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COPY OF A LETTER,

WRITTEN BY

The Rev. Mr. WILLIAM BARLAS,

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL OF THE ANTI-
BURGHIER CONGREGATION, WHITEHILL,
PARISH OF NEW DEER,

TO

JEAN WALKER.

JEAN WALKER,

Whitehill, May 12. 1798.

IT is no easy matter to act properly in the hour and power of temptation. I have often hesitated with myself about the propriety of writing to such a person as you. We are commanded to do good to our enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use us; but, by the same authority, we are forbid to cast pearls before swine. While the first is very difficult, it is often attended with happy effects; the last, is easy, but improper and hurtful. After much thought, I have resolved to write you a few lines, and leave the effects with the Lord— When you left Whitehill, I enjoyed the necessaries and conveniences of life, and a house which I could call my own: you have deprived me of them all, and reduced me, that I have no where to lay my head. When you went away, I was engaged in the work of the ministry, to which I had devoted myself from my youth; but at your instance, I am deposed from that office. If I am not mistaken, preaching Christ was dearer to me than life itself; but owing to you entirely, my mouth was shut, and hath never been opened again; so that, instead of proclaiming the great salvation, I must be silent, at your sole instance. You have done all you could to ruin the Congregation of Whitehill, which, to all appearance, was in a very flourishing situation, an individual or two excepted,—such as Wm. Davidson and John Spence. The people here were

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happy in a minister whom they loved dearly ; but, aided by Mr. Mitchell and your lawyer, with inconceivable violence you have torn their minister from them ; you have given the Lord's interest such a stroke, as it will not recover in this generation ; you have caused many a silent Sabbath, and made many a sorrowful heart ; the dreadful effects of your blow are innumerable. Much have I said and thought about the direful ways and depravity, and desperate wickedness of the human heart,—but your wickedness, by many degrees exceeds all the ideas I had ever formed of it. While here, you was with child, and denied it most bitterly ; you pretended a dropsy ; you constantly dealt with doctors openly, and, as I am informed, lately secretly bought drugs from J. B. to procure abortion. You was often prayed for in the family, as a very distressed person in it ; when in travail, you affected to be dying, and sent for me to pray with you : I tried to commend you to God, as one in the agonies of death. You may sport with death, but it will not sport with you. How can you think of mocking that God, to whom those prayers were addressed ! Whatever you may think, it is my opinion, and the opinion of very many, that you are guilty of the wilful murder of your own child, and have brought blood upon your head. The soul of the youngest, is of equal value in the sight of the Father of spirits as the oldest : What if your child perished eternally, through your not letting it live to hear of the great salvation ? Awful thought ! To my certain knowledge, you have brought their death on many, through inexpressible sorrow and anguish of heart : in my opinion, your conduct to me is worse than if you had cut my throat, or employed some of your relations, whom you heard so often call me damned rascal, to shoot me. Whatever you may say, you well know, and will know to your cost, that I am as innocent of your charge as any man in the world

and yet you have injured the innocent, and screened the guilty; by which conduct you have endangered the ruin of his soul to all eternity; and if he perish, his blood will be in a great measure required at your hand. You have mocked an omnipotent God; sinned wilfully, and wronged your own soul. You have misled the courts of Christ, and grieved the godly; you have brought the guilt of many oaths before the P——ry on your head; and some of them were strange depositions indeed. You have been the source of a whole flood of falsehoods, which hath filled the country; you have made most diabolical returns for the greatest kindness, and are a monster of ingratitude; you have, without the least cause, made me suffer more in one month, yea in one week, than I could make any person in the world to conceive; you have misimproved the best privileges and opportunities, without the shadow of provocation: nay, after the greatest kindness, you have done to me as I could never have done to a brute creature: you have done your worst. Though Satan should get full possession of your body, as he seems to have got of your heart, you can do me no more ill than you have done; and ill as you have done to me, you have done still worse to religion: but no man can reckon up your ills; no, not the hundredth part of them; your wickedness surpasseth all my comprehension. But God will sooner or later set them all in order before you. Well, it is no matter, a little time will clear up all: at the most, our life here is but a vapour, and this world's ills will soon be over: if in this life only I had hope, I would be of all men most miserable: Awful, Endless Eternity is before us! yea, there is an hereafter: then matters will be set to rights: there is a God, who judgeth righteously; there is a heaven, into which the godly are received after all their sufferings; there is a hell, into which the wicked shall be turned: then those words in the Revelation will be

strictly accomplished; "Murderers, whoremongers, all liars, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, shall have their part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." It seems your conscience is fast asleep, and seared up, as with a hot iron; but it will not always sleep; no, as far as I can judge, you have sold yourself to work wickedness, above all I ever knew or read of; unless I should except Judas, and two or three more. In all likelihood I will never see you in this world, till we meet again at the tribunal; there I will get justice, though I have got none at the church courts. Mr. Mitchell's malice, and your lawyer's libels, will be of no avail there; there, O Jean Walker, before an omnipotent God; before the Lord Jesus Christ, whom I preached unto you; and whom I mentioned so solemnly to you in the Session of White Stones; before all the holy angels; before all the devils in hell; before all who witnessed the trying scene you brought on me at the Presbytery since, the very remembrance of which makes me shudder to this day: in short, before all the world, good and bad, you will be made to declare the father of your child. There I will stand by fully acquitted; and as you signed yourself a liar in some sessions held by Mr. Taylor, where John Spence and William Davidson were the chief agents, you will again, before all the world, allow the character in all your charges against me. Mr. Mitchell, whom you have made so instrumental in ruining me, will be there; your lawyer, whom you hired to accuse me, will be there; and your particular friends, whom I shall not name, will all be there. Though there was no getting William Gibb, John Spence, and John Anderson, to hear you at White Stones, they will hear you well enough that day, and believe you too. The father of your child will, unless grace prevent, that day curse you to your face; and you and he will go away into everlasting

Every day and hour which you continue in your present course, you are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath! and, oh! what a vast treasure of it you are making for yourself! and you will get it all. How you think to reckon with the Judge of all, for your incalculable and accumulated guilt, exceeds conception; God is still as holy and omnipotent as when the earth opened and swallowed up his enemies; when Uzzah was struck dead for touching the ark; or when Annanias and Sapphira perished in a moment for lying to the Holy Ghost. You do not believe the Bible, else the many threatenings would alarm, arraign, and terrify you: one thing I am absolutely sure of, viz. If at any time you shall in earnest think of seeking saving mercy from God, the desolation you have brought on Whitehill; the hurt you have done to religion, and the godly; and the singular, unparallded injury you have done me; will fill your heart with terror, your soul with anguish, your conscience with agony, and your mouth with confession. In the nature of things, it is impossible you can pray for mercy, without confession of such enormous and unheard-of guilt: but I fear you have sinned the sin unto death; the day will declare: you are still alive: it is my settled opinion, that you will never be allowed to go off this earth without a visible stroke,—a stroke that will confound you, and astonish all my enemies. Twelve months ago, and upwards, I said different times, to many different people, with great seriousness, that whoever escaped a visible stroke, Margaret Mackie and Jean Walker would not: as to her, my words have not fallen to the ground, and they will not fall to the ground about you. If it be true that she and you, and John Anderson, and some others, entered into a deliberate plot to accuse, it was a most finished and execrable piece of wickedness, and will not pass unpunished. Nelly Mackie says, that her sister said it to her; and that she added, “Since I en-

“ engaged in it, I have not prospered ; it will deprive
 “ me of reason, and life itself, and sink me into hell for
 “ ever.” This Nelly Mackie told repeatedly to Sophia
 Seaton and others. Oh, inconceivable wickedness ! At
 any rate, before she died, she was a terror to herself,
 and all around ; often in extreme despair did she cry
 out, that she had ruined Whitehill, and removed the
 gospel : you have done that effectually. Awful was
 her screeching and roaring, at James Clark’s and many
 other places ; her horror was inexpressible ; and her
 death awful !!! I am greatly mistaken if yours, sooner
 or later, be not as ill ; your day is fast coming ; it
 will come, it will come : should they join hand in
 hand, and do their utmost, the whole world cannot
 keep such a sinner and monster of iniquity as you from
 Divine vengeance. Besides all the other parts of your
 dreadful load of guilt, you have a share,—no small
 share,—of Margaret Mackie’s blood on your head :
 and though she is first dead, when your turn comes
 she will have a share of yours. You may keep up a
 while ; sentence is not always speedily executed against
 an evil work ; but always certainly ; God will not be
 mocked. True, it is the glory of the gospel which
 preached to you, that it offereth salvation to the chief
 of sinners ; but that salvation, though long in your
 offer, you have utterly despised ; and that gospel, which
 offers it, you have tried to ruin. Well I settled the
 terms with you at Craigdam, and took High witnesses
 if you have forgot them, God will put you in mind of
 them ; they are as follows : I solemnly engaged to take
 all the bad effects and consequences which had follow-
 ed, or which would follow, on myself, and be ac-
 countable for them, and entirely free you, if I had
 either the least knowledge of your guilt, or that you
 was with child, or that I was the father ; but if I was
 innocent, injured, and falsely accused, I solemnly laid
 all the blame on you, and left you to answer for all the

bad effects. Mind, by these I abide. I told you then, too, that notwithstanding pretences, you knew the time of your delivery as well as ever any woman did; for no entreaty would persuade you to stay at New Deer. Putting all your conduct together, it constitutes the most complicated and consummate wickedness to be found in the annals of the human race. Oh, what an inconceivable load of guilt lies on you! Oh, what a hideous monster of wickedness and deceit! Is there a God? is he righteous and just? Yes, yes. Continuing as you are, you will not only perish, but the common damned will shun your society, as fiends less foul. I might address you as Paul did Elymas the sorcerer, Acts xiii. 10.; "O! full of all subtilty," &c. And what have you gained? You have gratified the pride of your relations by accusing me, and even that poorly; for not one in an hundred but sees the plot, and holds them and you in abhorrence; the country at large abominates you, and your band; hereafter your relations themselves will, by all appearance, curse you to your face bitterly without ceasing! It is no light matter to tear a minister from his office and from his charge!!! Inasmuch will the exalted Judge one day say in your hearing, "As you did it to the least of these, ye did it unto me." Oh what a large gnawing worm will pounce on your heart and conscience to all eternity, by all appearance!—I want no answer from you: my eyes, I think, shall never look upon any thing wrote by you. It was a piece of unparalleled cruelty and wickedness in you, to write to this house, and at the roup: my eyes never saw it from the time it was given in, as well as a hint, that some heard from your friend who carried it, that it was suspected to be from some of the band; it was taken and burnt unread before witnesses: witnesses who saw it given, opened, and burnt, in one minute of time. If you have any thing to write, either acquit-

ting or accusing me, send it to Clola or Clochcan, Cross-
 gight or Macduff, or you may send it to your friend
 L. — Well aware now of what you can do, to prevent
 false reports, and that you may do no injury to this
 letter, I leave exact copies of it in different persons
 hands; make any use of it you please. I lodge it in
 your conscience; which you well know is on my side,
 and against you; I have no fear but it will speak for
 me in due time. By a solemn oath, I have ended the
 controversy between you and me; in the most solemn
 manner I have applied to the Searcher of hearts, and
 he will determine the controversy. You must either
 accuse another man, or live to your dying hour under
 the scandal of fornication, and dreadful sin and scan-
 dal of accusing an innocent man. I have given autho-
 rity to different persons to prosecute, before the Court
 of Justiciary, the man, or set of men, who would talk
 with you about being absolved in my name—instead of
 doing it. I have also taken a written bond from them,
 that they shall do as I have appointed; it is but to guide
 all our affairs with discretion to the end. George Fulie
 hath stole enough from me already—“who steals my
 “purse;” he and you have tried to “rob me of my
 “good name.” I have had too much trouble from you
 already, I shall have no more—and write ye no more.
 I now leave you in the hand of an omniscient and holy,
 and just God; vengeance is his, and he will take care of
 you. I warn you never to think, hear, or speak about
 Whitchill, without minding, that you have made it a
 desolation, and that the weight lies on your shoulders;
 Numbers xxxii. 23.

