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Letter from John Newton to John Campbell, February 4, 1799

John Newton

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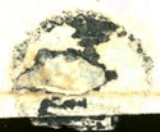
London 10th July 99

Mr John Campbell

Great Street

St James

Edinburgh



My dear Sir

The I do not promise to file this large sheet perhaps I may. My first point is to tell you that my Egg (Grimshaw) is hatched) is now at the Bookbinders to be put into boards; I think it will be flogged & fly about the Town in a few days.

I believe I told you that I have given it (together with the Copyright) to our Society for the relief of poor & pious Clergy. It is wholly at the disposal of their Committee, & I have no more to do with it than you have. But I have agreed with them to send you Fifty Copies, & I have ventured to promise them you ^{will} dispose of them, & remit the money when sold. For as it is a Charity business, we wish to have no more to do with Booksellers than we can help. You therefore need not order any to be sent in your Monthly parcel. I hope your Printers will not publish Grimshaw by subscription. It is sent out at Stationers & all, by way of prevention; & I believe the London price will be but Two Shillings

I do not offer one even to you as a Present; as I have many Friends in Scotland to whom I would be glad to offer such a token of respect, & as I must buy what I should give away, I serve you all alike. Yet I have begged a few copies to give chiefly to some Great folks in the Church, who probably would not buy, & to some of my poor friends in the State, who have little money for books.

I shall be as glad to see Col. Blackador, as you will to see Mr Grimshaw. We hope there is an appearance of some serious enquiries, among the Military, both Officers & Men, in several places.

I think, in London Tavernacles might be built in every street with out giving umbrage. And indeed Places of that Kind, are springing up like Mushrooms presently. But then it is an Old matter with us. When Mr Whitefield & Wesley first began there was stir enough. People were alarmed as if St. Pauls & the Monument were to be overturned. But these fears have been long ^{since} quite quieted. You must not wonder if even God Men are startled at the Novelty of your attempts. When Men have gone on for a long course of years in the same train of thinking & practices, they cannot easily at once, shake of their old

Wright

judges. If we ~~to~~ duly consider Human Nature & the force of habit, we shall not expect it. I suppose there was a time when the Erection of a Theatre gave the good people of Edinburgh no small uneasiness, but now perhaps they can walk by it without winking. If you Presiders of Tabernacles are conscious that you only aim at promoting the glory of God & the good of souls, & have no designs to give offence either to Church or State, I would advise you to waive disputes as much as possible, say, Thou shalt answer for me O Lord. Leave your cause in his hands, & He will plead for you. When instead of this, we are very anxious & earnest to vindicate ourselves, He often leaves us to make the best of it that we can, & very often that Best turns out but badly. The Believers at Jerusalem were in a great bustle when they first heard that Peter visited Cornelius. What an Apostle go to eat & drink with the Uncircumcised? Such a thing was never known before! But when they found that the Lord had sent him, they held their peace. Let us remember that Men are but Men, and that the Best Men have their imperfections & mistakes. Let us walk as circumspectly as we can, our Brethren will, at times, have something to bear with us; & we must pray for grace to be able to bear with them.

If you are about a good work, Satan will do all he can to discourage & hinder you; but he cannot break his chain nor go beyond. He cannot hurt us, unless we give him advantage by indulging Unbelief or Impatience.

How much am I obliged to my kind friends for their concern when they heard I was ill, & especially for their prayers. I am bound to pray for them, I am still remarkably well. But I am old; I must go the way of all flesh. Pray for me that I may tickle the Lord while I do live, that I may finish my course without staining my Profession, & that I may depart in peace. As to the time whether sooner or later, I wish to leave, with Him who doth all things well. Only, May I be ready when the time comes.

You say, you have more to do, one way or another than you can well manage. It is my own case; & my business seems to increase, as my strength ^{decreases} & abilities, I think it better to have too much than too little. I mean such as lies fairly & Providentially before us. If we wilfully overload ourselves with Worldly concerns

the sake of adding bag to bag, that we may have the pleasure of thinking, we shall leave a great many bags behind us when we go - this is a bustle & an ambition unworthy a Child of God. They who are run^{ing} a race should not encumber themselves with needless weights. I am persuaded that this is not your turn. But while you have ~~an~~ secular calling, it is your duty to be active & accurate in it. You are acting for the Lord as his journeyman, & when you are behind the Counter, in a right frame of mind, you are more help serving the Lord, than when you are praying, exhorting or hearing. Every thing is beautiful in its proper season. Self likes to be employed in great matters - Grace teaches us to do small & common things with a Great Spirit. A Servant-Maid when cleaning her Kitchen, may be as well employed, as a Minister preaching the Gospel thro Scotland, and if she give him a cup of Cete Water for his Masters sake, & can do no more, she shall have a prophets reward. It is the Intention that the Lord chiefly regards, and He will reward his upright & devoted people, not according to what they are actually able to do, but according to what they would have done if they could. 1 Thimo. 5. 18, 19 Luke 21. 3. Mark 11. 8. Ephes. 6. 8. Col. 3. 23, 24.

I have bringd an Old faithful Servant, who had been with us more than twenty years. I have 2 others, One has lived with me about 14 years, & the other 13 - so that we are all growing Old together, & I trust we shall all live together in a Better World. I thank the Lord Miss Cutler (the comfort of my declining life) is pretty well. She always joins with me in respects & best wishes to you. Remember us to all whom we know - The Lord bless you & them & us also. Amen

I am your very affectionate
John Newton

N. B. 1 Feb 7 99