

Answer to the foregoing letter

South Carolina 30th of 9th month 1786

- 1 Dear Cousin notwithstanding I  
Did lately write to thee  
I'm still unwilling to pass by  
This opportunity
- 2 To let thee know that Pratting fame  
Has lately founded here  
A Strange Oration, and thy name  
Sounds loudly in mine ear
- 3 If I remember right, she says  
Thee in France was long  
And fasted seven nights and days  
Each Day Composed a Song:
- 4 Then with the Methodists did join  
In membership to be  
Which unexpected acts of thine  
If true are strange to me
- 5 But as experience daily shows  
And time has testified  
France's intelligence often grows  
Like number multiply'd
- 6 Which oft her credit greatly stain  
And when she tells the Truth  
I can't believe her, but complain  
She always from her youth
- 7 Was noted for a worthless Dame,  
Two thousand years ago  
Was prov'd a liar, and the same  
Stands yet Recorded so.
- 8 When Absalom did Amnon smite  
Knew to the King the cause  
That all his sons were kill'd outright  
And none of them did live;
- 9 Which I was thinking now of thee  
There's something done I doubt,

But not by half so much as she  
The tattler makes it out.

When I so far had written, to my hand  
Thy letter came, by which I understand  
Thy mother out of sickness most severe  
Recovered was, which I was glad to hear.

The illness of thy sister and thy Brother  
Seem'd as a veil my joy for all to cover.

God news thee tells me if its Really so  
That true Contrition in the Land doth grow  
And universal Christians there is found  
That doth the gospel unto others sound.

I'm in the same opinion as before,  
If God is their author and they him adore.  
They'll grow and flourish O'er their enemies  
But if they out of Carnal wisdom rise  
They'll die or wither, time will show they stand  
Not on the Rock of Ages, but the sand  
Which will receive when storms and tempests roar  
But I'm unwilling to say much therefore  
Concerning them; I may the matter close  
Till time their standing and foundation shows.

But self-religion seems to get a blow  
For in thy writing, which I'll answer so,  
If once the Quakers they were right, I'll say  
Tis an Apostate that will turn away  
Because some of the members greatly hath  
Transgression wrought and shipwreck made of faith;  
Which seems to be at present thy Complaint;  
But let us see if righteous Paul the Saint  
Forsook the Churches when he heard the News  
That fornication some of them did use  
Nay, he forsook them not at all, but did.  
The active members of the Church forbade  
For to assemble with such men as they

{the foregoing  
part was  
wrote before  
the receipt  
of the  
preceding  
letter}

But turn them out of membership straightway.  
 If traitor Judas did for thirty pieces  
 Sell his dear Lord, shall I conclude from thence  
 Peter a fool that prize'd his Saviour so  
 That for his sake all things he'd undergo.  
 If when the sluggard sees the wind doth blow  
 And Hail descending with cold rain and snow  
 He doth give over and no longer will  
 Remain his fields and barren lands to till;  
 Shall the good Husband-man from such like ground  
 (That often had by good experience found  
 Except he sows no harvest he can have)  
 Resolve the painful labour quite to leave.  
 If some Professors vainly turn away  
 Shall I forsake the Body, surely nay.  
 In Asia seven Churches did abound <sup>Revelation</sup>  
 In all save one St John transgression found, <sup>Apocalypse</sup>  
 Yet firmly did to self religion hold.  
 And speaking to his own Professors, told  
 Them to hold fast, let no man take your Crown,  
 And he that overcometh, with renown <sup>Revelations</sup>  
 They shall as pillars in god's Kingdom stand <sup>3.11, 12</sup>  
 With a new name upon them written, and  
 Shall in white Raiment also there appear <sup>{ Rev 3.5</sup>  
 With Jesus Christ their Lord and Master dear <sup>{ Rev 3.21</sup>  
 Before god's throne where Saints and angels are  
 Adorned with <sup>the</sup> glorious morning Star; <sup>{ Rev 2.28</sup>  
 Their Diet to be Dainties rare and nice <sup>{ Rev 2.7</sup>  
 The Tree of Life that grows in Paradise,  
 Or hidden manna — With an iron rod <sup>{ Rev 2.27</sup>  
 Shall dash the Nations that forgetteth God <sup>{ Rev 2.19-23</sup>  
 Such was the promise John did recommend  
 To such as held out firmly to the end <sup>{ Rev 2.26</sup>  
 Thee owns the Quakers once did glorify  
 The god of heaven, then thee canst deny

But they were once Gods holy heritage  
 And if they once were his I'll engage  
 He owns the same Religion to this Day.  
 Though some apostates vainly turn'd away  
 The faithful standers to the same are found  
 Exceedingly fruitful like the holy ground  
 Thee seems to put a question asking plain  
 If I would have my weaker Brethren slain  
 'Cause their Religion differs some from mine?  
 I answer no, that is not my Design.  
 I rather pray that God may ope their Eyes  
 To see the place where their Salvation lies.  
 Thee seems to challenge in a Brav'ry way,  
 As if encouraged by my long Delay  
 Thee thought no answer could be had at all  
 Which makes thee lonely for an answer'd Call  
 And say'st thee writes to be Reprov'd again  
 Bid me the more exert my slothful pen:  
 Which seems to slander all that past before;  
 For if reproof be wanting, nothing more;  
 I think there must be Reason to Deny  
 All the whole volume in a word.— So I  
 Will now conclude my letter, only add  
 To see thee here I should be very glad.  
 My Mother sends her love to thee once more  
 To all her Children on the Western shore  
 And John and Dinah Both unite with me  
 To send our love together unto thee  
 And to thy Parents likewise, with the rest  
 Of all our Cousins living in the West.