

To Dr. Wilson. Sheffield July 22 1838.

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Dear Sir, There has been a long interval in our correspondence, and the fault has been mine. Pray forgive me. I have not forgotten, I have only neglected you, for I neglect every body, and nobody more than myself. I was ^{under} a great depression of spirit when I received your last letter, and many of those troubles (both from external causes and from the deplorable infirmities of my own heart, which render me so perpetually discontented that I rather suffer than enjoy life) have occurred since that time to distract my attention, and indispose ^{me} for an hour to take up my pen to write on any subject or to any friend, unless I was absolutely compelled. I do not mean however, to torment you with a recital of all my woes, real and imaginary, within the last four months, but name them here as the true reasons for my long silence; and when I mention that political controversy has been a fountain from which I have been drinking bitter water for many weeks past, you will not attribute all my sorrows to dissipated sensibility and indulged hypochondriacal fictions. No more, however, of these. I will turn to your letter. You have not forgot the contents: I must therefore remind you that it contained some very just and welcome strictures on the fourth and last part of my poem on the West Indies &c. with a repeated remonstrance against the close of the third part in which I had attributed some of the ~~extreme~~ calamities ^{incident} to those lands to Divine Vengeance. When I pleaded poetic effect to you, as being eminently produced by the introduction of punishments so awful and exemplary (for which I had the authority of many of my predecessors on this very subject) it was rather to evade a discussion of the question with you, than either to vindicate or to apologize for what I had done: indeed if I thought that it better a plea to urge I should have cancelled the passage, and acknowledged it most unwarrantable and impious presumption to judge with such boldness and decision of the mysteries of God's Providence, which perhaps were not in time or eternity, could ^{any} fully comprehend, any more than he could comprehend the Deity himself, eternal, almighty, omniscient and omnipresent. I thought then, and I dare say that you will think so too, that we could not easily be brought to give in opinion on certain religious points, among which this may be included, namely, - the general belief that the total natural evil in this world is the consequence and the punishment of moral evil, but by the mercy and forbearance of God overruled for the correction rather than the destruction of his creatures, unless they wilfully remain hardened and impenitent to the end. On this principle (if it be a true hypothesis) I am surely justified in attributing every calamity, either natural or ~~incident~~ ^{accidental}, to the displeasure of the Almighty on account of the sins of the inhabitants, and such the ~~lower~~ ^{lower} ~~grade~~ ^{grade} was the most crying.

But indeed I must shrink from the discussion of a subject so much beyond my ability to contest with you. Still, however, promising you very seriously to weigh and revise, and improve the passage in my poem, which alludes to Divine Justice, and perhaps when you see it again you may grant it toleration; I ask no more. — This you have already extended in the most liberal manner to these passages in the fourth part of my poem. I can scarcely expect indulgence from any except those who profess religious sentiments resembling my own, — if I can lay claim to any religious sentiments, — I have done so in my life (since I imagined myself wise enough to judge of things that God has hidden in unsearchable mystery) as been consumed in doubt, and fear, and distraction, of mind. I must tear myself away from this subject, for all my miseries centre here, but here also I find the only hope that makes existence tolerable, a hope sometimes almost extinct, yet sometimes a gleam of immortality, that I should gladly suffer all the afflictions of time, and the scorn and neglect of the world — to me the falling of all the evil ^{in this world} ~~in this world~~ to pass, that I may gain as I have gained the ^{lost} ~~lost~~ child. My days of childhood were truly days of Paradise, and that that I have then have been like the days between the fall and the flood, when sin and sorrow shrouded more and more till judgment swept away both from the face of the earth. I do not pretend that my ~~early~~ infancy was an age of innocence, — remember well that it was not, — but in comparison with youth and manhood it was an age of happiness, and that happiness sprung from the simple, pure and fervent belief of the gospel of Christ, as I learned it from my Parents and my Moravian Teachers. That simplicity of heart I have long ago lost, and with it wanting peace of mind for ever, or till it shall please God to make me a little child again, that I may be "fit for the Kingdom of Heaven." I must ~~and~~ implore your indulgence on this head; and you need not distress yourself by touching upon this, it when you favour me with another letter, which I hope will be very soon, for I shall be anxious to hear that I am forgiven for my long and impenitent silence. — You ask me, if I am aware of the effect which may be produced against my argument, and in favour of the Slave Trade, when I speak so captivously of the spiritual benefits derived to the Negroes from the Missionaries. I am fully aware of the advantage which might be taken from my statement of those glorious facts (they are neither dreams nor opinions but facts, as illustrious as the history of man can afford) and whoever could be so base as to take advantage of that statement should be welcome to all the advantages that can be derived from it in support of the Slave Trade. That trade is now established, and the door is thereby opened to the Missionaries into the Native Country of Negroes, which the Moravians attempted vain to enter at the time when they were successfully sending ~~Missionaries~~ Missionaries into Greenland, North America and the West Indies. The Slave Trade had closed the Portals of Africa, (and like the gates of hell they were guarded by sin and death) against all communication with earth or heaven, except for the commerce of blood: neither Angels of Mercy nor Ministers of Grace could visit for a moment those unsearchable regions, which were given up as a spoil to the Man Stealer within and the Slave Merchant without. The Negro only knew the European as his enemy, watching for an opportunity by force or by fraud to seize and carry him into captivity. While the Trade existed it was fixed in view for the White Man to break peace to the afflicted and White to the Slave on the coast of Guinea, converted into a cold war by the intrigues of his Brother.

I must again check my pen for my paper begins to fail me. I think this simile of mine not objectionable on the ground which you state, as it is introduced into a paragraph entirely distinct from the Christian passages that precede it, and as it is only illustrative of an historical allegory. Las Casas. I purposely connected it with the name of Wilberforce; I knew the charge against him by his enemies, which Robertson has adopted and on the authority of Robertson our countrymen are ready to believe anything concerning America. The Abbe Gireire, I think, has so successfully vindicated the Character of the brave and benevolent Las Casas, as to prove that there ^{is no} ~~is no~~ contemporary record of his existence to support the charge that he was a "promoter of the Negro Slave Trade"; nor does the accusation appear to have been preferred against him — I mean against his memory, — earlier than thirty years after his death! Shall then you with avidity seize the occasion to say a word in favour of one who ought not to have been condemned without testimony the most clear and unequivocal: but never did an Angel of light appear in this malicious word, it was not willful as a Devil in disguise. — For your other candid and generous strictures, I have only room to thank you; I have endeavoured to profit by them all. — When I had finished the Poem, in the form in which it was communicated to you, I laid it aside, and put the subject itself as much as I, and a story of thoughts. Next a fortnight ago, I began to revise it deliberately, and with the advantage of all the critical advice that my friends ^{have} ~~have~~ given me upon it, that I should make the whole more creditable to myself, and more worthy of the Public. I have laboured through the first part, and have no inclination to complain of the head aches and heart burnings which I again sustained when it without mercy to my indifference, or regard to myself, which would have been persuaded that it was both good enough, and as good as I could make it, before. I mean to proceed with the three following parts at my leisure, and hope to have gone over the whole before the middle of September, about which time, I propose, under my stars the author's plan, to lay the corrected poem, with my own Lauds, at your feet. Last Week I sent you one of my newspapers, containing an imitation of an epigram, in simple French, long to the air of ^{my} ~~my~~ dear Father. I will give you a copy of the original on the next page. You will see that I did not pretend to translate it. I only caught the mantle, and prayed for the Spirit of the Author. I have written another, long, lyric poem (almost 200 lines) having little at the time; and afterwards when I coldly read it over. You find that its colours were faded or my eye was grown dimmer; I could not look at it with delight; it was a rainbow when I first saw it — when I returned it was a cloud. I threw it away, but I mean to take it up again, and when I have cut off its right hand, and plucked out its right eye, that is, when I have cancelled the stanzas that cost me the most toil, and when I have done the worst to myself, I had written ^{them} I hope it will not disgrace me. You shall then see it. — I had almost forgotten to say that about two months ago Mrs. Longman & Co. sent me for a copy revised from Poems, to present to the hands of Mr. Ballantyne, of Edinburgh to print a fourth Edition. I made a few slight alterations, and wrote a dozen lines of preface on the occasion. I have not heard since what progress has been made in the printing; and I have learned to be patient, and to collect what a numerous letter sent to you on the appearance of the Edinburgh Review of the 3^d Edition. I am astonished at the success which my poor wandering has experienced in the world, and I am sincerely ashamed of myself. Mrs. Longman & Co. have given ~~me~~ ^{me} a signed instance of their liberality on this occasion; they presented me with 30 £ above my stipulated share of the profits of the 3^d Edition. I must then become it is to be gratifying to you to hear it, for it was you who recommended me to them, I was a stranger to you, and I shall be so very grateful to you that I shall be sure to be as a poet.

Dear Sir, thus far have I written, and it is all about myself! - but I am determined not to notice the most affecting passage in your letter, till I had no room left to torment you with expatiating upon it. The last sentence in which you mildly, but in words that touched the tenderest string of my heart, allude to your own share of the sorrows of life, would have claimed from me a long, long epistle of encouragement and consolation, but I know by bitter experience that nothing is more wearing to a wounded spirit than words of condolence; for uncomplaining grief loves silent sympathy, and humble friendship dare not offer more. Whatever trials may afflict you or any part of your dear family may they all be converted into blessings in their issue. Accept my most grateful good wishes for your own peace and prosperity, and for the welfare of all whom you love. Your truly obliged friend,
Wm. G. Lusk

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1006 Clock
 N.Y. 25
 John A. Hewitt M.D.
 Stoke Newington,
 near
 Q. M.D.
 Aug. 23. 1808.

1808 July 22

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 JUL 25
 1808

UN 1808

<u>Ranz des Vaches.</u> Quand aurai-je en un jour Tous les objets de mon amour Nos clairs ruisseaux, Nos hameaux, Nos cotéaux, Nos vaches apais	Et l'ennemi de nos montagnes, La si gentille Labeau? Dans l'ombre d'un ormeau, Quand aurai-je au son de chalamme? Quand aurai-je en un jour Tous les objets de mon amour.	Mon Pere Ma Mere, Mes Freres, Ma Soeur, Mes Agneaux Mes troupeaux, Ma Bergerie!
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