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### THE VIRGINIA INDIAN TRADE TO 1673.<sup>1</sup>

By A. J. MORRISON.

The continent of Europe was disturbed by wars in the year 1551. The sadder, the more solid or graver, merchants of London, not willing to be dashed in their business, took counsel together and asked the advice of Sebastian Cabot, eminent man of nautical science. The upshot was the formation of a company of Merchant Adventurers, chartered about the middle of December, 1551, with Sebastian Cabot as life governor. The good old gentleman, Master Cabot, of Venetian parentage and of large experience about the world, spend his last years to good result for England. He had in his youth been to America of the north, in his middle age he had wasted a few years in what we call the Argentine; relinquishing the office of chief pilot to Emperor Charles V of Spain and the New World, Master Cabot was in his old age the man of all others to show England how to go to sea. He said himself he had the knowledge of the art of finding longitude by divine revelation. Henry VIII, notwithstanding, had dealt harshly with him. Upon the death of King Henry he was brought back to England and virtually given charge of the maritime affairs of the nation. His art of finding longitude was thought worth subvention in those critical times, when the continent of Europe was upwrought and the Hansa League was over strong in English affairs.

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<sup>1</sup>This essay is to serve by way of preface to a rather close investigation of the Southern Indian Trade from 1673 to 1763. It has not been thought necessary to cite authority. Alvord and Bidgood, in their *Trans-Alleghany Explorations of the Virginians*, have covered the ground extremely well. The other sources are fairly obvious.

LETTERS OF PATRICK HENRY, SR., SAMUEL DAVIES,  
JAMES MAURY, EDWIN CONWAY AND  
GEORGE TRASK.

(From Dawson Manuscripts, Library of Congress.)

St. Pauls parish Hanover Feb. 13th  
1744/5

Reverend Sir<sup>1</sup>

I would have wrote you before now concerning the new Preachers that have lately seduc'd some unwary people in this Parish, had I not expected to be more distinctly inform'd of some of their principles and practices which I thought might render my account of them or their followers more full and satisfactory which please take as follows. There is in Pennsylvania a Synod of Protestant Dissenters consisting of about 40 members, one of whom viz Mr. John Thomson came to a certain Gentleman's house in our parish, on thursday the first of this month, intending to preach the Sunday following in the meeting house lately erected here, but when he with a few that accompany'd him, came to the house on Sunday morning, the followers of Robinson,<sup>2</sup> Blair<sup>3</sup> & Roan<sup>4</sup> (whom I mentioned to you when at Wmsburg) shut the doors against him alledging he was an opposer of these three, the last of whom had wrote to some of them, requesting them in the name of the Lord, and for the Sake of Christ Jesus, not to allow Mr. Thomson to preach in their house, because he is an enemy to Christ & true religion. On hearing of this difference among them, I sent and invited Thomson to my house. He entertained me with a distinct account of these new light men, their peculiar tenets, and practices, their rise and progress to this time. He is, in my opinion,

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<sup>1</sup>Addressed to Rev. William Dawson, Commissary of the Bishop of London.

<sup>2</sup>For an account of Wm. Robinson see 3 Sprague's *Annals*, 92.

<sup>3</sup>For an account of John Blair, see 3 Sprague's *Annals*, 117.

<sup>4</sup>For an account of John Roan, see 3 Sprague's *Annals*, 129.

a man of learning and good Sense, a strenuous opposer of these new Preachers and Whitfield, having published two small treatises against them (which I think are very well performed) and I believe he is a man of piety and veracity. So that his information may be look'd upon as true. The substance of which with what I have upon other undoubted [?] is as follows. There is one Gilbert Tennent lately a leading man in the Synod of Presbyterians in Pennsylvania, who, with one Mr. Freelenhouson a Dutch Minister of Staten island, had several years before Mr. Whitfield appear'd in America broach'd some strange notions about religious matters, which some other younger Preachers imbib'd from them, but they had not authority enough to impose these notions upon the people, till Whitfield coming over join'd them, and then their notions and opinions were every where publish'd, and being espoused by Whitfield and his followers, became the current Doctrines of that joint party; and at a meeting of the above mentioned Synod at Philadelphia in May 1741 this Tennent and eight more of the members openly declared their separation from the Synod, and have ever since that time continued to meet by themselves, to [?] a discipline of their own framing, and have ordain'd a good many young Preachers, whom they send into all parts of America to disturb the established Churches of all denominations, requiring almost no other qualification in Candidates for Orders, than, what they call experiences of a work of grace in their hearts; and the Preachers who lately came into Hanover were three of those ordain'd by these Separatists above mentioned. The new doctrines these Schismaticks are at great pains to propagate and which their Missionaries publickly taught among us here were chiefly these following viz.

That antecedent to the very first beginning of a work of grace, there is a necessity of what they call, a Law work or common convictions, whereby the Sinner must be brought to despair, by way of preparation for Gospel grace, and some of them assert, That men must be willing to be damm'd, before they can obtain an interest in saving grace or mercy. And Roan who preach'd in Hanover about Christmas last, asserted in one of his publick discourses (as I was inform'd by one who heard him) That a Sinner, before

he can be thoroughly converted, must experience this Law work in such a degree as to disbelieve the very being of a God. II. That every true Convert is able to give an historical narrative of the time and manner of his or her conversion. III. That every converted person is as assuredly sensible of the Spirit of God working in him, as he would be of a wound or stab, or any thing else that he knows by his outward senses. IV. That all true believers, and especially converted ministers have the spirit of discerning whereby they can distinguish a hypocrite or a formal professor, from a sincere Christian. And this Spirit is claim'd by some here in Hanover, particularly Samuel Morris and Thomas Green two of my neighbours. V. That a true Christian may know whether a Minister be converted or not by hearing him preach or pray. This wild notion prevails among our Enthusiasts here, and I have been condemn'd by some of them as a stranger to true religion, & what they call the work of God, particularly by one Roger Shackleford who having come to Church last Sunday, in his way home told those about him, that I had preach'd Damnable doctrine, and he pitied me as being an unconverted graceless man. And now that I have mentiond Shackleford, I cannot omit informing you of another piece of his conduct. I sent him one of the Bps of London's letters for his perusal, and before he had read it half over, he returnd it to the person by whom I sent it, and told her that he was sure the Bishop was an unconverted man, and said he wished God would open his eyes to see the truth. VI. That a Minister being unconverted hath no call or authority from God to preach the Gospel and such a Minister's preaching, tho' he preach sound doctrine, can be of no saving use to the hearers. And thus by their pretended Spirit of discerning they apply the sentence of Condemnation to all ministers who are not of their way, and persuade as many as they can, to forsake their own Pastors as carnal graceless wretches, tho men of good principles and blameless lives. VII. That a regular ordination of a man to the holy Ministry, after due tryal and examination, is not the call of God, but of men only, the call of God with them being wholly inward by the Spirit and that therefore none ought to be admitted into the Ministry, but such as are sure of their conversion. VIII. That

Christians are not obliged to adhere to their own respective Pastors, but ought to go to hear the word preachd where they think they receive the greatest benefit, or where they meet with the greatest gifts in the Preachers.

IX. They make little or no account of a sound profession of Doctrine, joind with a regular Christian conversation, as a ground of judging charitably concerning a man's gracious State, unless one can give a narrative of the work of the Spirit of God in his heart, to judge charitably of a man's state on any other account is called by them a murdering, barbarous charity.

X. They claim a right to examine whom they please concerning their spiritual state, and take them to pronounce such as dont please them in their answers, to be in a carnal damnd condition (These are their own words) This right to examine is common to both Preachers and people. XI. Both Preachers and people are great boasters of their assurance of salvation. They are so full of it here that the greatest number of those who have lately left the Church, and followed those Enthusiastick Preachers, last, as if they were there already; nay some people here who have always been justly reputed guilty of several immoralities such as do confidently assert that they are as sure of going to Heaven at cheating, lying, and even theft, and whose practices (I well know) are the same now as before, these very men do boast as much of their assurances, as others who are reckond blameless in their conversation: where such as these are so confident or rather impudent, you'l be less surpriz'd at what follows, viz, That their Preachers publickly tell their hearers, that they shall stand at the right hand of Christ in the day of Judgment, and condemn all of them who do not come to him at their call.

Having given you an abstract of their doctrines, I beg leave to add a few sentences relating to their practice especially that of the three Enthusiasts that preach'd lately in this Parish. These have been at great pains to vilifie the Clergy of this Colony and have told their followers, both in publick & private that they can never reap any benefit by going to hear them, because they are not the Servants of God, and have no authority to meddle with Holy things; They endeavour to give them a mean opinion of

our Liturgy, but this I believe they have done chiefly in private, for I did not hear that they spoke against it in their Sermons, however I know, that their adherents generally disperse it and one of them (Thomas Green), told one of his Neighbours that it containd abundance of lies, and mentioned that sentence in the Te Deum (All the earth doth worship thee) as one. These three that were with us, as well as their brethren elsewhere, strive with all their might, to raise in their hearers, what they call convictions, which is thus performd. They thunder out [?] words and new coind phrases what they call the terrors of the law, [?] & scolding, calling the old people, Grey headed Devils and all promiscuously Damn'd, double damn'd whose souls are in hell, though they are alive on earth, Lumps of hellfire, incarnate Devils, 1000 times worse than Devils &c and all the while the Preacher exalts his voice puts himself into a violent agitation stamping & beating his Desk unmercifully until the weaker sort of his hearers being scar'd, cry out fall down & work like people in convulsion fits to the amazement of Spectators, and if a few only are thus brought down, the Preacher gets into a violent passion again, Calling out Will no more of you come to Christ? thundering out as before, till he has brought a quatum sufficit of his congregation to this condition and these things are extoll'd by the Preachers as the mighty power of God's grace in their hearts, and they who thus cry out and fall down are caressd and commended as the only penitent Souls who come to Christ, whilst they who don't, are often condemn'd by the lump as hardned wretches almost beyond the reach of mercy, insomuch that some who are not so season'd, impute it to the hardness of their own heart, and wish aud pray to be in the like condition.

You may probably think, Sir, that Iam a little hyperbolical in this last relation, but I beg leave to assure you, that I have unquestionable authority for the truth of it, and that they have acted in this parish in the same manner as I have now describd.

I am told that there are two or three of these Enthusiastic Preachers expected in Hanover next month, to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; I wish they could be prevented,

or, at least be oblig'd to show their credentials, for they may be Jesuits for anything we know.

You have here inclosed some notes of a sermon preachd by the last of these Missionaries; I was to have transcribd it but have not been at leisure to do it. I purpose to wait on you at Wmsburg—as soon as my parochial & other business will allow, that I may have some further directions about my conduct with respect to these wild & wicked men, and am very respectfully

Reverend Sir  
Your most obedient humble Servant

Patrick Henry<sup>5</sup>

Pray Sir, excuse some interlining  
&c I being necessarily in hast.

St. Pauls Hanv County

Reverend Sir<sup>6</sup>

Octor 14th 1745.

I have been so much afflicted with fever, and ague last week that I was not able to write you concerning Mr. Whitfield, who made some stay among us in his way to Georgia, and preachd in one of our churches in this Parish. I take the oppty of my Brother to write you now but am at writing so ailing that I hope you'l excuse the brevity of the following relation, which I would not at present have troubled you with but that I'm afraid my conduct with respect to Whitfield, may be misrepresented to you, and I would by no means incur your censure or Displeasure. Mr. Whitfield lodg'd at a house in my parish Friday night the 4th ult and the next morning the Master of the house wrote me, That his Guest was desirous to preach in the Church the day following, if I would give him leave; my answer was in these words (Please to tell Mr. Whitfield, That if he will come to my house that I may have some conversation with him I shall be able to determine whether or

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<sup>5</sup>This is Patrick Henry, Senior, the uncle of Patrick Henry, the distinguished orator. "This gentleman had been induced to come to Virginia by his brother [John Henry] through whose influence he had been made rector of St. George's Parish, in Spotsylvania, in April 1733. On June 11, 1736, he became rector of St. Paul's Parish in Hanover." 1 Henry's *Henry*, 7.

<sup>6</sup>Addressed to Rev. William Dawson.

not it will be proper for me to allow him the use of my Pulpit tomorrow) Mr. Whitfield did not come near me, nor heard I anything from him. Next day I set out for Church and was told by the way that he was to preach either in the Church, or Church-yard, I found a great multitude waiting for him at Church, and after consulting some of my Friends, I thought it adviseable to give him leave to preach in the Church, on this condition that he read the common prayer &c before sermon, which when he came, he consented to do and accordingly read prayers, and preachd. If I had refusd him access to the Church, he would have preached in the Church yard, or very near it and then the whole congregation would have gone over to him, this was what I plainly foresaw, as did also my Friends; for tho the number of his followers there were but few, yet all the people to a man had a great desire to hear the famous Whitfield. And besides as all our new light men were present, who exclaim upon our Liturgy, I thought, that their great Apostle's using it, must infallibly silence them for ever on that subject. These, Sir, were my chief reasons for allowing Whitfield to preach in the Church, and I shall be extremely glad if you approve of them.

Mr. Whitfield preached in private houses in this parish on the same day & Monday following, and on which day, in the meeting house he refusd to baptize a Child they brought him & told them they ought to carry it to their parish minister, and that by their senseless, singular and [?] they laid themselves open to prosecution, but not for righteousness sake. And both in his sermon in the Church (which I heard) and other public [?] (as I was informed by good authors) he advised the dissenters to return to the Church, and some of the chief of 'em have declar'd that they will return, I am respectfully

Reverend Sir

Your most obedient

& obliged Humble Servant

Pat Henry

Revd Sirs

As I detest that Jesuitical Notion—That Equivocations & mental Reservations are lawful in taking an Oath, or in declar-



ing assent to a particular System of Doctrines; and as a few Clauses in some of the Articles of the Church of England, from subscribing to which dissenting Ministers are not expressly exempted by the Act of Toleration, may bear an Explication which I cannot adopt, nor assent to; I think it my Duty, for the Satisfaction of my Conscience, and that I may act with Gospel Simplicity to present to you, Revd Gentlemen, the following Explanations of the Articles mentioned, declaring in what sense I take 'em when I declare my Belief of them.

I do heartily & unfeignedly declare my Belief of the 1st & 2d Articles without Exception, or Explication.

3d Art. with this Explication, That by the Clause "He went down into Hell" be not understood Christs local Descent into the place properly called Hell where the Damned are, but either his being in the State of the Dead; or his enduring extreme Misery & great Distress; or his lying in the Grave.

4th & 5th Art: wtout Exception or Explication.

6th Art: with this Explication, That this Clause "And the other Books (as Hierom saith) the Church doth read for Example of Life & Instruction of Manners", be not intended to enjoin as a Duty the Reading of the Apocryphal Books in publick Religious Assemblies.

7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th Art: without Exception or Explication.

20th Art. with the Exception of these Words, which is allowed by Act. of Parl. "The Church hath Power to decree Rites & Ceremonies."

21st Art. with this Explication. That these words "General Councils may be gathered together without the Commandment & will of Princes," only signifie, That Chri[sti]an Princes have Authority, to call, when there is occasion, General Councils and that Ecclesiastic Officers ought to regard and Submit to their Auth. in this Respect, but not that Ecclesiastic officers may not convene in Councils, when Occasion requires it, of their own Accord, when the Prince is a Heathen, or no Friend to the Church; for we find, The Apostles and Elders met in Council, without the

Command of the Roman Emperor, he being an Enemy to the Church, Acts 15.

22d, 23, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31th, 32th, & 33rd Art wtout Exception or Explication.

34th, 35th, 36th Art. wholly accepted by Act of Parl.

37th Art. with this Explication, That this Clause, "Unto whom (the "Queen's Majesty) the chief Governmt of all Estates of this Realm, Whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all Causes doth appertain", only mean, That the Kings & Queens of England, are the Supreme Head of the Civil State, and have the chief Govt. throf; & thrfore have the chief Govt. over all Ecclesiastic officers. as they are members of the Civil State, qua talis; and in all Civil Causes as well with respect to Such, as with respect to Such, as with respect to the Laity; but not that they are the Head of the Church, or have the chief Govt, and be the Supreme Judges in Ecclesiastical affairs and matters of faith: for as the authority of Ecclesiastical Judicatures, [which] are prin[cipa]lly concernd in Religious Matters, wou'd be infring'd: the Right of private Judgment violated; & implicate Faith introduc'd—I readily concede, That Principles subversive of Civil Society, & of the Foundations of N[at]ural and reveald Religion, then propagated, may justly be checked by Civil Authority, & the Propagators of them punished with condign Punishment. But I cannot grant, That civil Rulers have Authority to preside in, and determine Controversies about Matters of Faith, & Affairs that Peculiarly concern the Church: The Determination of these, I humbly conceive, belongs ultimately to God speaking in his Word, & subordinately to Church Judicatures; not excluding the inviolable right of private Judgment. My Meaning I would illustrate by one familiar Instance, viz 'Tis much controverted in the Chri[sti]an World, whether a Sinner be Justified in the Sight of God, by Faith alone, wtout his own good Works & personall Righteousness? Now, I can't allow that the King's Majesty is Supreme Judge in this Case; & that his Majesty has the chief Authority to determine it.

38th & 39th Art. wtout Exception or Explication.

Thus, Revd Sirs, I have with Candour & Impartiality repre-

sent to you the Sense in which I cordially & freely Subscribe these Articles, & in which I do not.

The most material & Important Exceptions which I have made, are expressly allowed by the Act of Toleration—For these I need made no Apology—and the Explications are either the real Design & Intent of the Articles; tho' not so plainly exprest, but that they may bear another Explication; or, at most, they are such small Digressions & variations from the native sense of the Articles, that I humbly presume, they will be indulg'd—I am as well satisfied with his present Majesty King George as my Supreme Civil Ruler, as, perhaps, any loyal Subject in all his Majestys Dominions, and accordingly to attest the same, have with the utmost Freedom sworn allegiance to his Majesties Person & Government; & therefore if I be understood to insinuate any thing to the contrary, by the above Explications, I shall be very disingenuously wrong'd. But submitting these things to your Consideration I hope you'll allow me to be Revd Gentlemen

your very humble

&

Obsequious Servt. in the Gospel  
Saml Davies<sup>7</sup>

Hannover April 21st 1747

Directed thus

To

The Revd Mr. Henry.

P. S. Tho I have not subjoind the Reasons of these Explications in full at present: yet, if it be judg'd requisite I shall be willing to propose them as soon as time will allow.

Copy

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<sup>7</sup>Samuel Davies was born in 1724 and died in 1761 while holding the office of President of Princeton College. In his 23rd year (1747) he was sent to Hanover, Virginia, and remained about eleven years, though absent for occasional periods of considerable length. The mother of Patrick Henry, Jr., was one of the followers of Davies in Hanover, and there is every reason to believe that the son was influenced by the impassioned oratory of Davies. One of the best memoirs of Davies is in the *American Quarterly Register*, v. 9, no. 4, May, 1837. The bibliographical note given there is of such interest that it is copied herewith. "Brief biographical notices of President

Hanover April 29th 1747.

Reverend Sir<sup>a</sup>

I made an appointment with the Revd Mr. Mossom to wait on you, this week, but, by the bad weather, have not been able to accomplish what I so much desired.

I need not trouble you with accounts of Mr. Whitefield's conduct here, my Revd Brother, who is with you before now, can inform you concerning him; as I could not get clear of the whole gang of enthusiasts & seducers (as I hop'd I should) I thought it needless to make use of what you sent me in your last, & the rather because I detachd the Man from his Party, and have got such verbal & written declarations from him, as will certainly give the world the same notions of Him as I always have had, tho' I am willing to conceal my sentiments of him (for some reasons) till I see you. I send you a Copy of Mr. Davies's Explications of the Articles; the original he withdrew last Saturday, intending, as he wrote me, to present it to the Governour in Person, he has preachd almost every day since he has been here, and is greatly applauded by his Followers, and by none more than a certain Great Man of your acquaintance. I'm sorry my Letter, when laid before the Council, had not the desired effect; I am ready to prove the truth of every Fact set forth therein, & which my Brethren, if they had sign'd the Lettor, must have believed upon my Testimony,—there being but few things in it that they themselves could otherwise know.

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Davies may be found in the prefaces to the editions of his sermons; in the funeral sermons of Drs. Gibbons and Finley, generally prefixed to the sermons of Davies; in the second volume of the Panoplist; Middleton's Evangelical biography; Assembly's Missionary magazine; State of Religion in Virginia; Rev. David Bostwick's Account prefixed to Davies sermon on the death of George II; appendix to Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green's Baccalaureate Addresses; and in President Allen's American Biographical Dictionary; the most copious and interesting biography is found in the second volume 1819, of the Evangelical and literary magazine, edited by Dr. John H. Rice." To these should be added the account in Sprague's Annals, v. 3, and Foote's Sketches of Virginia.

<sup>a</sup>Addressed to Rev. William Dawson.

I want much to lay all my grievances before you, that I may disburden my Mind a little; but as that can't be done in writing, I will embrace the first opprty of waiting on you at Wmsburg. My wife & Jenny beg leave to join in our most respectful Salutations of You & your good Family and I am with much Esteem.

Reverend Sir

Your most obliged &  
obedient humble Servt

Pat. <sup>s</sup>Henry.

P. S. The inclosed Copy was written for my own use, there are contractions in it that mayn't be legible. I purported to have sent you the Original.

Hanover June 8th 1747.

Reverend Sir<sup>9</sup>

Mr. Davies whom the Govnour was pleas'd to indulge in preaching about six weeks in Hanover, is to leave it to day or tomorrow: And as I still suspected that all of his Fraternity were disturbers of the Societies of Christians of all Denominations, by declining to settle in any place, So I am now confirmed in that opinion of 'em by Mr. Davies's conduct. This Man (who was with me last Friday & Saturday) told us that he did not intend to return hither till next Spring & perhaps not then; and after he took his leave of me, I was inform'd by a Gentleman in Amelia That Mr. Davies is to preach at Goochland Court-house next Thursday, from whence he is to travel as far as Roanoke, preaching at certain appointed places in his way, and that circular Letters and Advertisements are dispersd all over the upper parts of this Colony, that the People may have notice of the times & places of meeting. My Informer has one of the circular Letters, and the Advertisement at Goochland Court-house has, I believe, been seen by hundreds.

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<sup>9</sup>Addressed to Rev. William Dawson.

I persuaded my self that the Govinor & Council never intended to encourage Itinerant Preachers, and therefore think it my duty to acquaint you with this Man's behaviour. I think also that the Govinour, by his Indulgence, did not allow Mr. Davies to administer the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, which notwithstanding he did celebrate at the meeting-house in St. Pauls parish, on Sunday the last of May, and had a great many Communicants.

I need not inform you of the present distracted condition of my Parish nor of the future disturbances I justly apprehend from these Itinerants, who make it their Study to screw up the People to the greatest heights of religious Phrenzy, and then leave them in that wild state, for perhaps ten or twelve months, till another Enthusiast comes among them, to repeat the same thing over again, and this hath been the case here for above these two years past. I purpose (God willing) to wait on you as soon as I am fit to appear in Town: and am, with my wife's and Jenny's tender of respects to you & good family.

Revd Sir your most obedient & obliged  
humble Servant

Pat. Henry.

Revd. & Honour'd Sir,

Embolden'd by your Condescension & Affability towards me when waiting upon you, & constrain'd by the Exigency of my present Case, I humbly adventure to trouble you in this manner, promising myself your Pardon, at least to pass with Impunity.

Soon after my Settling here, some Presbyterians in my Congregation apply'd to me for the Solemnization of marriage; But lest I should arrogate any Priviledge which did not legally belong to me, I refus'd it; 'till some time in March last, I had opportunity of submitting it to the Honble Sir William Gooch; who was pleas'd to tell me, unexcited by my Importunity, that, after regular Publication of the Banns, or obtaining a legal License, I might lawfully marry my own People; still securing the fee for the Parish Minister. Confiding in the Opinion of so qualified & authoriz'd a Judge concerning the Sense of the Law, as sufficient to direct me; &, besides, endeavouring to see with my own eyes as far as I was

able; I lately marry'd a Couple living in the Revd. Mr. Brunskill's Parish, after thrice Publication of the Banns in the Meeting-Houses where the Parties themselves, and those that were immediately concern'd, were wont to attend: & I order'd the Fee to be sent to Mr. Brunskill.<sup>10</sup> My Procedure herein has so inflam'd his resentments, that tho' I have inform'd him,—That I had the Governour's Permission to warrant it,—That the Perquisites shou'd be always reserv'd for him, & I design'd never to take a Penny,—That I shou'd yield the readiest Submission to the first Intimation of the Pleasure of my Superior, particularly the Honble the President & Council, requiring me to desist, &c. Yet he is determin'd to prosecute me. Without the Aid of a Judgement superior to my Own, I despair of convincing myself of the Illegality of my Conduct; & therefore humbly submit it to your Honour's Determination, requesting your Opinion of it, or rather (if it be obtainable by your condescending Interposition in my behalf) an Authoritative Order of Council, confirming or nullifying the Governour's License; to regulate & Indemnifie me in my future Conduct.

As the Preaching of the Gospel is the Main End of my Function, & I think, the principal object of my Zeal; & as the Privilege of marrying has no immediate Connection with it; I want no Motive to excite me to relinquish it, but such an Order; 'till I obtain it, or something equivalent, the legality of it, not only in my Apprehension, but according to the Governour's Judgment is sufficient, I humbly conceive, to indemnifie me in the Use of it.

I allow myself the Pleasure, Sir, of expecting an Answer with all convenient Speed: & you may rest confident that the Determinations of Authority shall always be a rule of Practice to,

Revd. & Honour'd Sir,

Your oblig'd

&

Most humble Servt.

Saml. Davies.

Feb. 3rd  
1749/50

<sup>10</sup>For the three John Brunskills, clergymen, see Perry's Papers relating to the church in Virginia.

[Endorsed]

To

The Revd. & Honble

Dr. Dawson

Commissary, & one of His Majesty's Council, &c.

Hanover Augt. 22d 1751

Reverend Sir

Inclosed is a Copy of a Letter from Mr. Davies to one of our Justices, which, I thought, you might be willing to see. As no Encouragement is to be given that Party wch can be legally deny'd them, I shall use my Interest with our Court to have the Consideration of their Petition deferred till I receive your Directions; as, I'm afraid, I cannot have them before next Court; but if I cannot prevail with the Justices to put it off till then, I hope, I shall be able to give them Such Reasons as will determine them to reject the Petition viz. That Mr. Davies perform'd several Parts of his pretended Ministerial Office, both here and in Henrico, before he was legally qualified. That, last May, he transgressed his Limits, by preaching &c in the Southern Parts of this Colony? That he hath celebrated the Rites of Matrimony, in this, and a neighbouring County. That many of his Hearers do, in their Meeting houses hold unlawful Assemblies, in Contempt of the Act of Toleration. That some of them have spoke reproachfully of the Liturgy, & officers of the Church. That they whom Mr. Davies married, joined with him in an illegal Act. These Facts will, I hope, demonstrate that both Mr. Davies, and many of his Congregation have faild in giving Sufficient Evidence of their Fidelity to the civil Governments, and inoffensive Conduct. I wish I could find any Thing provd against them before the Genl. Court, wch might strengthen what I have to say; you may, probably, help me to something of that Nature from the Records of that Court. If they obtain a Testimonial from our Court, I think, it can be no other than a Certificate from the Clerk bearing that they or some of them, have taken the Oaths enjoynd by Law to be taken by such People; but this is not what they aim at. I shall look for



your Directions in the Matter, and observe them, in the best Manner I can.

I am sorry that I have ground to find Fault with my old Friend the Revd Mr. Mossom,<sup>11</sup> who has used me very unkindly, if Matthew Anderson speaks true upon (I think) his Death-bed; Our former Intimacy will not allow me to give his Treatment of me a harder name than Unkindly. He return'd me an Answer to mine (wch you saw) in such a haughty stile that I have not thought it expedient to correspond with him ever since. I have it in my Power to show the World, that he is in the Wrong; but several Considerations determine me otherwise. I would always pass over the Faults of my Friends, and therefore did not resent that Part of his Conduct viz. That during our Intimacy, I had Reason to believe that he endeavoured to lessen me in the Esteem of a certain Honble Friend whom I justly value and in whose generous & disinterested Favour I was always proud to have Place. The Gentleman could not Bear, like the Turk, a Brother near the Throne. However, I thought, that this & some other Things that gave me just offence, might still consist with some sort of Friendship, but my Revd Brother's late Usage of me is altogether incompatible with any Degree of it. When I have an Oppty. of waiting on You, I shall give you a Detail of the whole Affair, wch would, after this long Service, tire your Patience too much; And I should not have given you the Trouble of any Thing concerning our Difference, were it not to justify myself for not waiting on Mr. Mossom, as you desir'd. When my Business will permit, I purpose to pay my Duty to You, at your hospitable House, & am very respectfully,

Reverend Sir

Your most obedient

obliged, humble Servant

Pat. Henry.

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<sup>11</sup>Rev. David Mossom, minister of St. Peter's Parish, New Kent. Mr. Mossom is remembered as the minister who married George Washington to Martha Custis.

Reverend & honorable Sir,

Not doubting but, as You represent our pious & learned Diocesan, tis your great Study to preserve, as far as may be, Purity of Faith, as well as sound Morals & good order in this remote corner of his Lordship's Diocese; it seems not improper to inform You that the revd Messrs Davies & Todd<sup>13</sup> have lately been guilty of what I think Intrusions upon me, in having preached each of them a Sermon at a Tavern in my Parish; within the Bounds of which I have never heard, that either of these Gentlemen, or any of their Communion, have obtained any properly authenticated License to exercise their Function. What was their real Motive to this Conduct, I dont undertake to determine: but an apparent one was, the Request of Capt Overton to Mr. Davies, & of Capt. Fox to Mr. Todd, to preach an occasional Sermon to their respective Companies, at the Time of their Departure to range upon our Frontiers. But, as few, if any, of the former Company reside in this Parish, it might perhaps, have been equally prudent & regular in the former of those Teachers to have preached in one of his own Meeting-houses in Hanover. And, tho the other Company consisted chiefly of Inhabitants of this County yet tis Matter of Question with me, whether their Request alone sufficiently justifies Mr. Todd in acting as he has done; which however is humbly submitted to your better judgment.—If these Gentlemens Conduct be warrantable in this Particular; the inconveniences, resulting thence, must be patiently acquiesced in; but, if not, every stanch Friend of the Church of England will be pleased to see those Evils obviated in Time & guarded against for the future. What they are, tis needless to mention to You, Sir, who for some years past have had frequent opportunity of remarking, what Heats & Dissentions, what Breaches of Charity, what Ruin & Decay in the Families of many well meaning but deluded People, what Confusion & Disorder, what Disaffection in the People to regular Pastors, of unblemished Morals & unquestionable Abilities, together with many other unhappy Effects, have usually attended the Ministry of Itinerants & Enthusiasts in this Colony, whenever they

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<sup>13</sup>For an account of John Todd, see 3 Sprague's *Annals*, 144.

have either boldly intruded, or been legally licensed.—'Tis a Doubt, I am told, with some worthy Members of your honorable Bench, whether the Act of Toleration extends to the Plantations. I wish that Doubt were indisputably solved, which, perhaps, it would be, on proper Application to proper persons. Not that I would be fond of seeing these or any other nonconforming Teachers molested purely for their religious tenets; but of seeing the Privileges of both Churchmen & Dissenters so precisely ascertained, as to leave no Room for Controversy in the Case. I trust I am far from the inhuman & uncharitable Spirit of Persecution. No Man either professes or thinks himself a warmer Advocate for Liberty of Conscience, that natural Right of Mankind. But when Men under Pretence of asserting & exercising this Right, sow the Seeds of Discord & Confusion: when they so industriously propagate heterodox opinions in a Manner, inconsistent with & repugnant to, the formal Sanctions of Government & Law; none, surely, not their most zealous adherents, nor even themselves, can justly complain, should they be laid under just & equitable Restraints. Such, as dissent from the established Church, & are indulged by the Government publicly to teach those of their own Communion under certain wise & moderate Restrictions, would, one would think, if influenced either by Modesty or Prudence be cautious of transgressing the Bounds, markt out to them by such wholesome & tolerating Laws; which, as they, on one Hand grant them all reasonable Indulgences, in Condescension to their scrupulous Consciences, so, on the other, must be thought just in wisely providing for the Peace, Unity & Order of the national Church, for the Security of which they have been chiefly calculated. These Gentlemens Intentions may, peradventure, have been pious. I wont assert the Negative. But this, I believe, may be safely affirmed, That if, to effectuate their Intentions, however pious, the Laws of the Community must be violated, & if the Violation of such Laws be an Evil; they have, if not intentionally, yet eventually, acted upon that unsound Principle, which St Paul disclaims with so much Abhorrence, Doing Evil that Good may come. Do me the Justice, Sir, to believe, that a pure Zeal for the established Church, a sincere Desire to guard that Part of it which is

intrusted to my Care from Errors in Doctrine as well as Practice, & a compassionate Concern for many honest but ignorant People who by being unhappily seduced from the Church to the Covenanticle have been involved in inexplicable Difficulties, have been my only Motives in troubling You with this Complaint. To which if you find it expedient & practicable to give effectual Redress, you'll greatly oblige all, in general, who wish to see Purity in Faith & Manners flourish in this Part of the Christian Church; and, amongst the rest, in a very particular Manner,

Reverend

& Honorable Sir,

Your obliged Friend  
& affectionate Brother

James Maury<sup>14</sup>

Fredericksville  
Oct. 6, 1755.

Lancaster March 3d 1758

Reverend Sir<sup>15</sup>

I expect the Gentlemen of the Clergy, from these Parts, will Let your Hon. know the Evil Consequences of a Dissenter's Preaching among us.

Inclosed is a Short Representation to be laid before the Next Assembly, which I Humbly offer to your Care, till the Assembly meets, hoping the Honourable Council will then Send it to the

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<sup>14</sup>James Maury was born April 18, 1718, and attended William and Mary College. On July 31, 1742, he was appointed usher of the grammar school. Ordained in 1742. He served one year as a minister in King William, and then went to Fredericksville parish in Louisa. He died as minister of this parish June 9, 1769. (Tyler's *Va. Biog.*, v. 2, p. 201.) He was the plaintiff in the famous suit in Hanover, in which Patrick Henry distinguished himself as the defendant's counsel. There is an interesting letter of Rev. James Blair, the commissary to the Bishop of London, about James Maury, Feb. 9, 1742, printed in Perry's "Papers relating to the history of the Church in Virginia," p. 36.

<sup>15</sup>Addressed to Rev. Thomas Dawson, commissary of the Bishop of London, and President of the College.

House of Burgesses for their Consideration. Pray Excuse this Presumption in,

Most Reverend Sir,  
Your Honrs. most Humble  
and very Obedient Servant  
Edwin Conway.<sup>16</sup>

Reverend Sir

Mr. Davies hath sent among our Negroes a Small Pamphlet,<sup>17</sup> I Expect one will be Sent to your Honr. wherein you may Perceive Mr. Davies hath much Reproached Virginia. And informs the Negroes they are Stronger than the Whites, being Equal in Number then, & having an Annual addition of thousands. I Can't See any Advantage to the Country, to give this account to the Negroes. See Appendix to Fawcett's Ad[?] I know of but two Freeholders in this County, Dissenters; and they both received the Holy Eucharist, in our Church, before Mr. Davies Preached here. I am the Oldest Freeholder in the County, and I never

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<sup>16</sup>For a good account of Col. Edwin Conway, see Hayden's *Virginia Genealogies*, p. 238-243. Col. Conway was born in Lancaster in 1681. He died October 3, 1763. He was for a period of 32 years, 1710-1742, in the House of Burgesses.

<sup>17</sup>In the biography of Davies in the *American Quarterly Register*, v. 9, p. 312, is an extract of a letter written by Davies to a friend in London in 1755, upon the subject of his efforts to convert the negroes. He writes "The books I principally want for them are Bibles, and Watts' Psalms and Hymns." For a discussion of the relation of the negro to the Church in colonial times, see M. W. Jernegan's "Slavery and Conversion in the Colonies," in *American Historical Review*, v. 21, p. 504-527. See in this connection Davies' sermon "On the Defeat of General Braddock" (Sermons, ed. by A. Barnes, N. Y., 1849, v. 3, p. 228) in which he addresses the negroes in the congregation showing them why they should not wish to take the side of the French. There was probably some fear of a slave insurrection in favor of the French, and Davies words were intended to influence the negroes to remain loyal.

heard a Dissenter Preach, Except one received Minister of the Parish, in old time.

I am

ut Supra

Chesterfield Dec. 9th 1758

Reverend Sir

The Gentleman who brings you this will at the same Time deliver to you five pounds, the sum I Subscrib'd for at the Convention. Be pleas'd to take the Trouble to give him a Receipt for it. I beg Leave, Sir, now I am writing to you, to put you in mind of an Affair, which I could only hint to you, when I was at Town. That, if any Dissenters should appear in Behalf of an unlicensed Meeting House, which has been lately built in a Corner of my Parish, you will take Care to oppose them. It was chiefly promoted by some Scotch Merchants & others in Petersburg of another County & Parish. It meets with no encouragement from the Gentlemen or Generality of the People of my Parish, except one wrong headed Colonel, & a very few others. But if factious & restless people may build an House, when & where they please, without Leave or License; the Peace & Security of the established chh will be very precarious. This method of proceeding must appear to be audacious, irregular & illegal, & inconsistent with any lawful Toleration, & Will always I hope be opposed. Therefore I hope you will take Care to disappoint them if they should apply for a preposterous License now. R. Sir I am wth the greatest Respect

Your most hble Svt.

Geo. Trask

[Endorsed] To

The Reverend

Mr. Commissary Dawson

at Williamsburg.