

JOHN ERSKINE to the REV. CHARLES WESLEY.

1745, September 9th. Millbank.—“Very dear Sir, I wrote to you by last post but one. I am told not to go to Scotland at all, and indeed, as it is believed [as] things are there, if I went I could hardly miss falling in the young Pretender’s hands. General Cope, who commands the forces in Chief in Scotland, on the Young Chevalier’s landing in the West Highlands, sent up a plan of operations to the Regency, which was to march through the Highlands with all our King’s troops, and attack him before he gathered strength. The answer was approving and ordering him to execute it, but to talk thereof to Duke Argyll then in Scotland. His Grace said it was wrong, and that the King’s forces being so few should be kept at Sterling, the great pass between the North and South, and if thereby the Chevalier should get leave to overrun all the Highlands and Northerly Countys ($\frac{2}{3}$ of Scotland) yet the Southern part and that called the West would be safe, and when our King got more troops, the Chevalier would easily be driven from the Northerly, and if Cope with his handfull of men ventured through some strait narrow passes in the Highland mountains, a very few could destroy him, and they not lose a man. This being represented to the Regency, they

notwithstanding ordered him to performe his first plan; and the orders being sent by Marquis Tweeddale, Secretary for Scotland, were drawn so peremptorily and angry, that there was no latitude left him to delay or vary. So he marched, and advancing to a place among the mountains called Dallwhinyie, where the road he was to take towards Fort William (within a few miles of which the Chevalier landed) goes to the left hand, and finding he could be quite routed in the straight passes by $\frac{1}{16}$ of his number and the ennemy not lose a man, he took the right hand road, which goes to the town of Inverness (which is a fine place), from thence intending to march and attack the Chevalier by a better and safer road. But this put him at about 50 or 60 miles distance from the Chevalier, who thereupon marched down to Dallwhinnyie without opposition, and thence to Blair of Atholle (the chief seat of the Duke of that name), and rested there about a day or two, to get the Atholle and Lord Perth's highlanders to join him, and then marched for Stirling. At the last rebellion, the old Duke of Atholle was alive, and went not into the rebellion, nor yet his 2nd son, but [the] eldest did and was attainted of High Treason. On the old Duke's death, the estate and title descending to the attainted eldest son, would have [been] forfeited; but to prevent this, an Act of Parliament was passed, fixing the succession of both in the 2nd son, who

accordingly is Duke of Atholle and Lord of the Isle of Man (his grandmother was a daughter of Earl Darby's). Now the eldest son is with the Chevalier, and if they should have success would take all from his 2nd brother; and the Highlanders being much attached to the lineal succession and what is called the right of blood, it is thought probable they will follow the eldest, and so join the Chevalier. Lord Perth is popish, as the family has been since the late King James's time, when his grandfather was Chancellor of Scotland, and his brother Earl Mellfort Secretary of State, and both turned popish and bigotted, and following King James to France. It is feared that the Chevalier is now in possession, not only of Sterling but of Edinburgh; and except one regiment of Dragoons, which is at Edinburgh, our King has no forces in Scotland at all, but those of General Cope at Inverness, which by the highland road (and the nearest) that he marched, is upwards of 100 miles north of Sterling, and Sterling is called 24 miles north-west from Edinburgh, but here you would reckon it more than 30. Sherief-Muir, which is about four miles from Sterling, and on the north side as Sterling is on the south side of the River Forth, is the place where the battle was the last rebellion, at which the rebels were driven back, and the King's troops returned to Sterling, and waited there till more troops joined them, and particularly some regiments of Dutch and Swiss,

which forced the Pretender to fly to France, and our King's troops marching through the Highlands reduced them all to His Majesty's obedience. At that time the people about Glasgow and farther west, who are mostly presbyterian and zealous for protestancy and the revolution (and suffered cruel and bloody persecution soon after the Restoration till the Revolution) sent about 5,000 men in arms on their own charges to the King's camp at Sterling but afterwards complained that they were scarcely thanked or noticed by the Government for this service, and said they would not again be so forward. I have not heard that any of them now have offered to take arms, nor that any orders or warrants for arming against the rebels have been sent to such in the Highlands, who we hear did offer their service to the Government. But we are told that Sir Alexander McDonald, Mr. McLeod (member of Parliament for the County of Inverness) and Lord Lovat, men of great interest, and who can raise many bold, hardy, fighting fellows, have assured the Government that they will not assist the Chevalier. Thus, except that one regiment at Edinburgh, there is nothing in the South of Scotland to oppose the Chevalier; and if he be at Edinburgh, Cope is upwards of 130 miles north from him the nearest way, and cannot return but either through the Highlands (where I fear there are still more than enough to fall on him in his march, if on the

Chevalier's success they take [] in their heads), or about by the Eastern coast, which though not Highlands is a much longer march, and incumbered with ferrys and large rivers. Thursday, 10 September. The Chevalier was not so far as Sterling, when the last post came off; 300 of his men had seized the Town of Perth. Your brother having read the Sum of Saving Knowledge &c., thought it too Calvinistic. He told me so, in the presence of five or six others, in my own room, Friday last. I did not see him again, but a short start last Lord's day between the evening sermon and the meeting of the Society at the Foundry. Among other very good things he said to the society, I was exceeding glad of the moderation and brotherly communion he advised them to, with regard to Mr. Whitefield's people. May the Lord prosper you all in the Work of the Gospel and not partyship. Dear sir, most faithfully yours—J. E."

JOHN ERSKINE to the REV. CHARLES WESLEY.

1745, September 30th, London. "My dear Friend, the inclosed was sent too late to the post house. Saturday last. I had not room to notice your many kind expressions. None of them are losst on me. When the young Chevalier came to Edinburgh, he on the Saturday night sent to each of the

Ministers in the City, that they might preach next day &c., as usual. But, if they would [pray] at all for King, Prince, &c., he desired them to keep in general and to name none. The bells rung next day at the usual hours for the forenoon and afternoon service, but no Minister went to a pulpit, not daring to pray for King George by name, nor willing to forbear it (as I suppose) if they appeared at all. But whether they fled from the city on the Chevalier's approach, I have not learned. I suppose the Episcopal or Church of England men have continued in their meeting houses as before, for they never prayed otherwise for King, Prince, &c., than as the Chevalier enjoined the Presbyterians of the Established Church. —The battle, that was between the Chevalier and our King's forces, Was upon the estate I have six miles on this side of Edinburgh, and the Preston you see mentioned in the Gazette is my house, gardens and inclosures, and Preston-Pans, a village hard by, the best part of which is mine. I don't yet hear of any damage my estate has suffered— if it be not breaking down some of my walls.—The victory gained by the Chevalier appears to have been compleat, and they say his Highlanders fought like enraged furys, and drove all down before them in less than ¼ of hour. General Cope got soon to the town of Lauder 12 or 14 miles thence, and over hills. The dragoons behaved abominably. Colonel Gardiner, finding he could

not stop the flight of his regiment of dragoons, put himself on foot at the head of the foot forces, and was so mortally wounded that he dyed. I hear the Chevalier visited him in his wounds and spoke civilly to him; and I am told Gardiner said to him, 'You are come, Sir, to seek a temporal crown, and I am going to get a crown of glory.' He was an honest, brave fellow, and I believe a reall Christian, as for many years, he professed to be. His lady is my kinswoman and of the same name and family, and his house and land was divided from mine at Preston only by the high way. I find our people here speak of the Chevaliers army as but about 4,000 strong. How then came they to gain so complete a victory over Cope? And yet the Chevalier had many not there; and of those there, 'tis said that only 2,000 were engaged, having so suddenly done their business, that the rest had nothing to do. This seems to have been partly owing to the cowardice of the regiments of dragoons, both Irish. 'Tis reported by both sides that the Chevalier till he came to Edinburgh was dressed in the Highland habit; that at crossing the Forth and other rivers he was the first who jumped in; that he goes to the King's Palace at Edinburgh to hold his Levées, and receive company, but lies every night in his tent in the Camp, and eats there and dines on bread and a bit of cold roast beef or mutton, or any scraps; that he headed his men and went on with them at the

*battle; that on his standard, and the cockades his men wear there is on one side a Crown and on the other a Coffin, with some such motto as this 'The one or the other'; that there is no sort of violence committed by his people, but what is unavoidable by an army; that in his march from Sterling to Edinburgh, one of his Highlanders stole a sheep, for which he held a council of war on him, and had him immediately shot; that he has levied a contribution in the City of Edinburgh of 12,000*l.* sterling, and of 15,000*l.* from Glasgow, which was demanded peremptorily; that at Perth (and Edinburgh) he danced with the ladies at their Balls and Assembly, does all he can to ingratiate himself with all sorts.—The Dutch troops and those of our own come from Flanders are marching north, and 'tis said that Marischall Wade sets out Wednesday next to command them ; and that all the rest of the British in the Netherlands are ordered immediately home. This will make an army much superior every way to any which I can see how the Chevalier can get except there be a French or Spanish invasion in his behalf; and they cannot easily land on us, there being so many of our King's navy now on all sides of the Island. Admiral Vernon and his squadron now in the Downs is to sail northwards, and for that purpose he has got pilots from Hull and Newcastle, that are well acquainted with the Scotch coast. The two from Hull I travelled*

*with for two stages as I returned from the country, they in one post-chaise and I in another. Both appeared to be honest, religious men. They are dissenters. One of them is acquainted with some of your people at the Foundery and entreated me to take a note of one of them, who by trade is a chapman, that I might call for him, which I intend to do at the first time I can find foor it.
.....J.E.”*