

LETTER (No. 2.) TO THE REV. JOHN BORLAND.

Beloved Sir,

The Copy of your "Reviewer reviewed" which you had the goodness to send me, came duly to hand. A hasty perusal of the document satisfied me that it furnished the very best additional proofs I could offer in support of the general charge of incompetency, as a writer, which I had preferred against you in my No. 1. and acting upon that conviction, I immediately addressed you a note, respectfully asking for fifty copies of it, and pledging myself at the same time to address one to each of the parties to whom I had sent my own letter. One would have supposed you would have been glad to put your crushing reply before every man who had seen the production you had honored with so many beautiful names, but you treated my application with "severe and silent contempt." Urged, as you will no doubt conclude, by a desire to do you ample justice, and being denied the opportunity of doing so by sending your Review to the persons who received my sheet, I am left to the alternative of printing a rejoinder, which I trust will be more satisfactory to you than my letter No. 1.

You will pardon me if I do not treat the subject upon which I enter with overmuch solemnity—upon some occasions it is exceedingly difficult to be grave. *Pourquoi ne dirais-je pas la vérité en riant?*

I had hardly expected you would deem me worthy of notice, and yet, I thought you could not very well afford to be silent, as judgment might then go by default. You have answered, and I have therefore the proud consciousness of having been instrumental in procuring to the Republic of Letters another great contribution from your pen. In the next edition of *Dr. Israel's Curiosities of Literature*, it may be that the Wesleyan connexion will be gratified by seeing a production from one of its most gifted sons.

That your graceful tribute to my character and abilities did not originate in exuberance of love, is patent upon the face of the epistle, but it indicates, and with tolerable certainty, that my arrow had reached its mark, inflicting a deep, yet I hope not incurable wound. Hence your cries of distress which, however, be it said in a whisper, for fear of offence, you have not even the talent to utter in decent English.

Your criticisms of my orthography and diction are in excellent keeping with your other writings, I only regret you did not amplify, for floundering as you do, every successive "plunge" presents a new aspect of the ridiculous which, were it not very melancholy, would be infinitely entertaining. You address your letter to another soft-headed friend, but unfortunately for your purpose, everybody is not prepared to accept nonsense, nor are all your readers credulous enough to gulp down all you say of me.

The quotation which follows—I am sorry to be under the necessity of saying it—contains an untruth, and those who know me best will stand aghast at your hardihood. "You see him here as he has been often seen by others under a tumult of vindictive feelings:" unless you can bring witnesses, you must be regarded as—bad man. I adduce another instance of contempt for truth, "he takes up with marked eagerness anything that falls from my pen with the evident design of shewing how incompetent I am to write, &c." Now Reverend Sir, you know that I never took up your writings for the purpose of criticising them, until I came to Toronto. I alluded once or twice, in my correspondence with a Montreal paper—I doubt if I did it more than once—to the politico-religious letters to Roman Catholics you published in the *Quebec Gazette*, but as to taking them up with eagerness, with marked eagerness, for the purpose of criticism, the statement is absurdly and wickedly untrue: mark that Mr. Borland. Your literary labours in that line amounted I believe to a respectable sized volume, whereas all I ever said about them would not cover one-twentieth part of this sheet! Then you have printed sundry pamphlets and a small book, all of them distinguished for grammatical inaccuracies, upon which I have never offered a remark, other than the one contained in my letter issued a few days ago. And yet you have the imprudence to say that I take up with marked eagerness anything that falls from your pen, in order to show how ill you write!! Have you no shame? Have you so entirely forgotten the sacredness of truth as to experience no qualms of conscience when you utter falsehoods of this magnitude? Your reputation for conscientiousness does not stand very high in a certain place, and unless you control your unruly members—tongue and dexter hand—I fear it will fall equally low here.

My statement with regard to attendance at class is one which cannot be truthfully contradicted, as all your show of indignation will in no wise invalidate it. Having been for twenty-nine years in direct intercourse with Wesleyan Societies in this country,—twenty as a member, and eight or nine as a Class Leader—I hold myself to be as competent a witness of the usages and habits of the Methodist people as the very Reverend Mr. Borland, and I deliberately re-assert that at this moment thousands of members neglect meeting in class without being brought under discipline. Aye! and I will go further than in my first letter, and say, that in most cases of neglect, the reason is not inquired into.

With all your painstaking you have detected two typographical errors in my letter, which you present as faults of my own, and respecting one of them, you say I "colored it for the sake of effect," or, for the purpose of damaging you. You mean that I lied. Now Mr. Borland, it is true I have very little respect for you, but God forbid that I should descend to so mean an action as giving currency to a lie about you, or any body else. My remark upon the passage in which the word "reference" occurs is as follows—"We have the allusions of Malachi, and the references to them by Jehovah himself," of which pluralities you say "I will read it for your consideration." My readers will see that the objection is not based upon the s in "references," but upon the "allusions and references," so that you may drop the s (which was a typographical error) in the second word, without lessening the force of the objection. You will gain very little credit by this unworthy stratagem.

Speaking of orthographical errors, allow me to tell you that I passed over several words misspelled in your Dialogue, which indicated pretty clearly that they had been wrongly written, and I find similar defects in your "Reviewer Reviewed." Please note the following:—*Phamphlet*, 3rd page, or Preface, "Phamphlet"; 5th page, "seperate"; 7th page, "seperate"; (the repetition of this error is something like proof that you did not know how to spell that simple word.) Page 10, "irresistable"; page 14, "counell and pray" &c., for *counsel*; page 18, "Imovables." The letter to your "Dear Friend" shows the following:—1st page, "violaters"; 3rd page, "Ineligancies"; same paragraph, "Ineligancies" again! There are other mistakes which I do not mark as they are apparently due to the type-setters.

I come now to the use you have made of my unpublished note to yourself, and if I were to employ very strong language in reprobation of the act, I am sure no person of right feeling would hold me guilty of a breach of christian courtesy. My proceeding in sending you that note was dictated by a desire to avoid doing you injustice, but with a total disregard of polemical propriety you have introduced the contents of a hurried scrawl, which formed no part of the document upon which you were remarking, in your reply. As to the criticisms upon the note itself, can it be necessary that I should tell the reader that the technical word "proof" is used by printers and writers without the addition of "copy"? I would not insult any man of common intelligence by supposing it necessary, but for your sake I crave reference to Webster. "Proof, No. 7, in printing and engraving, a rough impression of a sheet taken for correction; plural Proofs." And then as to the use of the word "issue," did you not know that that verb is both active and neuter, or transitive and intransitive? Your cavil suggests that you do not even understand the most simple rudiments of grammar. See Webster, "Issue, s. i., to pass or flow out, &c., &c." Legal processes issue, or may be "ready to issue," so may debentures or scrip from Stock Companies; warrants from the Government; books and letters from the Press, &c., &c. Sir, your hypercriticism (don't mistake the word for hypocrisy) is worthy of your logic and grammar. When I tell you that I willingly take the risk of all your other marvellous critiques you will excuse my giving them a more extended notice.

I have another serious charge to bring against you, and it is one which no writer having decent self-respect can afford to treat lightly. Being a minister of the Gospel your presumed sanctity makes it especially necessary that you should act in good faith, in other words, like an honest man. This you have not done in your "Review, &c." To attain an end you have descended to a very doubtful act. You have misquoted me, or to be more explicit, you have withheld from your readers portions of some of my arguments which were necessary to their integrity (I use the word integrity in its primary and best sense—wholeness.) In proof of this charge I refer the reader to the 6th paragraph of my first letter, and to the 6th, 7th, and 8th of yours, also to my paragraph 14, and to its mutilation at your paragraph 10.