

Wicket Gate Magazine

A Continuing Witness



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At the Web Site of the Wicket Gate magazine www.wicketgate.co.uk you will also find the following recordings:

- Through the Bible with the Children – Bible Stories told by Mr Seaton.
- Congregational Praise – the singing of our Church during Worship Services
- Sermons preached by Dr N. Needham, W. J. Seaton, and Pastor G. S. Marley
- Historical Lectures given in the Church by Dr Needham
- Podcasts on Various Subjects
- Archive of Audio Sermons.

Popular Opinion of God's Word?

One of the most effective means of stifling a true spirit of sincere enquiry on the part of men and women (the Lord's people included) is to cite the preponderance of a contrary popular opinion – especially if that opinion happens to be one that is held by the recognised leaders of the day. It was the means that was often employed in the days of the Saviour on earth as various groups of people began to feel their hearts and minds opening up to the things that He was saying. In John chapter seven, we have an outstanding and instructive illustration of the whole process.

In that passage of scripture, our Lord has just stood forth on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem and made His famous declaration, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." This statement – together with all that had gone before – immediately aroused the interest and the discussion of many of the people and a great spirit of enquiry followed. This in no way suited the ruling religious party in Jerusalem, and immediately a group of Temple officers were sent off to arrest Jesus and bring Him before the Council.

The officers returned empty-handed, of course, and when they were asked to give a reason for this, all they could do was express the tremendous impression that Christ's words had on them:- "Never man spake like this man," they said. Such impressions, and such opening-up towards the words of Christ must be quickly dealt with; and so, the Pharisees in question call into operation the procedure mentioned above.

First of all, of course, they absolutely demolished any sense of confidence that the returning officers might be placing in their

assessment of what they had seen and heard: “Are ye also deceived?” they said. Pretty devastating stuff, and enough to take the wind out of anybody’s sails! Then came the “deathblow;” “Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?” “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?” That was meant to be final, and so far as the Word of God leads us to believe, it *was* final for every one of those Temple officers that day. The preponderance of popular opinion was against them – the very opinion of the rulers and the leaders themselves – who were they to think otherwise in the face of such weight, and authority.

As we say, so far as the Bible leads us to believe, the returning officers were silenced and their impressions stifled. It is still a very impressive weapon, and one that is still employed in a very high-handed fashion. Preponderance of opinion, and opinions of some in particular, must always be regarded with respect and due consideration; for the enquiring mind of anyone, however, the final answer must rest with what the Lord has said in His Holy Word.

The “second phase” of the proceedings in the Jewish council in John chapter seven is also full of interest and instruction for us. Nicodemus, as a member of the council, was present during these proceedings, and if the officers had been intimidated by the thought of being “out on a limb,” he apparently was not. Nicodemus then, in fact, spoke-up in the defence of Christ, but he was met with the most crushing response of all. “Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know that he doeth?” asked Nicodemus; “They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” Surely that must be the end of the matter. And for poor old Nicodemus, at this point, it would appear that it was.

You see, what the Pharisees and rulers in question were doing was inviting Nicodemus to “search the scriptures.” “Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” Surely that was the “end of all controversy!” And we may well-imagine with what confidence they beckoned Nicodemus to the Bible to see for himself just how valid their opinions were. If *he* would read his Bible, like *they* read their Bibles, then indeed, he would see that “no prophet” in Israel came out of “Galilee,” such as this man Jesus of Nazareth did. How true that was; how sadly true. For the truth of the matter is, they could not read their Bibles aright, and therefore, never did see Christ in their Bibles.

We may remember our Lord’s own words to them, in chapter five of John, verse 39, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; *but they are they which testify of me.*” These men did, indeed, read the Bible, but for all their reading of it, they never did see the true nature of the Christ who was to come, so that when He did come, they rejected Him, and delivered Him up to the death of the cross. If Nicodemus had followed their approach to the Word of God, without doubt, he would have come to believe also that Galilee had no connection with the Prophet of Israel who was to come. But he would have been wrong.

It’s a very telling remark that those religious leaders in Jerusalem made, even in a general understanding of their words. “Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” But, in fact, one of Israel’s greatest prophets had arisen “out of Galilee;” that is the prophet, Jonah. Jonah came from Gath-hepher, which was little more than a stone’s throw from Nazareth itself. How did they make such a glaring omission in their statement? Or, at least, how did they fail to

notice a connection in their statement? The answer is more than interesting in the light of the total context of John seven.

The one thing that those religious leaders could not bear was the thought that this Jesus of Nazaeth was presenting Himself as the Saviour of “all men.” That is, not only a Saviour for Israel, but for the uttermost parts of the earth. So, our Lord’s statement that had aroused such discussion and enquiry:- “If *any man* thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” Christ had come to be the Saviour of all who would believe on His name, and that kind of preaching found little house-room with those men whose whole theology centred on Israel’s favoured position, and on Israel’s favoured position alone. They had no heart, or no thought for the “uttermost parts of the earth.” That was their stated theology and position.

Now, if there is one book in the Old Testament canon of scripture that absolutely pillories that position, it is the book of the prophet Jonah, and the Lord’s insistence that He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. Jonah was sent, in fact, (much against his own will and views) to the uttermost parts of the earth; it is small wonder that those men of the Jonah-spirit, had little eyesight for recalling the existence of such a prophet in the scriptures that they professed to search. It was simply the old story, they didn’t mould their opinions according to the Word of God, but the Word of God according to their opinions. That’s why they were confident in telling Nicodemus to search and look. Praise God, of course, Nicodemus did just that and found “Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write.”

Yours sincerely,
W. J. Seaton (1986)



Gleanings in the Psalms

Psalm 108

Verses 1-5. “O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory ...” These five verses are found in Psalm 57:7-11 almost verbatim. The chief point of difference probably lies in ***the position*** of the verses. In the 57th Psalm these notes of praise ***follow*** prayer and grow out of it; but in this case the Psalmist begins at once to sing and give praise, and afterwards prays to God in a remarkably confident manner, so that he seems rather to ***seize*** the blessing than plead for it.

Sometimes we must climb to praise by the ladder of prayer, and at other times we must bless God for the past in order to be able, in faith, to plead for the present and the future.

C. H. Spurgeon

Verse 1. “O God, my heart is fixed.” The wheels of a cart revolve, but the axle turns not; the sails of a mill move with the wind, but the mill itself moves not; the earth is carried round its orbit, but its centre is fixed. So should a Christian be able, amidst changing scenes and changing fortunes, to say, “O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed.”

G. Bowes

Verse 3. “I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.” David seemed inspired to foresee that his Psalms would be sung in every land,

from Greenland's Icy mountains to India's coral strand. His heart was large; he would have the whole race of men listen to his joy in God, and lo, his desire is granted, for his psalmody is cosmopolitan. He had but one theme, he sang Jehovah and none beside, and his work being thus made of "gold, silver and precious stones," has endured the fiery ordeals of time. Happy man, to have thus made his choice to be the Lord's musician. He retains his office as the Poet Laureate of the Kingdom of heaven, and shall retain it till the crack of doom.

Spurgeon

Verses 5-6. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; and thy glory above all the earth; that thy beloved may be delivered The Church is the Lord's "beloved" – more loved than anything else in the world; therefore, it is here called "***Thy*** beloved." Because the church is God's beloved, the care of it should be most in our mind, and the love and the preservation of it should draw forth our prayers; "That thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand and answer me."

David Dickson

Verses 7-8. God hath spoken in his holiness ... Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine ... Judah is my lawgiver. All God's subjects in Israel were to be brought under one head, one governor, who should give them laws according to which they should be ruled. This power and authority belonged to the tribe of Judah according to that prophecy of Jacob, (Genesis 49:10.) In the Church and in matters of religion, this one Head is Christ, even that "Lion of the tribe of Judah," as He is called. He is the Lawgiver of His Church, and let Him so be. This will be found the one way – aye, the only one way – to breed a holy and religious unity in the Church, and bring home wandering and straying sheep.

John Brinsley

Verse 9. “Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe” In God’s prophetic promise to David, Moab and Edom were to be reduced to a state of lowest vassalage. The one was to be like a pot, or a tub, fit only for washing the feet in; while the other was to be like the domestic slave standing by to receive the sandals thrown to him by the person about to perform the washing. The promise becomes the basis of confidence in the closing verses.

From Rays from the East

Verses 10-11 “Who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me to Edom? Wilt not thou, O God...?” The believer, when he promises himself great things, must neither be senseless of the difficulties of opposition that he is to meet with, nor of his own inability to overcome those difficulties. **But**, being sensible of both, he must look to God for assistance and furniture to overcome. When David considered the strength of that fenced royal city of the enemy, he saith, “Who will bring me into it?” The answer? “Wilt thou not, O God?”

Dickson

***Mrs Seaton's Letter
to the
Boys and Girls***



Dear Boys and Girls,

Some time ago I was reading a story about a young farmer in Canada who one day, as he was working in his field, suddenly heard a swift rustle among the sheaves of corn. "Ah, good! He

exclaimed, "Here's a hare for our dinner." He darted forward to grab the hare. Pushing his hand into the sheaf, he caught hold of the thing that was making the noise. As he drew out his hand, the young farmer was almost frozen to the spot when he saw what he had in his hand. Guess what? - a deadly rattlesnake! Quick as a wink, he made an end to it with the farming tool he had in his other hand.

As he continued on with his work, he said to himself, "Had that rattlesnake got me first, instead of me getting it, I'd have had it." Immediately his mind went back to a little village on the banks of the river Clyde, where he had been born and brought up.

His parents feared God and taught their children the way of salvation. Alick (for that was his name) continued to remember how that, when he was a young boy at Sunday School, he had felt in his heart that he was a sinner. He had been told by his teacher that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and yet, had put off Jesus' offer of mercy and eternal life. So there, in that field far, far away from his home, shaken by the fright and the great truth of the uncertainty of life, Alick looked to Jesus for His way of salvation. He continued right through his life to serve God and glorify Jesus.

You know boys and girls, it is very dangerous to put off thinking about God and His salvation. Boys and girls are inclined to "put off" because they feel they have plenty of time. To "put off" is just to play into the hands of that great enemy – that old serpent – the devil. It is he who puts the "putting off" thoughts into our head, and this is more deadly than any rattlesnake bite.

Remember the story in the Old Testament about the children of Israel who were bitten by the serpents, and were dying? (Numbers chapter 21 verses 6) God told Moses to make a brass serpent, put it on a pole and tell the bitten Israelites to look at it. If they looked – then, they lived.

We are told about a remedy for Satan's bite, and that is by looking to Jesus, for Jesus said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Jesus had to be "lifted up" on the cross so that salvation could come to sinners.

Take the lesson of Alick, boys and girls; be wise; don't put off." Look to Jesus, and be saved.

Love,
Mrs Seaton.

Most Fit for a Wounded Conscience.

In his Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, John Bunyan tells about his search for some book that would help him in his Christian pilgrimage and quest. He tells us that he read and tried a good many books by various authors of his day, but it wasn't until he came across Martin Luther's commentary on Galatians that he found what proved to be that book that was "most fit for a wounded conscience." Indeed, he says, "I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians (excepting the Holy Bible) before all the books that ever I have seen."

In his Bunyan Characters, Alexander Whyte sets out to show why Bunyan would have found Luther's commentary on

Galatians such a fit book. This he does by simply relating some passages from Luther, on some subjects at would have taken hold on Bunyan's heart and mind such as *sin, law, Christ, and grace*. We have no doubt that Luther's comments are as fit as ever for our souls.

(1) Sin. Sin in Holy Scripture signifies far less the outward act, than the sinful spirit that lives and works deep down in the bottom of the sinner's heart. According to the universal teaching of Holy Scripture, the sinful heart is the true seat, and the real source, of all evil. And then, more than that, Holy Scripture looks on our *unbelief* as being the real spring of all our evil – both inward and outward. “The Holy Ghost shall convince the world of sin,” says our Lord, “because they believe not on me.” According to the Holy Scripture, faith alone justifies and unbelief alone condemns. Our unbelief and our sin are so deeply rooted in our depraved hearts that they are never wholly eradicated in this life. Even the best saints are continually falling into sin through unbelief and an evil heart. Abraham fell, Isaac fell, Jacob fell. And so on, all down the Holy Scriptures. And all these sins of God's saints are recorded in the Holy Scriptures in order that we might take comfort and not despair. If Jacob, Aaron, and David, and Peter fell, and rose again, so may we rise again like them. They rose again by repentance, and by faith, and by prayer; and so, may we.

(2) Law. Understand that Moses is not intended to be your Saviour! You will never save yourself by the deeds of the law. The law is intended to have the very opposite result. For the divine intention of the law is, to begin with, to show us ourselves. Its first function is to reveal to us our hopeless sinfulness, and it mightily deepens and darkens our despair. Let every well taught Christian dispute with the law say to it:- O

thou so severe and inflexible law! Thou wouldst fain set up thy seat of judgment in my guilty conscience! Thou wouldst fain summon up all thy witnesses against me! Thou wouldst fain sentence me as I deserve! But keep thee to thy proper office. Lay all thy terrors upon my sinful heart, and upon my evil life. But come not near my tender conscience, for thou must know that Christ, thy Master, and mine, has Himself died for me. He has Himself settled all accounts for me. And in Him I have, and am rightly entitled to have, peace of conscience and a quiet mind. He has led me wholly out of thy jurisdiction, and He has placed me down in a state of salvation, in which estate there is no condemnation. Tell the law that if it has anything in any way to say to thee now, it must say it all through Jesus Christ. Say to it that thou art now stone dead to everyone and to everything but Christ.

(3) Christ. Christ, then, is no Moses. Christ does not speak from Sinai. No weapons in His hands are seen, nor voice of terror heard. Christ is not a hard master who will compel the uttermost farthing. Christ comes to all sinners full of grace and mercy: both able and willing to save. Christ is nothing but infinite grace and goodness. Be sure that you always paint Christ to yourself in His true and correct colours. It is the very top and complete crown of Christian truth to be able to define and describe Christ aright – and that especially in the season of sin and guilt and condemnation. Hold fast at all times by Paul’s description and definition of Christ. Now, Paul’s true description is this: He loved me, and gave himself for me. For myself, I have much difficulty in always holding this divine definition of Christ which Paul gives to all believers. When I was a young man, I was so drowned in unscriptural and anti-evangelical error that my heart trembled at the very name of Christ, for I was taught to think of Him as an angry judge: whereas He is our

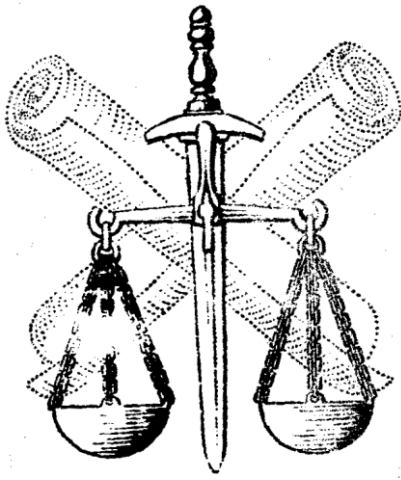
Redeemer and our Saviour. Christ is joy and sweetness to every trembling and broken heart. Christ is the true and faithful lover of all those who are in trouble and anguish because of sin. He is the merciful High Priest of all miserable and fearful sinners.

Let us learn to practice this distinction; for where Christ is rightly understood and held by, there must needs be joy of heart and peace of conscience. And that because He is our reconciliation, and our righteousness, and our peace, and our life, and our whole and complete salvation. ***In Brief***, whatsoever the afflicted conscience desires that it finds in Christ abundantly and continually.

(4) Grace. Grace has this distinction, that it signifies the favour and the affection of God, through which he pours Christ and His Spirit into our hearts. And though our sinful nature remains in us more or less all our life on earth, nevertheless, grace does so much for us that we are regarded as fully and entirely justified before God. For His grace does not divide itself and parcel itself out, but it receives us at once and wholly into the divine favour for the sake of Christ. You can understand, therefore, the seventh chapter of the Romans, where Paul so reproaches himself as a sinner, and yet in the eighth chapter goes on to say that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. On account of our indwelling sin, we are still sinners; but because of our faith and trust in Christ, God is favourable to us and will act towards us according to our faith in Christ till our sin is completely mortified within us.

From the above it is not difficult to see why John Bunyan considered Luther's Galatians as "most fit for a wounded conscience."

The Trial of Anne Askew



“And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you” (Our Lord to His disciples; Matthew chapter 10, verses 18 to 20.)

Numerous are the martyrs of Jesus who have known the truth and the upholding of those words from Matthew’s gospel spoken by our Lord to His disciples so many years ago. The names of Latimer and Ridley, or Hamilton and Wishart, immediately spring to mind as being of those who received “a mouth and wisdom” which all their adversaries were “not able to gainsay nor resist.” But, as all these were men who had proved themselves to be “able ministers of the word of God,” it is, perhaps, more especially in the “ordinary” member of the Church of Christ that we see the glory of this promise most vividly portrayed. Such is the case of Anne Askew, the twenty-five year old martyr of the gospel who was burnt at the stake in Smithfield Square in the year 1546, but who so astounded her accusers right up until the final hours of her death when she committed her soul into the hands of Him who had kept it throughout the weeks and months of her trial.

Anne Askew was born near Grimsby in the year 1521. Those were early days in the things of the Reformation, especially as far as our own islands were concerned, and John Calvin was still

a schoolboy at Noyon in France. Anne married at an early age, but it soon became clear that it was an ill-matched marriage, and as her faith developed and increased, the gap between husband and wife widened until she was finally shut out from her home altogether, because her husband couldn't bear the stigma of being married to a woman of "protestant" sympathies. Right from the beginning it would seem that Anne Askew had been born to persecution as the sparks fly upwards, and soon she was forced to leave the region of her birth completely, first of all moving to Lincoln, and then London itself.

Anne was of that prophetic spirit of Amos that had heard the lion roar, and could do nothing else but speak. However, to speak of the things of the gospel in those days was but to invite the wrath of the "church" and the state, and when Anne Askew made it known quite openly, "I had rather read five lines of the Bible than hear five masses," the future course of her life was set, and in March 1545 she was formally accused of embracing the protestant heresy.

Now began the trials that were to last, on and off, for over a year, and when all the official and theological might of the city of London was brought at various points in an effort to make this young "heretic" recant and re-enter the mother church of Rome. Listen to her here being interrogated by the Lord Mayor of the city, on the charge of denying the "reality" of the Mass:

Lord Mayor: Thou foolish woman, sayest thou that the priests cannot make the body of Christ?

Anne: I say so, my lord, for I have read that God made man; but that man made God I never yet read, nor I suppose ever shall read.

Lord Mayor: No, thou foolish woman. After the words of consecration is it not the Lord's body?

Anne: No, it is but consecrated bread, or sacramental bread.

Lord Mayor: What if a mouse eat it after the consecration? What will become of the mouse? What sayest thou, foolish woman?

Anne: What shall become of it, say you, my lord.

Lord Mayor: I say that that mouse is damned.

Anne: Alas, poor mouse!

This last reply finished the session for the court fell into laughter, and it was not thought advisable to continue! She was met with the old chestnut that she had no right to quote scripture at all, seeing that the apostle Paul had forbidden women to speak. But she very consistently pointed out that this injunction had to do with "teaching" the congregation, and as she had never entered a pulpit there was little that she could be charged with before the apostle.

The next opponent to enter the arena with the young saint was no less a person than the ill-famed Bishop Bonner himself. He tried to ensnare her with questions relating to the value of private Masses which were to be said for the souls of loved ones in purgatory. "What idolatry is this?" said Anne, "that we should rather believe in private masses than in the healthsome death of the dear Son of God!" Seeing that face-to-face confrontation was virtually useless, Bonner hit on a new plan of campaign. He

produced a document which she simply had to sign as her confession of faith, and so, gain her release. She told him that she would sign the document provided that he added one sentence which would state that she believed those things written in it where they were in agreement with the Word of God. Needless to say, this was not what Bonner required; nor was he happy at a future date when she made her confession on paper in the following terms: - “I, Anne Askew, do believe all manner of things contained in the faith of the Catholic Church.” The Bishop well knew that Anne’s “Catholic church” was very far different from the “Roman” Catholic Church.

There followed a short period of freedom from imprisonment, but when Anne was rearrested she was to face the most formidable opposition that she had yet encountered. But God abode faithful in giving her words to speak to the scattering of her foes. Bishop Gardiner attempted to play the fox, but ended up like one of those in Samson’s escapade and had his tail burnt. He attempted to take Anne aside and speak to her in a private and fatherly manner. But Anne saw through the deception; “At the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter must stand after the doctrine of Christ and Paul,” she told him. “Then you must burn,” shouted the enraged Gardiner. “Search the scriptures,” was the young girl’s reply, “and you will never find that Christ and His apostles put any creature to death. God will laugh your threatenings to scorn.”

Once again, the great issue of the Mass was raised, and with renewed vigour and courage Anne Askew delivered a scathing challenge to the assembled prelates; “As to that which you call your God,” she said, “it is a piece of bread. For proof of that, watch it any time you please, for if it lie in the box three months

it will grow mouldy and so turn to nothing that is good.

Whereupon I am persuaded that it cannot be God.”

The sentence of death soon came, and Anne was removed to the Tower of London to await the burning. During this time she was cruelly dealt with, as John Foxe gives testimony of in his famous Book of Martyrs; “First, she was led down into a dungeon,” he tells us, “where Sir Anthony Knevet, the lieutenant, commanded his jailor to pinch her with the rack; which being done as far as he thought sufficient, he was about to remove her, supposing that she had suffered enough. But Wriothesley, the Chancellor, displeased that she was so speedily released, when she would make no confession, commanded the lieutenant to bind her on the rack again. And when Knevet, less brutal than his superior, refused, and urged the weakness of the poor victim, the Chancellor threatened to report his disobedience to the King. Then he (the Chancellor) and Mr. Rich, throwing off their gowns, must needs play the tormentors themselves, first enquiring whether she were with child. To which she nobly answered ‘Ye shall not need to spare for that, but do your will upon me.’ And so, quietly and patiently praying unto the Lord, she abode their tyranny until her bones and joints were almost plucked asunder, so that she was carried away in a chair.”

It was only a matter of time now before the trial of Anne Askew would draw to a close on that July morning of 1546. There were three others led out to the stake along with her, but even up to the last, it was her words as given to her by the Lord that made ready testimony to her God and strengthened those others of like precious faith now about to die a like cruel death. The preacher for the occasion was Nicholas Shaxton – no doubt appointed to that task in a last-bid effort to weaken Anne Askew, and also as a means of torment to his own soul. Shaxton had been himself

imprisoned for failing to comply with church strictures, but on hearing the sentence of burning being pronounced upon himself, he recanted, and signed the offending articles. No sooner had Shaxton ended his sermon over the martyrs than Anne was given a letter, written in the King's own hand, and offering her freedom if she would but follow the preacher Shaxton's example and recant. Her reply were the last words that fell from her mortal lips, "I came not hither to deny my Lord and Master." And the flames were but a chariot of fire to bear her soul to its eternal rest.

Colourful Correspondences

The written acknowledgments or advice of many of the Lord's people of the past seem to have a peculiar down-to-earth quality about them that is, perhaps, missing from much of our present-day greetings and penmanship as the following few extracts show. Writing to a friend who has intimated his intention to pass through the village of Everton, the old Vicar, John Berridge, informs him what he might expect by way of hospitality.... "I am glad to see you write of a visit to Everton; we have always plenty of horse provender at hand, but unless you send me notice beforehand of your coming, you will have a cold and scanty meal, for we roast only twice in the week. Let me have a line and I will give you the same treat that I always gave Mr Whitefield, an eighteen-penny barn-door fowl; this will neither burst you nor ruin me. Half you shall have at noon with a pudding, and the rest at night. Much grace and sweet peace be with yourself and partner; and the blessings of a new heart be with your children. With many thanks, I remain your affectionate servant. J.B."

Jacob Gruber was another who could express his intentions in a colourful and striking manner when offering advice. An aspiring young pulpit orator who had an unfortunate habit of prolonging his words in an effort to gain effect received the following direction regarding his preaching,

“Dear Ah! Brother Ah!” – When-ah you-ah go-ah to-ah preach-ah, take-ah, care-ah you-ah don’t ah!- say-ah Ah-ah! Yours-ah, Jacob-ah Gruber-ah.”

Few, we would imagine, have been introduced to their future life partner the way one young woman was introduced to hers by good Matthew Wilks, the worthy old preacher of the Evangelical Awakening. Believing that a young Minister friend was in need of matrimonial bliss he dispatched him to an eligible young lady with this brief covering note:-

“My dear madame, - Allow me to introduce to you my worthy friend, the Rev Mr A-.

If you’re a cat,
You’ll smell a rat!
Yours truly,
Matt. Wilks.
