” replied, “Sir, you shall find, the Mayor is King of Cork.”

20. I began preaching in our own house soon after five. Mr. Mayor meantime was walking in the 'Change, where he gave orders to the drummers of the town, and to his sergeants,—doubtless, to go down and keep the peace! They came down, with an innumerable mob, to the house. They continued drumming, and I continued preaching, till I had finished my discourse. When I came out, the mob immediately closed me in. I desired one of the sergeants to protect me from the mob; but he replied, “Sir, I have no orders to do that.” When I came into the street, they threw whatever came to hand. I walked on straight through the midst of them, looking every man in the face, and they opened to the right and left, till I came near Dant's Bridge. A large party had taken possession of this, one of whom was bawling out, “Now, heigh for the Romans!” When I came up, these likewise shrunk back, and I walked through them into Mr. Jenkins's house.

But many of the congregation were more roughly handled; particularly Mr. Jones, who was covered with dirt, and escaped with his life almost by miracle. The main body of the mob then went to the House, brought out all the seats and benches, tore up the floor, the door, the frames of the windows, and whatever of wood-work remained, part of which they carried off for their own use, and the rest they burnt in the open street.

21. Monday, 21. I rode on to Bandon. From three in the afternoon till after seven, the mob of Cork marched in grand procession, and then burnt me in effigy near Dant's Bridge.

Tuesday, 22. The mob and drummers were moving again between three and four in the morning. The same evening the mob came down to Hammond's Marsh, but stood at a distance from Mr. Stockdale's house, till the drums beat, and the Mayor's sergeants beckoned to them; on which they drew up, and began the attack. The Mayor, being sent for, came with a party of soldiers. Mr. Stockdale earnestly desired that he would disperse the mob, or at least leave the soldiers there to protect them from the rioters. But he took them all away with him; on which the mob went on, and broke all the glass and most of the window-frames in pieces.

22. Wednesday, 23. The mob was still patrolling the streets; abusing all that were called Methodists; and threat-

ening to murder them, and pull down their houses, if they did not leave "this way."

Thursday, 24. They again assaulted Mr. Stockdale's house, broke down the boards he had nailed up against the windows, destroyed what little remained of the window-frames and shutters, and damaged a considerable part of his goods.

Friday, 25, and again on Saturday, 26, one Roger O'Ferrall fixed up an advertisement at the public Exchange, (as he had also done for several days before,) that he was ready to head any mob, in order to pull down any house that should dare to harbour a Swaddler.

23. Sunday, 27. I wrote the following letter to the Mayor:—
"MR. MAYOR,

"AN hour ago I received *A Letter to Mr. Butler*, just reprinted at Cork. The publishers assert, '*It was brought down from Dublin to be distributed among the society. But Mr. Wesley called in as many as he could.*' Both these assertions are absolutely false. I read some lines of that letter when I was in Dublin, but never read it over before this morning. Who the author of it is, I know not. But this I know; I never called in one; neither concerned myself about it; much less brought any down to distribute among the society.

"Yet I cannot but return my hearty thanks to the gentlemen who have distributed them through the town. I believe it will do more good than they are sensible of. For though I dislike its condemning the Magistrates and Clergy in general, (several of whom were not concerned in the late proceedings,) yet I think the reasoning is strong and clear; and that the facts referred to therein are not at all misrepresented, will sufficiently appear in due time.

"I fear God and honour the King. I earnestly desire to be at peace with all men. I have not willingly given any offence, either to the Magistrates, the Clergy, or any of the inhabitants of the city of Cork; neither do I desire anything of them, but to be treated (I will not say, as a Clergyman, a gentleman, or a Christian, but) with such justice and humanity as are due to a Jew, a Turk, or a Pagan.

"I am,

"Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"J. WESLEY."

II. 1. Your performance is dated, May 28th, the most material parts of which I am now to consider.

It contains, First, a charge against the Methodist Preachers: Secondly, a defence of the Corporation and Clergy of Cork.

With regard to your charge against those Preachers, may I take the liberty to inquire why you drop six out of the eleven that have been at Cork, viz., Mr. Swindells, Wheatly, Larwood, Skelton, Tucker, and Haughton? Can you glean up no story concerning these; or is it out of mere compassion that you spare them?

2. But before I proceed, I must beg leave to ask, Who is this evidence against the other five? Why, one that neither dares show his face, nor tell his name, or the place of his abode; one that is ashamed (and truly not without cause) of the dirty work he is employed in; so that we could not even conjecture who he was, but that his speech bewrayeth him. How much credit is due to such an evidence, let any man of reason judge.

3. This worthy witness falls foul upon Mr. Cowly, and miserably murders a tale he has got by the end. (Page 13.) Sir, Mr. M. is nothing obliged to you for bringing the character of his niece into question. He is perfectly satisfied that Mr. C. acted, in that whole affair, with the strictest regard both to honour and conscience.

You next aver, that Mr. Reeves "asked a young woman, whether she had a mind to go to hell with her father." (Page 16.) It is possible. I will neither deny nor affirm it without some better proof. But, suppose he did; unless I know the circumstances of the case, I could not say whether he spoke right or wrong.

4. But what is this to the "monstrous, shocking, amazing blasphemy, spoken by Mr. Charles Wesley? who one day," you say, "preaching on Hammond's Marsh, called out, 'Has any of you got the Spirit?' and when none answered, said, 'I am sure some of you have got it; for I feel virtue go out of me.'" (Page 18.) Sir, do you expect any one to believe this story? I doubt it will not pass even at Cork; unless with your wise friend, who said, "Methodists! Ay, they are the people who place all their religion in wearing long whiskers."

5. In the same page, you attack Mr. Williams for applying those words, "I thy Maker am thy husband." Sir, by the same rule that you conclude "these expressions could only

flow from a mind full of lascivious ideas," you may conclude the forty-fifth Psalm to be only a wanton sonnet, and the Canticles a counterpart to Rochester's Poems.

But you say, he likewise "made use of unwarrantable expressions, particularly with regard to faith and good works; and the next day denied that he had used them." (Pages 10, 11.) Sir, your word is not proof of this. Be pleased to produce proper vouchers of the facts; and I will then give a farther answer.

Likewise, as to his "indecent and irreverent behaviour at church, turning all the Preacher said into ridicule, so that numbers asked, in your hearing, why the Churchwardens did not put the profane, wicked scoundrel in the stocks;" my present answer is, I doubt the facts. Will your "men of undoubted character" be so good as to attest them?

6. Of all these, Mr. Williams, Cownly, Reeves, Haughton, Larwood, Skelton, Swindells, Tucker, and Wheatly, you pronounce in the lump, that they are "a parcel of vagabond, illiterate babblers;" (pages 3, 4;) of whom "every body that has the least share of reason must know," that, though "they amuse the populace with nonsense, ribaldry, and blasphemy, they are not capable of writing orthography or good sense." Sir, that is not an adjudged case. Some who have a little share of reason, think they are capable both of speaking and writing good sense. But if they are not, if they cannot write or read, they can save souls from death; they can, by the grace of God, bring sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

7. But they "made a woman plunder her poor old husband, and another absent herself from her husband and children." (Pages 24, 25.) Pray, what are their names; where do they live; and how may one come to the speech of them? I have heard so many plausible tales of this kind, which on examination vanished away, that I cannot believe one word of this till I have more proof than your bare assertion.

8. So far I have been pleading for others. But I am now called to answer for myself. For "Theophilus and John Wesley," say you, "seem to me the same individual person." (Page 4.) They may seem so to you; but not to any who knows either my style or manner of writing. Besides, if it had been mine, it would have borne my name: For I do not love fighting in the dark.

But were not "a great number" of those books "brought

from Dublin, to be dispersed throughout the city?" Not by me; not by my order, nor to my knowledge. However, I thank you again for dispersing them.

9. But "while charity stands in the front of Christian graces, the author of such a book can have none of that grace. For you must allow the vulgar to think." (Page 26.) Mal-a-propos enough, a lively saying; but for any use it is of, it may stand either in the front or rear of the sentence.

The argument itself is something new. A man knocks me down: I cry, "Help! help! or I shall be murdered." He replies, "While charity stands in the front of Christian graces, the author of such a cry can have none of that grace."

So now you have shown to all the world "the uncharitable and consequently unchristian spirit of Methodism." What! because the Methodists cry out for help, before you have beat out their brains?

What grimace is this! His Majesty's quiet, loyal, Protestant subjects are abused, insulted, outraged, beaten, covered with dirt, rolled in the mire, bruised, wounded with swords and hangers, murdered, have their houses broke open, their goods destroyed, or carried away before their face; and all this in open day, in the face of the sun, yet without any remedy! And those who treat them thus are "charitable" men! brimful of a Christian spirit! But if they who are so treated appeal to the common sense and reason of mankind, you gravely cry, "See the uncharitable, the unchristian spirit of Methodism!"

10. You proceed: "But pray, what are those facts which you say are not misrepresented? Do you mean, that Butler was hired and paid by the Corporation and Clergy?" or, "that this" remarkably loyal "city is disaffected to the present Government?" and that "a Papist was supported, nay, hired by the chief Magistrate, to walk the streets, threatening bloodshed and murder? Declare openly whether these are the facts." Sir, I understand you well; but for the present I beg to be excused. There is a time and a place for all things.

11. I rejoice to hear the city of Cork is so "remarkably loyal;" so entirely "well-affected to the present Government." I presume you mean this chiefly of the Friendly Society, (in whom the power of the city is now lodged,) erected some time since, in opposition to that body of Jacobites commonly called, "The Hanover Club." I suppose that zealous anti-Methodist

who, some days ago, stabbed the Methodist Preacher in the street, and then cried out, "Damn King George and all his armies!" did this as a specimen of his "eminent loyalty."

It cannot be denied that this loyal subject of King George, Simon Rawlins by name, was, upon oath made of those words, committed to gaol on May 31; and it was not till six days after, that he walked in procession through the town, with drums beating, and colours flying, and declared, at the head of his mob, he would never rest till he had driven all these false prophets out of Cork. How sincere they were in their good wishes to King George and his armies, they gave a clear proof, the 10th of this instant June, when, as ten or twelve soldiers were walking along in a very quiet and inoffensive manner, the mob fell upon them, swore they would have their lives, knocked them down, and beat them to such a degree, that, on June 12, one of them died of his wounds, and another was not then expected to live many hours.

12. But you have more proofs of my uncharitableness, that is, supposing I am the author of that pamphlet; for you read there, "Riches, ease, and honour are what the Clergy set their hearts upon; but the souls for whom Christ died, they leave to the tender mercies of hell." Sir, can you deny it? Is it not true, literally true, concerning some of the Clergy? You ask, "But ought we to condemn all, for the faults of a few?" (Page 20.) I answer, No; no more than I will condemn all in the affair of Cork for the faults of a few. It is you that do this; and if it were as you say, if they were all concerned in the late proceedings, then it would be no uncharitableness to say, "They were in a miserable state indeed;" then they would doubtless be "kicking against the pricks, contending with Heaven, fighting against God."

13. I come now to the general charge against me, independent on the letter to Mr. Butler. And, (1.) You charge me with "a frontless assurance, and a well-dissembled hypocrisy." (Page 22.) Sir, I thank you. This is as kind, as if you was to call me, (with Mr. Williams,) "a profane, wicked scoundrel." I am not careful to answer in this matter: Shortly we shall both stand at a higher bar.

14. You charge me, Secondly, with being an "harebrained enthusiast." (Page 7.) Sir, I am your most obedient servant.

But you will prove me an enthusiast: "For you say" (those

are your words) “you are sent of God to inform mankind of some other revelation of his will, than what has been left by Christ and his Apostles.” (Page 28.) Not so. I never said any such thing. When I do this, then call for miracles; but at present your demand is quite unreasonable: There is no room for it at all. What I advance, I prove by the words of Christ or his Apostles. If not, let it fall to the ground.

15. You charge me, Thirdly, with being employed in “promoting the cause of arbitrary Popish power.” (Page 7.) Sir, I plead, Not Guilty. Produce your witnesses. Prove this, and I will allow all the rest.

You charge me, Fourthly, with holding “midnight assemblies.” (Page 24.) Sir, did you never see the word *Vigil* in your Common-Prayer Book? Do you know what it means? If not, permit me to tell you, that it was customary with the ancient Christians to spend whole nights in prayer; and that these nights were termed *Vigiliae*, or Vigils. Therefore for spending a part of some nights in this manner, in public and solemn prayer, we have not only the authority of our own national Church, but of the universal Church, in the earliest ages.

16. You charge me, Fifthly, with “being the cause of all that Butler has done.” (Page 17.) True; just as Latimer and Ridley (if I may dare to name myself with those venerable men) were the cause of all that Bishop Bonner did. In this sense, the charge is true. It has pleased God, (unto him be all the glory!) even by my preaching or writings, to convince some of the old Christian scriptural doctrine, which till then they knew not. And while they declared this to others, you showed them the same love as Edmund of London did to their forefathers. Only the expressions of your love were not quite the same; because (blessed be God!) you had not the same power.

17. You affirm, Sixthly, that I “rob and plunder the poor, so as to leave them neither bread to eat, nor raiment to put on.” (Page 8.) An heavy charge, but without all colour of truth. Yea, just the reverse is true. Abundance of those in Cork, Bandon, Limerick, Dublin, as well as in all parts of England, who, a few years ago, either through sloth or profuseness, had not bread to eat, or raiment to put on, have now, by means of the Preachers called Methodists, a sufficiency of both. Since, by hearing these, they have learned to fear God, they

have learned also to work with their hands, as well as to cut off every needless expense, to be good stewards of the mammon of unrighteousness.

18. You assert, Seventhly, that I am "myself as fond of riches as the most worldly Clergyman." (Page 21.) "Two thousand pence a week! a fine yearly revenue from assurance and salvation tickets!" (Page 8.) I answer, (1.) What do you mean by "assurance and salvation tickets?" Is not the very expression a mixture of nonsense and blasphemy? (2.) How strangely did you under-rate my revenue, when you wrote in the person of George Fisher! You then allowed me only an hundred pounds a year. What is this to two thousand pence a week? (3.) "There is not a Clergyman," you say, "who would not willingly exchange his livings for your yearly penny contributions." (Page 21.) And no wonder: For, according to a late computation, they amount to no less every year, than eight hundred, eighty-six thousand pounds, besides some odd shillings and pence; in comparison of which, the revenue of his Grace of Armagh, or of Canterbury, is a very trifle. And yet, Sir, so great is my regard for you, and my gratitude for your late services, that if you will only resign your Curacy of Christ's Church, I will make over to you my whole revenue in Ireland.

19. But "the honour" I gain, you think, is even "greater than the profit." Alas, Sir, I have not generosity enough to relish it. I was always of Juvenal's mind,—

*Gloria quantalibet, quid erit, si gloria tantum est?**

And especially, while there are so many drawbacks, so many dead flies in the pot of ointment. Sheer honour might taste tolerably well. But there is gall with the honey, and less of the honey than the gall. Pray, Sir, what think you? Have I more honour or dishonour? Do more people praise or blame me? How is it in Cork? nay, to go no farther, among your own little circle of acquaintance? Where you hear one commend, do not ten cry out, "Away with such a fellow from the earth?"

Above all, I do not love honour with dry blows. I do not find it will cure broken bones. But perhaps you may think I glory in these. O how should I have gloried, then, if your good

* What is glory, without profit too?

friends at Dant's Bridge had burnt my person, instead of my effigy!

We are here to set religion out of the question. You do not suppose I have anything to do with that. Why, if so, I should rather leave you the honour, and myself sleep in a whole skin. On that supposition I quite agree with the epigrammatist:—

*Virgilii in tumulo, divini præmia vatis,
Explicat en viridem laurea læta comam.
Quid te defunctum juvat hæc? Felicior olim
Sub patula fagi legmine vivus eras.**

20. Your last charge is, that "I profess myself to be a member of the established Church, and yet act contrary to the commands of my spiritual governors, and stab the Church to the very vitals." (Page 27.) I answer, (1.) What "spiritual governor" has commanded me not to preach in any part of His Majesty's dominions? I know not one, to this very day, either in England or Ireland. (2.) What is it, to "stab the Church to the very vitals?" Why, to deny her fundamental doctrines. And do I, or you, do this? Let any one who has read her Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, judge, which of us two denies, that "we are justified by faith alone;" that every believer has "the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit;" that all who are strong in faith do "perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name:" He that denies this, is "the treacherous son who stabs this affectionate and tender mother."

If you deny it, you have already disowned the Church. But as for me, I neither can nor will; though I know you sincerely desire I should.

Hoc Ithacus velit et magno mercentur Atridæ.†

But I choose to stay in the Church, were it only to reprove those who "betray" her "with a kiss."

* See the green laurel rears her graceful head
O'er Virgil's tomb! But can this cheer the dead?
Happier by far thou wast of old, when laid
Beneath thy spreading beech's ample shade!

† This quotation from the Æneid of Virgil is thus translated by Beresford:—

"_____ This Ithacus desires,
And Atreus' sons with vast rewards shall buy."—EDIT.

21. I come now to your defence of the Corporation and Clergy. But sure such a defence was never seen before. For whereas I had said, "I dislike the condemning the Magistrates or Clergy in general, because several of them" (so I charitably supposed) "were not concerned in the late proceedings;" you answer, "Pray by all means point them out, that they may be distinguished by some mark of honour above their brethren." (Pages 29, 30.) What do you mean? If you mean anything at all, it must be that they were *all* concerned in the late proceedings. Sir, if they were, (of which I own you are a better judge than I,) was it needful to declare this to all the world? especially in so plain terms as these? Did not your zeal here a little outrun your wisdom?

22. "But the Magistrate," you say, was only "endeavouring to secure the peace of the city." (Page 6.) A very extraordinary way of securing peace! Truly, Sir, I cannot yet believe, not even on your word, that "all the Magistrates, except one," (pp. 29, 30,) were concerned in this method of securing peace. Much less can I believe, that all "the Clergy" were concerned in thus "endeavouring to bring back their flock, led astray by these hirelings," (an unlucky word,) "into the right fold."

23. Of the Clergy you add, "What need have they to rage and foam at your preaching? Suppose you could delude the greater part of their flocks, this could not affect their temporal interest." (Page 7.) We do not desire it should. We only desire to delude all mankind (if you will term it a delusion) into a serious concern for their eternal interest, for a treasure which none can take away.

Having now both stated the facts to which you referred, and considered the most material parts of your performance, I have only to subjoin a few obvious reflections, naturally arising from a view of those uncommon occurrences; partly with regard to the motives of those who were active therein; partly to their manner of acting.

1. With regard to the former, every reasonable man will naturally inquire on what motives could any, either of the Clergy or the Corporation, ever think of opposing that preaching by which so many notoriously vicious men have been brought to an eminently virtuous life and conversation.

You supply us yourself with one unexceptionable answer:

“Those of the Clergy with whom I have conversed freely own they have not learning sufficient to comprehend your scheme of religion.” (Page 30.) If they have not, I am sorry for them. My scheme of religion is this :—Love is the fulfilling of the law. From the true love of God and man, directly flows every Christian grace, every holy and happy temper; and from these springs uniform holiness of conversation, in conformity to those great rules, “Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God;” and, “Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.” But this, you say, “those of the Clergy with whom you converse have not learning enough to comprehend.” Consequently, their ignorance, or not understanding our doctrine, is the reason why they oppose us.

2. I learn from you, that ignorance of another kind is a Second reason why some of the Clergy oppose us: They, like you, think us enemies to the Church. The natural consequence is, that, in proportion to their zeal for the Church, their zeal against us will be.

3. The zeal which many of them have for orthodoxy, or right opinions, is a Third reason for opposing us. For they judge us heterodox in several points, maintainers of strange opinions. And the truth is, the old doctrines of the Reformation are now quite new in the world. Hence those who revive them cannot fail to be opposed by those of the Clergy who know them not.

4. Fourthly. Their honour is touched when others pretend to know what they do not know themselves; especially when unlearned and (otherwise) ignorant men lay claim to any such knowledge. “What is the tendency of all this,” as you observe on another head, “but to work in men’s minds a mean opinion of the Clergy?” But who can tamely suffer this? None but those who have the mind that was in Christ Jesus.

5. Again: Will not some say, “Master, by thus acting, thou reproachest us?” by preaching sixteen or eighteen times a week; and by a thousand other things of the same kind? Is not this, in effect, reproaching us, as if we were lazy and indolent? as if we had not a sufficient love to the souls of those committed to our charge?

6. May there not likewise be some (perhaps unobserved) envy in the breast even of men that fear God? How much more in them that do not, when they hear of the great success

of these Preachers, of the esteem and honour that are paid to them by the people, and the immense riches which they acquire! What wonder if this occasions a zeal which is not the flame of fervent love?

7. Add to this a desire in some of the inferior Clergy of pleasing their superiors; supposing these (which is no impossible supposition) are first influenced by any of these motives. Add the imprudence of some that hear those Preachers, and, perhaps, needlessly provoke their parochial Ministers. And when all these things are considered, none need be at a loss for the motives on which many of the Clergy have opposed us.

8. But from what motives can any of the Corporation oppose us? I must beg the gentlemen of this body to observe, that I dare by no means lump them all together, as their awkward defender has done. But this I may say without offence, there are some even among you who are not so remarkably loyal as others, not so eminently well-affected to the present Government. Now, these cannot but observe, (gentlemen, I speak plain, for I am to deliver my own soul in the sight of God,) that wherever we preach, many who were his enemies before, became zealous friends to His Majesty. The instances glare both in England and Ireland. Those, therefore, who are not so zealously his friends have a strong motive to oppose us; though it cannot be expected they should own this to be the motive on which they act.

9. Others may have been prejudiced by the artful misrepresentations these have made, or by those they have frequently heard from the pulpit. Indeed, this has been the grand fountain of popular prejudice. In every part both of England and Ireland, the Clergy, where they were inclined so to do, have most effectually stirred up the people.

10. There has been another reason assigned for the opposition that was made to me in particular at Cork, viz., that the Mayor was offended at my preaching on Hammond's Marsh, and therefore resolved I should not preach at all; whereas, if I had not preached abroad, he would have given me leave to preach in the house. Would Mr. Mayor have given me leave to preach in my own house? I return him most humble thanks. But should he be so courteous as to make me the offer even now, I should not accept it on any such terms. Greater men than he have endeavoured to hinder me from calling sinners

to repentance in that open and public manner; but hitherto it has been all lost labour. They have never yet been able to prevail; nor ever will, till they can conquer King George and his armies. To curse them is not enough.

11. Lastly. Some (I hope but a few) do cordially believe, that "private vices are public benefits." I myself heard this in Cork, when I was there last. These, consequently, think us the destroyers of their city, by so lessening the number of their public benefactors, the gluttons, the drunkards, the dram-drinkers, the Sabbath-breakers, the common swearers, the cheats of every kind, and the followers of that ancient and honourable trade, adultery and fornication.

12. These are the undeniable motives to this opposition. I come now to the manner of it.

When some gentlemen inquired of one of the Bishops in England, "My Lord, what must we do to stop these new Preachers?" he answered, "If they preach contrary to Scripture, confute them by Scripture; if contrary to reason, confute them by reason. But beware you use no other weapons than these, either in opposing error, or defending the truth."

Would to God this rule had been followed at Cork! But how little has it been thought of there! The opposition was begun with lies of all kinds, frequently delivered in the name of God: So that never was anything so ill-judged as for you to ask, "Does Christianity encourage its professors to make use of lies, invectives, or low, mean abuse, and scurrility, to carry on its interest?" No, Sir, it does not. I disclaim and abhor every weapon of this kind. But with these have the Methodist Preachers been opposed in Cork above any other place. In England, in all Ireland, have I neither heard nor read any like those gross, palpable lies, those low, Billingsgate invectives, and that inexpressibly mean abuse, and base scurrility, which the opposers of Methodism, so called, have continually made use of, and which has been the strength of their cause from the beginning.

13. If it be not so, let the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Cork, (for he too has openly entered the lists against the Methodists,) the Rev. Dr. Tisdale, or any other whom his Lordship shall appoint, meet me on even ground, writing as a gentleman to a gentleman, a scholar to a scholar, a Clergyman to a Clergyman. Let him thus show me wherein I have

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preached or written amiss, and I will stand reproved before all the world.

14. But let not his Lordship, or any other, continue to put persecution in the place of reason; either private persecution, stirring up husbands to threaten or beat their wives, parents their children, masters their servants; gentlemen to ruin their tenants, labourers, or tradesmen, by turning them out of their farms or cottages, employing or buying of them no more, because they worship God according to their own conscience; or open, barefaced, noonday, Cork persecution, breaking open the houses of His Majesty's Protestant subjects, destroying their goods, spoiling or tearing the very clothes from their backs; striking, bruising, wounding, murdering them in the streets; dragging them through the mire, without any regard to either age or sex; not sparing even those of tender years; no, nor women, though great with child; but, with more than Pagan or Mahometan barbarity, destroying infants that were yet unborn.

15. Ought these things so to be? Are they right before God or man? Are they to the honour of our nation? I appeal unto Cæsar; unto His gracious Majesty King George, and to the Governors under him, both in England and Ireland. I appeal to all true, disinterested lovers of this their native country. Is this the way to make it a flourishing nation? happy at home, amiable and honourable abroad? Men of Ireland, judge! Nay, and is not there not some weight in that additional consideration,—that this is not a concern of a private nature? Rather, is it not a common cause?

If the dams are once broken down, if you tamely give up the fundamental laws of your country, if these are openly violated in the case of your fellow-subjects, how soon may the case be your own! For what protection then have any of you left for either your liberty or property? What security for either your goods or lives, if a riotous mob is to be both judge, jury, and executioner?

16. Protestants! What is become of that liberty of conscience for which your forefathers spent their blood? Is it not an empty shadow, a mere, unmeaning name, if these things are suffered among you? Romans, such of you as are calm and candid men, do you approve of these proceedings? I cannot think you yourselves would use such methods of convincing us, if we think amiss. Christians of all denominations, can you reconcile

this to our royal law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?" O tell it not in Gath! Let it not be named among those who are enemies to the Christian cause; lest that worthy name whereby we are called be still more blasphemed among the Heathen!

A LETTER

TO

THE REVEREND MR. POTTER.

NORWICH, November 4, 1758.

REVEREND SIR,

1. TILL to-day I had not a sight of your sermon, "On the Pretended Inspiration of the Methodists." Otherwise I should have taken the liberty, some days sooner, of sending you a few lines. That sermon, indeed, only repeats what has been often said before, and as often answered. But as it is said again, I believe it is my duty to answer it again. Not that I have any acquaintance with Mr. Cayley or Osborn: I never exchanged a word with either. However, as you lump me and them together, I am constrained to speak for myself, and once more to give a reason of my hope, that I am clear from the charge you bring against me.

2. There are several assertions in your sermon which need not be allowed; but they are not worth disputing. At present, therefore, I shall only speak of two things: (1.) Your account of the new birth; and, (2.) "The pretended inspiration" (as you are pleased to term it) "of the Methodists."

3. Of the new birth, you say, "The terms of being *regenerated*, of being *born again*, of being *born of God*, are often used to express *the works* of gospel righteousness." (Pages 10, 11.) I cannot allow this. I know not that they are ever used in Scripture to express any outward work at all. They always express an inward work of the Spirit, whereof baptism is the

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