

## **GOLD TRIED 550 TIMES IN THE FIRE**

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Historians inevitably face the challenge of selecting a subset of primary sources to stand for a much larger body of research. This challenge is magnified in the case of the history of ideas, where the need to provide closer readings tends to diminish that already small sample size. My article, “The Greatest Metaphor Ever Mixed,” distilled hundreds of sources from numerous genres down to a few dozen. A section on the various uses of the metaphor of gold tried in the fire, for instance, quotes twenty-eight sources that employ that metaphor, or roughly five percent of the sources I consulted.

To find all these sources, I pursued two parallel tracks. The first was part of a larger project on the cultural and economic history of gold in Britain from 1780 to 1850, which will soon be published by Oxford University Press. For this project, I spent the last eight years looking for references to gold wherever they showed up: in treatises, novels, sermons, speeches, and newspaper articles, among many other sources. The bulk of my research utilized such online databases as Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Making of the Modern World, and Google Books. After realizing, a few years into this research, that gold appeared frequently and with interesting variations in numerous religious contexts, I did more targeted search in these databases (see my full list of search terms below for “gold tried in the fire”).

In a blog post accompanying a different article I published two years ago in the *Journal of Victorian Culture*, I made a first foray into providing access to the larger cultural world that historians must curtail in order to “see the forest for the trees.” (link). Here, I follow the model I used in that post, through the creation of a web page that breaks down my research notes for the “crucible” section of my article into several different topics (including references to affliction, illness or death, persecution, temptation, and secular uses). In the vast majority of cases where Google Books enabled this, I have linked these entries to the passages in the books and periodicals where I found them, to enable readers to explore their “natural habitat”; and I’ve identified each author by religious denomination where I was able to discover that information. I’ve also included a link to two Excel files I used: one tabulates my notes in order to locate patterns across these denominations (this includes some sources I didn’t transcribe in my notes), and the other (which I constructed by going through the Bible chapter by chapter using the service BibleGateway.com) identifies every Biblical passage that refers to gold.

Readers should feel free to use this collection however they see fit: as a resource for their own research; as an introduction to my own idiosyncratic research methodology (and in my experience every historian’s research methodology errs on the side of idiosyncrasy); or as an entertaining anthology, with plenty of amazing books titles such as *The Gospel Recovered from its Captive State, and Restored to its Original Purity*.

Gold references in the Bible, accessed using BibleGateway.com (Excel file)

Crucible references (Excel file)

*Search terms:*

forth as gold  
come forth purified  
forth like gold  
gold in the fire  
gold from the fire  
out of the furnace  
furnace of affliction  
out of the fire  
tried in the fire  
purified in the fire  
purified by fire  
*as refined gold*  
like pure gold  
seven times purified  
purified seven times  
seven times in the fire  
gold shines brightest  
purer and brighter  
passed through the fire  
fiery trial

With a few exceptions, these sources were all published in the United Kingdom (or, rarely, one of its colonies) between 1750 and 1850—including sources that originally appeared in print prior to 1750 but were published at least once between 1750 and 1850. I have reproduced the notes I took from each source, which are organized by topic and, within each topic, chronologically by original year of publication. In most cases you can click the title to get to the book or article via Google Books; the link should land you at the section quoted, and you can fan out from there to discover its context.

## **RELIGIOUS USES**

### **General sources**

William Goode, *Essays on all the Scriptural Names and Titles of Christ* (London: L.B. Seeley, 1822), series 4 in a survey of the “scriptural names and titles of Christ” includes a section “Refiner—Purifier” (2: 303-322): “Sin is the pollution of the soul: it is that corrupt principle that, entering in, defiled the pure creation of God; that drossy and earthly mixture which still injures and debases the gracious principles of the renewed heart... An infectious and diseased leper could not be more loathsome with his boils to the pure Israelite; a den of unclean beasts, or a cage of unclean

birds cannot be more unsightly and unwelcome to the most delicate feelings, or a sepulchre with its noisome odours cannot be more offensive to the most refined smell, or with its putrifying carcasses to the most exact observing eye, than the heart denied with sin in the eyes of *Infinite and Unchanging Purity*. The grand design and ultimate effect of redeeming love is, its complete purification; this must be effected before it can again dwell in his immediate presence; this the true believer desires may be effected; and to produce this is the great purpose of the word, the works, and all the gracious and providential ways and dispensations of the Lord; and especially of those trying, afflictive, and gloomy paths in which his people are led; and the end and object of which, through the remaining carnality of the mind, and the power of unbelief, they are often *unable now to perceive*" (303). "May every trial which the reader or the writer experiences forward this design, and it will be well! May they all promote this end, and terminate in this happy state! and the eternal glory must be given to that wisdom which directed them, that power that turned them into the means of blessings, that grace that sanctified them to purge away the dross and refine the gold" (304). **Anglican**

Goode 1822: "He comes to break the chain and bands of sin, and we reluctantly yield; to shew the emptiness and vanity of the world and earthly possessions, by the loss, or temporary suspension, of their enjoyments, and we murmur. He comes to exercise and strengthen faith by the trial of faith, and it excites our doubts, suspicions, and alarm. We are ready to say, "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation!" (Psal. Ixv. 5.) But this is the Lord's own peculiar work. 'The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold; but the Lord trieth the hearts.' (Prov. xvii. 3.)" (2: 314). "Refining is always a fiery process, and is intended to be a searching one; and is the more necessary, as the dross is more intermixed, or the gold more valuable: and the object is not its destruction, nor the loss even of a single particle, but its extrication from the impure mixture, and its refinement, that it may be more suited to the purposes for which *the owner hath designed it*. This affords a pleasing, though a serious, view of the trying dispensations of providence" (315). **Anglican**

Goode 1822: "The idea is interesting and solemn; his people are his gold and silver, they are his... 'peculiar treasure;' he is anxious that they should appear as such; that they should shine to his glory; and therefore he determines to refine and purify them from earthly dross. He assumes, therefore, the office, and casts them into the furnace of trial; but he *sits by* observing the whole: he has well observed the need they stand in of the trying dispensation / what peculiar trials are suited to their state; and what degrees they may be able to endure. He sees how they bear under it, the effects which it produces. He is intent upon and examining the process: it shall neither be too little nor too much; but, in time, in nature, and in measure, suited to answer the purpose of the great Redeemer in the purification and preservation of his people. So that every believer may be confident with holy Job, though he may not discern the work or design of the Lord, that "he knoweth the path which he takes, and when he hath tried him, he shall come forth as gold." (Job xxiii. 10.)" (2: 316-317). "Let, then, the believer be induced to look upon his present afflictions, of

whatever kind, in a very different light from what unbelief would represent them. The Gospel opens a most encouraging view to the mind" (319). **Anglican**

*Christian Lady's Magazine* 1845: "Believers are ... represented [in Scripture] as polished stones: but they cannot at once attain that beauty and smoothness which is to the praise of God, for we are his workmanship (Eph. ii.) Again, they are as gold refined, but then the process must be *gradually* accomplished. We do not at once behold *the full corn* in the ear, but first the *blade*, then the ear. God will not look for fruits if he has not himself tended the vineyard, fenced it, and placed it on a fruitful hill, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine. How tenderly, how infinitely above our thoughts of him does he deal with his creatures" (24: 444). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

### **Judgment Day**

Alexander Nowell, *A Catechism* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1853. Orig. English translation 1839; originally published 1549): "The apostle declareth that the end of the world shall be thus. The heaven shall pass away like a storm, the elements with heat shall be molten, the earth and all things in it shall be inflamed with fire; as if he should say, The time shall come when this world burning with heat, all the corruption thereof (as we see in gold) tried out by fire, shall be / wholly fined and renewed to most absolute and high perfection, and shall put on a most beautiful face, which in everlasting ages of worlds shall never be changed" (169-170).

### **Calvinist**

Henry 1803 (orig 1708), prayer "for the amending of every thing that is amiss in the / church, the reviving of primitive Christianity, and the power of godliness" (120-1): "Lord, let thy Spirit be poured out upon thy churches from on high, and then the wilderness shall become a fruitful field, then judgment shall return unto righteousness, and all the upright in heart shall follow it ... Let the Lord whom we seek come to his temple like a refiner's fire ... and let him purify the sons of Levi, and all the seed of Israel, and purge them as gold and silver ... O revive this work in the midst of the years... and let our times be times of reformation" (121).

### **Nonconformist**

Jonathan Edwards, *Practical Sermons* (Edinburgh: M. Gray, 1788,) sermon on Acts 17: 31, "he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world": "If there be a day of judgment appointed, then let all be strict in trying their own sincerity. God on that day will discover the secrets of all hearts. The judgment of that day will be like fire, which burns up whatsoever is not true gold; wood, hay, stubble, and dross, shall be all consumed by the scorching fire of that day. The Judge will be like a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap, which will cleanse away all the filthiness, however it may be coloured over"; Mal. 3:2 and 4:1 (187). **Congregational**

George Walker, *Sermons on Various Subjects* (London: J. Johnson, 1790): "If our passage be easy, pleasant, and prosperous; ease and prosperity will be no snare to a

mind, which is thus supremely guarded by the presence of God... The very mammon of unrighteousness will be made to be our friend, and send up a good report of us to our future Judge; to that holy and benevolent Being, who accepts our works of temperance, charity, and love. If adversity and suffering be our lot, our patience and virtue will come forth as gold from the furnace; and our present afflictions, which are comparatively light, and for a moment, will work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (1: 139). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

John Bousell, *The Near Approaching Day of Universal Restoration* (Norwich: W. Stevenson, 1793): *The Near Approaching Day of Universal Restoration*: "The seventh angel is preparing to sound his trumpet" (46). God will send his messenger, "and who shall stand the day of his coming, for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap; and he shall set as a refiner with fire, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord, as in the days of old... This world is for you whom the Lord will call unto his holy habitation, he will purify you in the furnace of affliction, ye shall become as pure gold, seven times tried in the fire, the King of kings will stamp his image upon you" (47). **Quaker**

John Baggs, *A Scriptural View of the Millennium* (London: S. Hazard, 1797): on judgment day, "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout," followed by an earthquake, when "all the prison doors will be opened, and every one's bands loosed. The saints will come forth like gold purified" (21). **Nonconformist**

John Finlayson, *An Admonition to the People of All Countries* (Edinburgh: G. Bileau, 1797), millenarian disciple of Richard Brothers, cites Malachi 3:3 (sons of Levi will be purified) as "additional evidence, that the third chapter of Malachi, alludes to our Saviour's second coming. For Christ at his first coming, did not sit as a refiner, nor did he purify the sons of Levi, so that they might offer at Jerusalem unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. In both characters will he sit at his second coming. For the Hebrews are now to be restored, the temple built, and the sons of Levi purified like gold" (11). **Nonconformist**

David Simpson, *An Apology for the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Macclesfield: Edward Bayley, 1798): "The great Head of the church... is shaking the nations, and is about to purge his floor. The gold, silver, and precious stones shall abide the day of trial; but the chaff will be blown away; the wood, hay, and stubble shall be burnt up; all superstitious ordinances shall be subverted; but the Word of the Lord shall endure forever" (vii). **Anglican**

George Bennet, *Olam Haneshamoth, or a View of the Intermediate State, as it Appears in the Records of the Old and New Testament* (Carlisle: B. Scott, 1800): "Death, in the demolition of the human frame, is / one great advance towards [the great work]. The gold is melted down in order to be rid of the dross, that at the day of Christ it may come forth in all its purity. A tumor, distended with putrid matter, may be painful in the act of amputation, but vigorous health may follow: so death performs

on the body the painful but friendly operation: it separates, for a little, the spirit from its corrupted man” (35-36). **Presbyterian**

Isaac Beeman, *Remains* (London: John Eedes, 1844), letter to a friend, 19 Dec 1828, describes heaven: “He that is life eternal is the wall of this city, and I have no doubt but you will, and I hope I shall, see this wall in the city of pure gold garnished with all manner of precious stones. But you have heard that, before we get into this wealthy place, we must go into the furnace and through the fire: and to be once delivered from fiery wrath, kindled in the law, and brought to feel this fire quenched by blood, no future fire will ever be so terrible to us as that; and being inlaid with faith and love, by these we are enabled to cleave to God, like Job, who says ‘when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold;’ and certain it is that a child of God loses nothing in the fire but dross” (2: 308). In a later letter to the same friend, April 1829: “the streets of the heavenly city are pure gold, like unto clear glass. The purifying efficacy of the gospel is to bring us to this state, and set us down in it, in eternal glory” (311). **Methodist**

Edward Irving, *The Church and State responsible to Christ, and to One Another* (London: James Nisbet, 1829): “all that can be done is to appeal to better men, and better times; to appeal to God, and to his judgment seat; to wait the coming of Christ, when every man's work shall be made manifest, for it shall be tried by fire. Then shall it be made apparent whether this truth... be of the silver, gold, and precious stones, which will endure the fire; or whether it be of the wood, the hay, and the stubble, which the fire shall consume” (574). **Nonconformist**

Burridge 1830: “I... sound a public alarm, that this awful crisis is descending on the guilty world, in order to purge and purify it, as *gold* is tried in the *fire*. I would rather die than neglect the desire of my heart to resound this alarm, if it were possible, in a voice of *thunder*, to all corners of the earth (if haply one lost sheep may hear), though I also feel that this and every *human* effort to awake people from sin, will only excite similar ridicule to what Noah experienced” (108).

Edward Irving, *The Day of Pentecost, Or, The Baptism with the Holy Ghost* (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1831): once he ascended to heaven, Jesus “receiveth the plan of a tabernacle for God to dwell in; which having well considered and faithfully imprinted in his mind, he doth proceed to build it by means of men whom God endowed with gifts of the Spirit for that very end. And when builded, God doth come into it with his glory, and resteth there amongst the people, giving oracles and executing justice and judgment in the midst of them. This work, of building men as living stones into a spiritual temple, Christ hath been going on with ever since the day of Pentecost, by distributions of the Spirit to certain men. Apostles, prophets, and others, who should, by spiritual teaching, discipline, and rule, be continually rearing up the glorious walls of gold, silver, and precious stones, all fire-proof, which shall nobly abide the day that shall burn like an oven and consume all the hay and wood and stubble which unwise and unholy builders have builded thereunto” (60). NB: people are literally gold. **Nonconformist**

Robert Wilson Evans, *The Church of God, in a Series of Sermons* (London: Smith, Edler and Co., 1832): "A sincere feeling of humiliation, a true knowledge of the principles of the gospel, will remind the best of men, that, sinner as he is, he must have contributed a share to the national sinfulness, on which fearful visitation seems fast descending" (386). "The storm is ushering in a glorious day, and between its gusts he can overhear the tinkling of the trowel of the angelic masons rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. If his body perish in the storm, then hath the kingdom of heaven arrived to him indeed; he has obtained his everlasting rest and citizenship there. If it survive, then are his eyes blessed with the sight of the purified Church of God, shining like / gold from the furnace. The vineyard of the Lord lies before him, expanded in more than its former loveliness. The unsightly and noxious weeds have been removed" (388-389). **Anglican**

*Short Comments on Every Chapter of the Holy Bible* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1838) on 1 Kings 20: God "declares that the wicked house of Ahab shall be rooted out... the visible church is scarcely to be seen: the wheat is lost in chaff, and the gold in dross, till the sifting, refining, separating day comes" (266). On Psalms XI: "We know what men seem to be, but God knows what they are, as the refiner knows the value of gold when he has tried it. God is said to try with his eyes, because he cannot err, or be imposed upon" (367). **Anglican**

*Short Comments* 1838, Ezekiel 22: 17-22: "Israel, compared with other nations, had been as the gold and silver compared with baser metals. But they were now as the refuse that is consumed in the furnace, or thrown away when the silver is refined. Sinners, especially backsliding professors, are, in God's account, useless and fit for nothing. When God brings his own people into the furnace, he sits by them as the refiner by his gold, to see that they are not continued there any longer than is fitting and needful. The dross shall be wholly separated, and the good metal purified. Let those who suffer pains, or lingering sickness, and find that their hearts can scarcely bear these light and momentary afflictions, take warning to flee from the wrath to come; for if these trials are not sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit, to the cleansing their hearts and hands from sin, far worse things will come upon them" (602). **Anglican**

*Bengal Catholic Expositor* 18 July 1840: "The day of the Lord, which is the day of judgment for each one after his death, will try and manifest, *for it is revealed in fire*, of what sort is each man's work. Those works which, like gold, abide the fire of God's scrutinizing wisdom, shall have their proportionate reward in heaven; but the works, which, like wood and stubble, cannot abide it, shall be burnt in the fire prepared by God's justice." **Catholic**

## **Salvation**

Charles Drelincourt, *The Christian's Defence against the Fears of Death* (London: J. Buckland., 1776 (French Protestant, orig 1651): St. Peter borrows a "Comparison... from *Goldsmiths*, who cast the Gold and Metals into Pots, and then melt them in the

Fire. Now as they destroy not by this Means the Gold and the Silver; but they cleanse them from the Dross and the Froth, cause them to appear in all their Brightness and Beauty, and give them a new Shape and Form; so the Fire of the last Judgment shall not consume the Heavens and the Earth, but shall only give them a new Form and Beauty” (477). **French Protestant**

John. Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized; or, the Heavenly Use of Earthly Things* (Newcastle: M. Angus and Son, 1800; orig. 1669):

“Is gold so tempting to you? Lo! Christ stands,  
With length of days, and riches in his hands.  
Gold in the fire try’d he freely proffers,  
But few regard, or take those golden offers” (248). **Presbyterian**

Flavel 1800, on Rev. 3:18: “gold, the cure of poverty, yea, *gold tried in the fire*, i.e. grace that hath been variously proved already; and the more it is proved, the more its truth will be conspicuous” (515). “Sincere grace is gold tried by fire” (536). “To conclude; sincerity alone hath all the heavenly aids and assistances to stability, and perseverance in suffering times... it is impossible such gold can perish in the fire. And thus of the several ways by which grace is here tried” (579). Let sincerity “come to the test, kindle the fire, and cast in my gold. Trials are the high way to assurance” (581). “Behold the wisdom and goodness of God... here is their courage, meekness, and self-denial, shining as gold in the fire” (583). “What is a vein of gold but a vein of sincerity?” (594). **Presbyterian**

Thomas Watson, *Sermons and Select Discourses* (Glasgow: William Bell, 1798; orig. 17<sup>th</sup> century): “That which makes salvation-work hard, is, it is a slippery work” (1: 357). “When the gold hath been purified in the furnace, it remains pure; but it is not so with the heart, let it be heated in an ordinance, let it be purged in the furnace of affliction, it doth not remain pure, but quickly gathers soil and corruption; we are seldom long in a good frame” (358). **Puritan**

William Bates, *The Whole Works* (London: James Black, 1815), “On Eternal Judgment”; Bates died 1699: “he that deceives himself by the external practice of holy duties, without correspondent lively affections.../ shall by a convincing upbraiding light see his wickedness, in dishonouring that God whom he pretended to worship, and neglecting his soul. When the upright as pure gold shall be more radiant by the fire, the insincere like reprobate silver shall not endure that severe trial” (3: 359-60). **Presbyterian**

John Cennick, *Village Sermons* (London: V. Griffiths, 1795; orig 1744), sermon on I Cor. 3: 11 (wise man builds house on rock): “This man builds with gold, silver, and precious stones; and when the fire shall try every man’s works, his shall stand, and his works be regarded with his divine Master’s approbation” (1: 12).

John Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodist* (London: John Haddon and Co., 1875); hymn by Charles Wesley, 1762);

NOW, ev'n now, I yield, I yield,  
With all my sins to part;  
Jesus, speak my pardon seal'd,  
And purify my heart;  
Purge the love of sin away;  
Then I into nothing fall;  
Then I see the perfect day,  
And Christ is all in all.

Jesus, now our hearts inspire  
With that pure love of Thine;  
Kindle now the heavenly fire,  
To brighten and refine;  
Purify our faith like gold;  
All the dross of sin remove;  
Melt our spirits down, and mould  
Into Thy perfect love." **Methodist**

John Fry, *Select Poems containing Religious Epistles* (London: Mary Hinde, 1774), "A Description of a true Minister of Christ":  
"That Man or Woman's qualify'd to teach,  
And can the Gospel-tidings truly preach,  
Who can the true refining Pot endure,  
Or, like fine Gold, is quite refin'd and pure;  
Or, like the Silver, purg'd from Dross and Tin,  
From all Pollutions fully wash'd within;  
And, in the Furnace being fully try'd,  
Knows both his Flesh and Spirit mortify'd" (44).

*Arminian Magazine* 1783, "A Short Hymn" based on Rev. 3:18. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire...":  
"Gladly I take thy love's advice,  
While without money, without price,  
I come thy grace to buy:  
Faith is the golden bullion pure,  
Which can the fiery test endure,  
and all my wants supply" (6: 112). **Arminian**

Joseph Hall, *Extracts from Various Devotional Writings* (Birmingham: T. Chapman, 1785), meditation "Upon the Sight of Gold melted": "This gold is both the fairest and most solid of all metals; yet it is the soonest melted with the fire: others, as they are coarser, so more churlish, and hard to be wrought upon by a dissolution. Thus a sound and good heart is most easily melted into sorrow and fear by the sense of God's judgments; whereas the carnal mind is stubborn and remorseless. All metals are but earth, yet some are of finer temper than others; all hearts are of flesh, yet some are through the power of grace, more capable of spiritual apprehension" (88).

R.C. Brackenbury, *An Estimate of Human Life* (York: Wilson, Spence, and Mawman, 1788): "A man that is travelling to any place, is not surprised to find himself in the way that leads to his journey's end. Nor is it any wonder, that he that is travelling towards heaven, finds himself in a *strait way*. If gold were an intelligent being, it would not think it strange to be thrown into a crucible to be melted by the fire, and so purged and purified from its dross, / and thereby become fit for making a vessel fit for a prince's use" (55-56). Likewise a soldier doesn't complain about "the fatigues of his march" and "the coldness and hardness of his lodging," since this is "the proper life of a soldier... and the only way that leads to victory" (56). **Methodist**

Samuel Saunders, *Theosophical Essays* (London: C. Dilly, 1789) describes twelve-step process of spiritual reunion of fallen man with God (8): first is conversion experience; second is acknowledgment of past life as that of "a fallen spirit" (10); so on through eleventh stage, "a swiftly ripening state of spiritual life." In the final stage, when "the soul becomes eminently more meet for its reward" (15), "the soul... is more the object of satanic rage, and human malice, than before:—hence the strong faith now given, is severely tried, that the soul may thereby *come off more than conqueror* over all its enemies; and, like gold, return seven times purified from the hottest fires!" (16). NB God saves the worst for the time when the soul can handle it.

John Berridge, *Works* (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1838) (*Observations on Passages of Scripture*, ca 1792): Jeremiah 6: 28-29, "They are brass and iron. Men may keep brass and iron in the furnace, till the / bellows are burnt, yet will not be refined into gold or silver; i. e. the utmost attempts for mortification of sin will be of no avail till the heart is renewed by grace, and thus converted into gold or silver: Mai. iii. 3. Then a furnace may purge out dross from the gold or silver, but cannot change brass into gold, or iron into silver. Men through grace must be made silver or gold at the bottom, else refining will do them no good" (164-165). "They are brass on account of their impudent face; they are iron on account of their hardened heart: the lead is consumed in the fire. Lead was formerly used in refining metals, as quicksilver is now. The founder melteth in vain, till the bellows are burnt, and the lead is consumed; but no refining, no gold or silver appears. No furnace will refine a sinner, till grace, (called gold or silver,) is planted in the heart" (165). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

John Corry, *Odes and Elegies* (Newby: R. Moffat, 1797), "Christianity. An Ode":  
"The Christian Faith, like well-tried gold,  
More pure and excellent appears,  
When impious men, perversely bold,  
Would fill our minds with doubts and fears;  
Their carnal lusts obscure the ray  
That Heaven gave to light the way  
To endless Rectitude and Peace:  
Perverted REASON misapplies  
The means that ought to make Man wise,

And happiness encrease" (71).

Henry Draper, *Lectures on the Church Catechism* (London: The Philanthropic Reform, 1799): "Precious metals, as gold and silver, are examined by fire; both to ascertain, and increase their purity." Cites Malachi 3:2-3 as "a fine allusion to this practice" (297). **Anglican**

*A Select Collection of Hymns universally sung in all the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapels* (London: W. Smith, 1799) ("Comfort of God's Love"):

"God's furnace doth in Zion stand,  
But Zion's God sits by,  
As the refiner views his gold,  
With an observant eye" (366). **Nonconformist**

Eliza Birch, *Poems on Various Subjects* (Manchester: C. Wheeler and Son, 1800):

God's bitter cup none here can drink,  
Till his just spirit's given;  
Those who are tried like gold by fire,  
Will shine as stars in Heaven" (68).

J. Lowes, *A World within a World* (Carlisle: Francis Jollie, 1800): God's law "is a furnace that is continually purging the dross of pride, hypocrisy, and error, with all the works of the flesh and Devil, from the works of faith, that 'faith may be as gold tried in the fire;' and the more it is tried, the more it discovers these sins; and the more sin is discovered, the more the soul comes to God as a sinner; and the more precious is the Saviour, the more desirable is his salvation, the greater is the worth of it, and the deeper is the mystery of it" (vii).

Lowes 1800 cites Zech. 13:9: "This is called a fiery trial, because it is to burn up a great deal of dross from the soul, by separating the false faith in it, from the true"; fire consists of "the rebuke of Gold's countenance" (15), God's wrathful law, the devil's "fiery darts of temptations," and "lusts and corruptions ... The wicked never can endure this trial; for when they are brought into it they are burnt up" (16). "Thus the dross is melted from the gold, and various kinds there are, such as *brass* and *iron*, *lead* and *tin*, *wood*, *thorns* and *briers*, *hay* and *stubble*, and *earth*" (long line of scriptural references). Earth = "an earthy covetous mind"; stubble = "light frothy pride" (18); wood = the "dry twigs and branches of speculative knowledge"; lead and tin = "soft metal, such as moist brains, and soft affections, crying and sobbing under a sermon, having the passions affected... heavy and soft like lead"; brass = "false confidence" (19); "all these the fire melts: whilst the dear Redeemer all the while sits regulating the heat, and, as *a refiner*, purifies the soul like gold in a furnace, and every now / and then scums off the dross; then we see the pure work, the pure metal, or pure faith, within" (19-20).

*Hymns, Cries, and Groans, lately extracted from a Mourner's Memorandums* (London: T. Wills, n.d. (ca 1800):

"Thy Head is finest gold!

'Twas try'd in ev'ry Fire!

Thy precious Face let me behold!

And more Thy grace admire!" (212).

William Huntington, *Contemplations on the God of Israel, in a Series of Letters to a Friend* (London: T. Bensley, 1802), letter to J. Jenkins, Sussex clergyman: quotes Micah 7:9 (156); "Faith gets a fresh discovery of the atonement of Christ, and a fresh application of it by the Spirit. If this is not the case, we come out *like a fool brayed in mortar*. It is not a deliverance from the furnace, but is intended to confound us, and to keep us in sear and suspense; doubting whether the furnace is not going to be heated hotter. When God takes us in hand, and judges and chastens us, we are sure of this furnace" (157). **Nonconformist**

Charles Simeon, *Helps to Composition; or, Six Hundred Skeletons of Sermons* (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1810): "While Christ is the foundation of our hope, we are also to build upon him all our works. But our works will all be tried by fire. If they be not such as tend to his glory, they will be burnt up as hay, and wood, and stubble. If they be truly good, they will stand the trial, like gold, or silver, or precious stones" (4: 180). Cites, I think, Hebrew 10: 11-14. Simeon = King's College, Cambridge **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Simeon 1810: "In the first ages of Christianity, martyrdom for the truth was common: and, since its establishment in the world, thousands have been called to sacrifice their lives for the sake of Christ—Nor are we to conclude from the rest that we enjoy, that our faith and patience shall never be put to the test— Indeed, there are few, if any, real Christians, who are not on / some occasions made to endure the fiery trial, and to approve themselves as pure gold, by sustaining, without loss, the action of the fire—At all events we must in the habit of our minds be 'ready, not only to be bound, but even to die at any time, and in any manner, for the name of the Lord Jesus' [Acts 21: 13]" (4: 211-212). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

*Anti-Infidel* 1831: "The contentment of religion arises from an *internal peace* springing from a right exercise of our moral and intellectual powers... Many, and deep indeed are the purifying trials which the mind has to undergo before it can attain but a small share of this peace. By temptations and trials the purifying which refines it is fed; but the gold comes bright and pure from the furnace" (1: 233).

*Scottish Pulpit* 1833 (David Runciman, Edinburgh, sermon "On the Influence of the Holy Spirit"): "The doctrine of the Holy Spirit's influence on the human mind is one of those points which would have been altogether unintelligible, had it not been brought before us by comparisons and allusions to objects with which we are all familiarly acquainted... and there is no figure more frequently employed than that of fire... Does fire purify—cast off the dross, and refine and sublimate the metals exposed to its power? So does the Spirit purify. It is the peculiar office of the Spirit to

purify the soul—to refine the dross of the human heart—to rectify the disordered principles of the understanding—to impart purity and strength to the inner man, sanctified wholly in soul, body, and spirit” (2: 41). **Presbyterian**

*Cottage Magazine* 1837, “The Church,” by Ludlow Tonson (Anglican bishop):

“The sky proclaims the tempest near,  
Deep clouds o'er Sion's towers are flung;  
Our hearts are failing us for fear,  
Our harps upon the willows hung.  
Christians! God chastens whom he loves;  
By fire the gold is purged from dross;  
Mercy awakens—calls—reproves—  
The crown rewards the transient cross.  
God shields the weakest saint from harm,  
The mightiest sinner meets his wrath” (26: 144). **Anglican**

William Hodge Mill, *Sermons ... before the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: University Press, 1845), on Malachi 2: 17-3:5: Christ will “separate the dross from the pure gold and silver in the city and sanctuary of God:/ he is, by clearing off all the corrupt and unworthy, to purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer to God a sacrifice in righteousness” (198-199). “The sighing of the contrite heart, and the desires of them who are sorrowful for sin, will not escape the notice of our Father in heaven, who sent his Son clothed in human nature to redeem us, and his Holy Spirit to sanctify us. He who /... directs his serious anxious thought to that day which the impure and the unrighteous cannot abide... may find the same refiner's fire which will consume the ungodly of the earth like dross, employed in cleansing his corruptions from him, and fitting him by a purification, perhaps painful in its process, for that holiness and righteousness in which his soul may be well pleasing to God” (208-209). **Anglican**

Charles Kingsley, *The Saint's Tragedy* (London: John W. Parker, 1848; q.v. for context):

Agnes: “Well spoke the old monks, peaceful watching life's turmoil,  
'Eyes which look heaven-ward, weeping still we see:  
God's love with keen flame purges, like the lightning-flash,  
Gold which is purest, purer still must be.” (145). **Anglican**

George Moberly, *Sermons, preached at Winchester College* (London: Francis and John Rivington, 1848): “the Holy Spirit, like purifying fire, banishes and destroys whatever base or unworthy substance mingles itself up with that which it seeks to refine. If there be base or vile thoughts in the heart, or unholy words upon the tongue, of one who has in baptism received the Holy Spirit of fire, what dreadful peril must be before him! must he not fear that the Spirit, whose fiery discipline of pure and self-controlling sternness he refuses now, will at length consume and devour him! must he not fear that if he will not give up his baseness and vileness to the fire, the fire will at last that inward, immortal, irresistible fire swallow him up in

eternal tortures? Thus the Holy Scriptures often speak of fire as purifying precious metals from baser substances. But they also speak of it as used to test. Fire purifies when gold is mingled up with other / things; and it tests and tries it, too, to ascertain whether it be pure and unalloyed. And in this sense, too, there is abundant scriptural ground for likening it to the operation of the Holy Spirit” (41-42).

### **Anglican**

Elizabeth Fry, *Memoirs* (London: John Hatchard and Son, 1848), comment by editors—her daughters— regarding her husband’s bankruptcy in 1828: “It is a marvellous thing to the natural mind of man, and wholly beyond the unassisted scope of his reasoning powers, why, eminent Christians are often so intensely afflicted. Faith's estimate is different, and holy writ solves the problem, by showing us that it is by this process they are fitted for the heavenly inheritance, the most fine gold purified, the diamond of the first water polished for the Master's use” (2: 32).

### **Quaker**

*Earthen Vessel* 6 (1850), letter from W.C. Powell, Reading, on “the spirituality [i.e. essence] of sin”: “in the elect, the law in its spiritual power comes in contact with this essence, fixes on it with irresistible force, and never gives up the contest till it is subdued: then like dross fetched out of the gold by a burning heat, it is purged off by the blood of Jesus, and the washing of unconditional promise” (67). **Baptist**

### **Salvation (baptism)**

James Rutherford, *Dissertations on Biblical Principles* (Newcastle: printed for the author, 1794) on John the Baptist: “John, as the harbinger and forerunner of his Divine Lord and Master assures them, he should baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; with all the influences of his word, his grace, and spirit; his power and providence, / which should purify and refine, yea, renew the souls of men, in a manner as fire refines silver or gold, or ay metal” (64-65). “And so he calls upon the obstinate and unbelieving Jews, to fly for their life, and their eternal all, from the wrath of God, to come upon a whole ungodly world” (65). **Nonconformist**

Job Scott, *The Baptism of Christ* (London: James Phillips, 1794), on baptism of soul vs body, in context of John the Baptist baptizing Christ: “The fire of this baptism is holy... it burns till all is consumed, till the dross, and tin, and, what is more, the reprobate silver (however specious in appearance, and current among many for true devotion, and real religion) is separated and done away from the gold, for the vessels in the Lord’s house spiritually are made of beaten gold, such as have endured the Lord’s fire, and been refined in his furnace; for this only can bear the hammer, so as thereby to be beaten and formed into chosen vessels in his holy house” (20). NB gold standard: even silver is corrupt. **Quaker** missionary, 1751-1793

### **Affliction**

Robert Parsons, *Christian Directory* (London: Richard Sare, 1703; orig 1582; Jesuit priest; at least 28 eds through 1792): “The Reasons why God suffers Good Men to be Afflicted”: “Affliction is a most admirable Medicine for healing our Spiritual Diseases, and restoring those to Health, whom gentler Applications would have no effectual Operation upon. This opens our Eyes, and works off those Scales of Spiritual Blindness, contracted by long Ease / and uninterrupted Prosperity” (312-1313). “a Tribulation enlightens us, and brings us to a sight of our faults; so it is a great Help to the removing and curing them... Hence we find it compared to a File, that scours off the Rust of the Soul; to a sharp Remedy, that cleanses Wounds from Corruption; to Fire, that purges the Gold from its Dross” (313). **Catholic**

Thomas Watson, *Sermons and Select Discourses* (Glasgow: William Bell, 1798; orig. 17<sup>th</sup> century): Christ “loves you in your worst condition, he loves you in affliction; the goldsmith loves his gold in the furnace; he loves you notwithstanding your fears and blemishes” (1: 618). **Puritan**

Tobias Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted* (London: J. Murgatroyd, 1791; orig ca 1640): “God afflicts his people... not for their sins, but to take them away; that is, to prevent the hastiness and inconsiderateness of a believer, that he may not be so rash, running head-strong in his own ways, but may be the more considerate for the time to come.” If people realized that when they suffer, and “are as gold cast into the fire, ... God, all that time they are in the fire, as the prophet *Malachi* speaks, sits as a refiner; then they would be more quiet in the expectation of that purity, in which they shall come forth, when the time of their coming forth is: when you see the refiner cast his gold into the furnace, do you think he is angry with the gold, and means to cast it away? No, he sits as a refiner; that is, he stands warily over the fire, and over the gold, and looks unto it, that not one grain be lost; and when the dross is severed, he will out with it presently” (32). “Even so Christ sits as a refiner; when once his gold shall have its dross severed, then he takes out his /gold, and it becomes as gold seven times purified in the fire” (32-33). **Anglican**

Thomas Brooks, *The Mute Christian under the **Smarting** Rod* (Glasgow: William Duncan, 1736; orig 1652): “Afflictions are but our father’s gold-smiths, who are working to add pearls to our crowns” (98). **Puritan**

William Bridge, *Seven Sermons* (n.p., 1789; orig 1657): why do sinners sometimes suffer as much as faithful Christians? And what’s the result? “True, you have heard, it may be, of some Jesuites, dying for their religion. It is possible, that a wicked man may suffer much, and that upon the account of his religion too. But at Austin speaks, there is an unlikeness of suffering, in the likeness of suffering. As saith he, gold is the same fire with the wood, and with the straw; with the same fire the wood and straw are consumed, but the gold is refined” (204). **Nonconformist**

Elisha Coles, *A Practical Discourse of God’s Sovereignty* (London: Nathaniel Hiller, 1708; first publ. 1673; at least 11 eds. into 1790s): “The Righteousness of God is... illustrated, by the issue and Event of his darkest Dispensations... His People, though

long under Oppression, He brought them forth at last, with the greater Substance... David's long persecutions by Saul, made him the fitter for the Kingdom... We see it also, by the End the Lord made with Job: he brought him forth like Gold, and doubled his Blessings upon him" (34). "Paul's Afflictions turn'd to / his Salvation" (34-35). "Even the Temptations, Sorrows, and Sufferings of Christ Himself, which were such as were never known by Men, were intended, and accordingly did, perfect and enable Him for His Office of Mediator" (35). "Faith works by Love; it is not henceforth the *Fear* of Wrath, but the Sense of Christ's Love in *delivering* from Wrath, that both curbs the unregenerate part, and carries to the highest acts of Obediance than *Fear* is capable of... Altho' at times, all sorts of Motives may be needful to keep us going; and the Lord... may let the dearest of His Children long conflict with their Fears; under which He yet supports them, and brings them forth like Gold, at last" (266). **Calvinist**

Robert Leighton, *Expository Works and Other Remains* (Edinburgh: David Wilson, 1748 on I Peter 4: 12-13: "the Connection of Sufferings with the Estate of a Christian... is not new, and therefore no strange Thing, that Sufferings, hot Sufferings, fiery ones, be the Companions of Religion" (2: 243); "these fiery Trials make the Lustre of Faith appear most, as Gold shines brightest in the Furnace: and if any Dross is mixed with it, it is refined and purged from it by these Trials, and so remains by the Fire purer than before... the Fire of Sufferings is the Advantage of Believers, both trying the Excellency of Faith, and also purifying it from the Earth and drossy Mixtures, and ... raising it to a higher Pitch of Refinedness, and Worth" (246). "If the Children of God consider not their Trials in their natural Bitterness, but in the sweet Love from whence they spring, and the sweet Fruits that spring from them; that we are our Lord's Gold, and he tries us in the Furnace to purify us ... this may beget not only Patience, but /Gladness even in the Sufferings" (251-252). Archbishop of Glasgow, 1611-1684. **Presbyterian**

Lewis Bayly, *The Practice of Piety* (London: Edward Brewster, 1702; dozens of editions through 18<sup>th</sup> c): "By affliction and sickness God exerciseth his Children, and the graces which he bestoweth upon them. He refineth and trieth their faith, as the Goldsmith doth his Gold in the Furnace [cites 1 Peter 1:7], to make / it shine more glittering and bright: he stirreth us up to pray more diligently, and zealously, and proveth with what patience we have learned all this while in his School" (374-375). **Puritan**

Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (London: John Lawrence, 1709): "Spiritual Songs" runs through several metaphors for god: tree, rose, vine, head, fountain, fire: "Is he a Fire? He'll purge my Dross,  
But the true Gold sustains no Loss;  
Like a Refiner shall he sit,  
And tread the Refuse with his Feet" (117).  
Appears in *Scripture Portions for the Afflicted, especially the Sick* 1845 (Religious Tract Society); *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns; designed for Public Worship* (London: C. J. & F. Rivington, 1831); and various Watts collections. **Nonconformist**

Robert Nelson, *The Practice of True Devotion* (London: J. Downing, 1715 (at least 16 eds through 1794), "Patience and Resignation": "Considering the many uneasie Circumstances of Life, this Virtue of *Patience* is absolutely necessary... Afflictions are like the Test to Gold, they prove and discover the Truth and Excellency of our Virtues. If any cross Accident befalls us, we look upon our Selves as very unfortunate, instead of esteeming our Selves happy in meeting with an opportunity of Expressing to God our Resignation and Patience" (206).

Thomas Boston, *Human Nature in its Four-fold State* (London: J. Chalmers, 1793; orig ca 1720): "regeneration is a real thorough change, whereby the man is made a new creature... The Lord God makes the creature a new creature, as the gold-smith melts down the vessel of dishonour, and makes it a vessel of honour. Man is... altogether disjointed by the fall; every faculty of the soul is, as it were, dislocated. In regeneration the Lord looseth every joint, and sets it right again" (167); "as the gold-smith melts down the old crazy vessel, and casts it over again in a new mould, bringing it forth with a new lustre; so shall the vile body, which lay dissolved in the grave, come forth at the resurrection, in perfect beauty and comely proportion" (348). **Presbyterian**

Zachary Pearce, *A Sermon on Self-Murder* (London: Rivington, 1794; orig 1736): "The are no Virtues perhaps more perfect than such as are display'd in the patient enduring of Calamities: As Gold and Silver are purified by the Refiner's Fire, so are These by the Furnace of Affliction. And perhaps the truest kind of Courage is that which is exerted in bearing Misfortunes: Its Principle is more *within* Man, than in any other Case; and therefore he that can face Misery is a Hero indeed" (20). Hence "all of us have great Occasion seriously and frequently to consider the heinous Nature of Self-Murder, while we are yet unmolested and untempted by the Evils of Life; for the only way to make the Rules about it force to us, when we are miserable, is to imprint them deep in our Memories, while we are happy" (21). **Anglican**

Ralph Erskine, *The Fountain-Head of All Blessings* (Edinburgh: A. Alison, 1740): "the Troubles and Trials of the Church and Children of God are but for a short Time" (25); not that long-term suffering is bad: "Nay, the Gold glances the finer, the longer it hath lien in the Fire. Therefore this should make you not at all to grudge. You are not to think that it is good for you to be quit of Affliction; for then you would think yourself well, and would not desire another Heaven; but he orders Affliction, that you may long for the Place where there is no more Affliction" (26). **Presbyterian**

Robert Manning, *Moral Entertainments on the Most Important Truths of the Christian Religion* (London: T. Meighan, 1742): "as Fire, not only tries, but refines Gold, by separating it from its Alloy; so Almighty God both tries the Hearts of Men in the Furnace of Adversity, and, at the same time, purifies them from the Dross of / earthly Affections; which debase the Soul, and sink her beneath the Dignity of her spiritual Nature" (3: 266-267). **Catholic**

John Willison, *Afflicted Man's Companion: or, a Directory for Families and Persons afflicted with sickness or any other distress* (Edinburgh: E. and J. Robertsons, 1743; 17 eds through 1794): "Faith represents Christ as standing by the furnace, as a *refiner*, where his gold is melting, carefully overseeing the trials of his people, that they may work for their good, and ready to bring them out thereof when they are sufficiently purified from their dross" (31). Quoted by Laird (see below). Later, under the heading "Labour to bear with patience whatever load of trouble the Lord appoints for you" (47): "The goldsmith will not let his gold lay longer in the furnace than it is purified. The wicked have a sea of wrath to drink: but, O drooping believer, take comfort; you have but a *cup of affliction*, which will soon be exhausted. The time is near when all thy trials shall have an end: in heaven there is no cross, no complaint, nor sorrows for ever" (48). See affliction below for one last reference.  
**Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Charles and John Wesley, *Short Hymns on select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* (Bristol: E. Farley, 1762):

Try me then, and try me still  
In the furnace of distress,  
By my own, and others' ill,  
By the hidings of Thy face;  
Yet will I the promise hold  
Which Jesus to my heart hath told,  
I shall at last come forth as gold" (9: 259). **Methodist**

William Mason, *Spiritual Treasury for the Children of God* (New York: Deare and Andrews, 1803; orig London, 1765): "Righteous souls pass through many dark frames and disagreeable experiences: sometimes they are put to a stand, ready to question if all is right within or not; for they are the subjects of a nature in which dwells every evil, which wars against God, the peace, holiness and comfort of their souls: hence they are sometimes in seasons of darkness; they see not things in the light of truth... Tried faith is true faith. Touch any metal but gold, and aqua fortis will burn it off. True faith stands the fire of temptations; trusts Christ in heaviness; stays upon him in darkness; for at all times, in all seasons, under all circumstances, light and gladness are sown for you, and in due season shall spring up in you" (2: 159).  
**Calvinist**

William Romaine, *A Treatise upon the Walk of Faith* (London: Worrall and Tovey, 1771): "The refiner does not / intend to lose one atom of his gold, but puts it into the fire to purge away the dross" (2: 89-90). "So does God. When he hath tried me, says Job, I shall come forth as gold. He was tried in the fire, and his faith was found unto praise and honor and glory" (90). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

George Horne, *Works*. London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1818), *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, orig. 1771: "*The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.* As to the afflictions which persons may suffer, who are embarked in a righteous cause, they are intended to purge away the dross, and to refine them for the Master's use. 'Gold,' saith the son of Sirach, 'is tried in the fire,

and acceptable men in " the furnace of adversity;" Eccles. ii. 5. In the mean time, God's displeasure against the wicked is ever the same, and their prosperity, instead of benefiting, will in the end destroy them. The cases / of David and Saul, Christ and the Jews, martyrs and their persecutors, are all cases in point, and should be often in our thoughts to teach us patience, and guard us against despair, in seasons of calamity, pain, or disgrace" (5: 61-62). **Anglican**

Marion Laird, *Memoirs of the Life and Experiences* (Glasgow: William Smith, 1775), "An unmarried Woman in Greenock" who was "many times brought into... the severest trials and temptations" (title page): "Ever since I can rightly remember, it hath been my kind Lord's way with me, often-times to hedge up my way with thorns of affliction... About the middle of August 1757, it pleased the Lord to visit me with afflictions on my body" (89). Quotes Willison on Christ melting his gold (90). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Charles Drelincourt, *The Christian's Defence against the Fears of Death* (London: J. Buckland., 1776): "As the Gold is tried in the Fire, thus the Lord casts us into the Flame of Affliction, that our Faith might / be tried, and appear more precious than fine Gold" (1 Cor. 5) (227-28). "We glory in God in the Midst of Tribulations, knowing that Tribulation produceth Patience, Patience Experience, and Experience Hope" (1 Peter 3) (228); "a Soul purified by Faith, ... is more precious than fine Gold" (342). **French Protestant**

Christopher Atkinson, *Sermons on the Most Interesting and Important Subjects* (London: S. Crowder, 1782): "supposing a just God to sign the Commission to each afflictive Circumstance, why are the best of Christians sometimes loaden with the worst of Evils? The Answer is obvious. The Mind of a conscientious Man feels no Sting but such as is darted by his Sovereign to prove his Loyalty, to purge away all his Dross, and to bring him at last out of the Furnace of Affliction, refined like pure Gold out of the Fire" (25). "And if his Body droops under a lingering Sickness, or is tortured with / Pain, he considers it as the salutary Correction of a tender Father, and views every Cloud of temporal Misery in the Light of an eternal Blessing" (25-26). **Anglican**

*A Collection of Hymns for... Plunket-Street Meeting-House* (Dublin: G. Perrin, 1782):  
Gold in the furnace tried  
Ne'er loses ought but Dross;  
So is the Christian purified  
And better'd by the cross.

Afflictions make us see  
(What else whould 'scape our Sight)  
How very foul and dim are We  
And God how pure and bright" (310) **Presbyterian**

Thomas Bell, *Grapes in the Wilderness: Or, A Discourse of the Dispensations of God towards His People* (Edinburgh: David Paterson, 1785): “as the fining-pot for silver and the furnace for gold; so is affliction to the sinner, a discovering and purging thing. Affliction... will open [men’s] ears to discipline; it will cause them to see things that before they would not see” (58).

Barthelemy Baudrand, *The Elevation of the Soul to God* (Dublin: Patrick Wogan, 1795; orig 1785; Jesuit): sins “are the obstacles which God desires to remove... What more effectual means, than sufferings? These faults of the just are blemishes in his soul; they do not destroy the friendship of God, but they cool it; they do not bring death to his soul, but they occasion weaknesses and infirmities, Now God, who loves the just... desires always to render them more worthy of himself, and of his love. They are precious gold, which has still need of being purified; he makes them pass through the fire of tribulation to give them their full value and all their splendour” (1: 169). “God intends to try us, or, to speak more properly, he intends to let us see what we are... He ordains sufferings to satisfy for and efface the blemishes, with which we are defiled. As gold is purified in the fire, so souls are cleansed from their imperfections by the fire of tribulation, which restores to them their primitive splendour and beauty” (2: 177). **Catholic**

R. Jones, preface to *Two Funeral Sermons occasioned by the Death of Two Young Women* (London: C. Dilly, 1786): “The / righteous shall lose nothing even when the world itself is lost” (xii-xiii); “they find again at the end of the world what they lost in the afflictive changes of it. In the mean time, blessed is the man that endureth temptation!” (xiii). “When Patience has had her perfect work, and under her sustaining and establishing influence, they possess their own souls... Then we see the spirit of God, and of glory, resting upon them” (xiv): “that mingled tranquility and majesty, which a Greek Poet calls, the beauty / and ornament of calamities: which the Bible calls, tried gold: of highest value, and finest lustre” (xiv-xv). **Congregational**

*Christian’s Magazine* 1790, letter from a reader (not clear, but I think female) recounts how in 1778 she planned suicide by swallowing opium; but instead of death, God “saved me out of the hands of my enemy” and she vomited up the drugs. Still despondent, she prepares to jump into the Thames, when a man who “was certain that I was going to destroy myself” convinces her to go home; “this I believe was Satan’s last effort” (1: 31); started reading the Bible again but didn’t find any helpful passages, went to a Sunday service in Holborn but didn’t hear anything to satisfy her. Went back in the afternoon and heard a prayer for “a person ... in despondency, and her case was described as if it were my own... The sermon was probably preached for her”; text = Zech 13. The preacher “said every thing that could be said from the text. He shewed the process of refining silver, and of trying gold, and illustrated the whole verse most delightfully. From that hour I was at full liberty; I was like *Christian* in the *Pilgrim’s Progress*, when the burthen fell from his back” (32). **Presbyterian**

Mary Hays, *Letters and Essays, Moral and Miscellaneous* (London: T. Knott, 1793): “The first and noblest characters that have adorned humanity, have generally arisen out of severe trials, and adverse circumstances... May we not conclude from hence, that as gold is tried in the fire, so the human character is perfected by sufferings; and those from whom the dross is separated in this first stage of existence, are assuredly nearer to that state of pure and perfect enjoyment, where our faculties will be no longer enigmatical; and where these glorious capacities, here too frequently only inlets to pain, will find their proper gratification?” (211).

William Coppinger, *The Life of Miss Nano Nagle* (Cork: James Daly, 1794), funeral sermon for Miss Nano Nagle (died Cork 1793): goes over her trials as a schoolteacher: “The stupidity of some was proof against every instruction; the very same lesson repeated during months, and every day in these months was neither retained, nor understood; the levity of others was not to be fixed... the stubborn rudeness of others was an overmatch for her mildness; to say nothing of the infected air she had to breathe in a confined room, from the nauseousness of their rags, and from their nastiness” (12). “Yet these difficulties, far from retarding her, were, on the contrary, a stimulative to / her exertions: she persisted with such intemperate application, that a consumption threatened her life” and led her to back off (12-13). “But as gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable souls in the furnace of tribulation, the Almighty thought proper about this time to lean heavily upon her”: her mother and sister both died; this led her to move from Dublin to Cork (13). **Catholic**

Thomas Rutledge, *Practical Sermons on Select Passages of Scripture* (London: T. Gillet, 1794): “Adversity is the true touchstone of every Christian, and the sure test of his virtues. It takes off every mask, and shows him in his genuine colours. The furnace of affliction refines the solid, and evaporates the unsubstantial and only assumed virtues. It makes the man of God perfect through sufferings; taking away his dross, purging his tin, and causing him to / come forth as the most fine gold” (415-416); “if God did not use affliction as the means of reviving and strengthening them, they would be in danger of being entirely lost. As the moisture of the air corrupts the baser metals, and causeth them to rust; so, a long course of prosperity, the pleasures and affluence of the world, are very apt to corrupt and intoxicate the minds of men; and make them forget both God and themselves” (416).

### **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Samuel Walker, *Christ the Purifier* (London: J. Matthews, 1794; curate of Truro from 1746-61). Preface by A.S., 1793, contrasts the “life of the flesh” with the “spiritual life” (xi): “The one... is as *dross*, and the other as *gold* or *silver*, in the same ore; and Christ is the only Refiner or Purifier to *purge* and to *purify* this ore, either by gentle means, or (if need be) by *fire*. The variety of the means, by which the Redeemer works, is much of the important subject of Mr. Walker’s present discourses” (xii). Text for Sermon 1 is Malachi 3:3; sermon 2 asks “What we are to understand by [Christ] purifying and purging his people” (20). “Now, inasmuch as purging and purifying metals is the cleansing them from dross and impurities that cleave to them... till they are brought out separate, clean, and pure; so,... the purification of

men's souls must consist in purging away from them more and more by successive operations that sensual, earthly, and devilish filth that is about them, till they be brought out in original purity. By means of the fall, the soul of every man is by nature altogether dross and base metal; it has no gold or silver, no goodness in it.... Though in regeneration there be spiritual life put into the soul, and a real, vital, and powerful principle of holiness; yet it dwells with corrupt nature... [which] has still an influence always mingling itself in every thought, word, and work" (21). Purging the latter "is effected by the quickening, strengthening, and exalting the principle of grace... for nature and grace are two opposites continually at war" (22); "those, who are much burthened by the striving of corruption, may be encouraged in the consideration, that it is the very office of Christ to purify their hearts, and to purge away the dross." Christ "sits over us in heaven, to refine us as gold and silver" (25). **Anglican**

William Day, *God's Favour the Best Security* (Evesham: Dyde and Son, 1795): "The children of GOD may partake of general calamities; they may be tried by the same judgments which afflict a sinful nation; but, in such cases, the love of GOD to them is equally visible. Temporal afflictions are not always real evils; but frequently blessings in disguise... It is not the scourge of wrath, with which the unrighteous is punished, and which is the beginning of woes, but gracious chastenings, designed to conform them to the divine image, and make them meet for eternal glory. Were it consistent with the interests of his people, GOD would preserve them from tribulation; but when it is not, he will be / their purifier, and bring them forth like gold" (16-17). "In the furnace they shall not lose any thing but dross: he will sit by them, and order both heat and time according to infinite wisdom and unchangeable love" (17). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

William Davy, *A System of Divinity* (Lustleigh: privately printed, 1796): "God... inspects and sees every thing really as it is, thro all the varying Circumstances of their Alterations, and therefore acts uniformly, according to the first Purposes of his Will, without Change or Variation, as FIRE, with one unvaried Action, consumes the Dross, but purifies and refines the finer Gold;—and the same SUN, with one continual Heat, melts one Sort of Bodies, but hardens another;—so God, without any Change or Alteration in himself, punishes the Wicked, when they so continue, and shows Compassion towards the same Persons, when they become truly & sincerely penitent" (2: 390). Says roughly the same thing, 1785, 1: 243. **Anglican**

Catherine Cecil, *Memoirs of Mrs. Hawkes, late of Islington; including, Remarks in Conversation and Extracts from Sermons and Letters of the Late Rev. Richard Cecil* (Philadelphia: Washington J. Simon, 1840). Remarks by Richard Cecil, ca 1796 on "Trouble and Perplexity": "We cannot get on one step, but in trusting to our great Leader. And the less sense has to build upon—the more obscure and intricate our way—the more should we rest with an unlimited confidence in Him, who sits as a refiner, watching over the gold while it is in the fire, that none of it be lost:—and while He is refining, we may safely trust Him" (470). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Habakkuk Crabb, *Sermons on Practical Subjects* (Cambridge: B. Flower, 1796): “A season of affliction gives an opportunity to display the amiable dispositions of meekness, humility, and patience; such afflictions being sanctified by the grace of God, cleanse and purify the human heart. The servants of God come forth from this furnace, as gold purified seven times; they are more pious and devout in their tempers” etc. “These seasons of adversity are peculiarly favourable to serious reflection. They are then withdrawn from the cares of / business, the glare of vanity, and all the vanities of pride and folly” (339-340). “The afflictions of the Christian, cause his graces to shine the brighter; from the cloud of adversity they break forth with a superior splendour” (340). **Nonconformist**

James Gillespie, *Sermons* (Perth: R. Morison, 1796): “In prosperity there is no opportunity of proving many of the cardinal graces of the Christian faith, such as faith, honesty, patience, and resignation to the divine will... adversity is the great and infallible test of sincerity. By this we are tried, as gold is tried in the fire; hence afflictions are called trials” (305). Scottish **Presbyterian**, St Andrews

Francis Leighton, *A Sermon preached at Battlefield Church* (Shrewsbury: P. Sandford, 1797), funeral sermon for Emma Corbet, Salop: feeling sad in fine (3-4), but: “When we fall into despair through the pressure of these melancholy dispensations, we give foundation for the most unfavourable conclusions respecting our faith and dependence on God. These afflicting strokes of his hand are probations by which, according to the sentiment of an Apostle, he casts our faith into the crucible. While you are in the midst of prosperity, it is difficult to distinguish whether it be the love of your benefactor or of his benefits which kindle your devotion, Tribulation separates the gold from the dross. It is only in tribulation that you can recognize a genuine zeal and an unsuspected piety: and when in these great trials your faith forsakes you, it is an evident proof that you have taken a phantom for a reality” (7).

Thomas Hussey, *A Sermon preached... in the Chapel in Spanish Place* (London: J.P. Coughlan, 1798): “let us admire the mysterious ways of God’s mercy. Sometimes it seems inexplicably severe to pious souls... it seems to refuse to them every interior comfort in their devotions, and to strew their ways, with thorns, and disquietudes” (24). “Inwardly they feel, disgust, perplexity, and horror—and outwardly, they meet with temptations, enemies, and vexatious attacks... Oh God! Art thou resolved that they should sink under the tempest? No, Christians! It is his mercy that permists those fiery trials, to purify that gold, which is to adorn his own throne, for all eternity. When his all-wise designs are accomplished, their faith, their constancy, and perseverance, will be rewarded a hundred fold” (25). **Catholic**

Richard Hayes Southwell, *Intellectual Freedom: or, an Essay on the Source and Nature of Moral Evil* (Bristol: R. Edwards, 1798): “if reason is permitted to controul our wayward passions, and religion allowed to turn aside the veil of time, they will point us to the place, where the rude companions of our present state will cease and be unknown. *As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold*, so is affliction for the trial of man. Lesser evils are in kindness sent to prevent greater” (159).

William Bromley Cadogan, *Discourses* (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1798), sermon on the death of Mrs Littlehales in 1796: “The alternate influences of joy and grief, of hope / and fear, seem to have wasted her spirits, preyed upon her animal frame, and brought her body to dissolution in the fifty-ninth year of her age... Though her faith had been tried with fire, and was pure and resplendent as gold, though her hope of the resurrection to eternal life was sure and certain, and though her love was abundant towards God and men, yet she had often expressed herself to her friends respecting the *passage itself* through the valley and shadow of death, as though it presented something awful to her mind. But God was better to her than her fears: The hour came, and support came with it” (210-211). **Anglican**

William Beat, *Sermons* (Edinburgh: Alexander Smellie, 1799): following Christ’s death, “there was still a gross mixture of unbelief with [the apostles’] faith, a deep tincture of the world in their affections” (166). “Before they were like gold in the ore as it is found in the earth; but, when this great day of the Spirit came, they were like gold that had passed through the fire. They got other views, better thoughts, and better inclinations” (167). **Presbyterian**

John Pawson, *A Legacy to the Poor; or, Sermons on Various Subjects* (London: n.p., 1799) quotes Malachi 3:3 (“And he shall sit as refiner and purifier”) and Zechariah 13:9 (“I will refine them as Silver is refined”) (88). “How exceedingly pertinent is the metaphor here made use of? Fire, it is well known, consumes to ashes every thing that is cast upon it, or changes it into its own nature, into pure fire: So the Spirit of God burns up our evil degenerate nature... Fire is made use of in the purification of metals; by this the refiner separates the dross from the pure gold; So doth the Spirit of God work upon the mind... by his power communicated to us, we are delivered from the evil of inward sin, and made truly holy” (89). “Fire and the soul both ascend” upwards towards heaven” (90); “we should remember, that a stedfast confidence in God, a calm and patient submission to his will, and an holy resolution to cleave unto him with our whole heart, under heavy and distressing trials, are blessed evidences that the Lord is present with us still” (91); quotes Job 23: 10.

William Gahan, *Sermons and Moral Discourses, for all the Sundays and Principal Festivals of the Year* (Dublin: Richard Coyne, 1825; orig 1799), “On the Advantages of Sufferings and Afflictions”: “If you should happen to be distressed by unjust lawsuits, or to be otherwise injured, abused, reviled or persecuted, you would acknowledge with holy Job, that it is the hand of the Lord that strikes you, and that your enemies are only the instruments of his divine justice... by your impatience, you become martyrs without merit or reward, and besides losing the benefit and fruits of your sufferings, you run the risk of being miserable in in both worlds, and of becoming slaves to Satan in flames for a never-ending eternity. Thus, in a word, you frustrate the designs of God’s mercy, who has marked out no other road for conducting his servants to everlasting happiness but the royal way of the cross, and who tries the hearts of / men in the furnace of adversity as silver is tried by the fire, and gold in the furnace. If we consult the Scriptures, almost every page will declare

that crosses are the portion and inheritance of God's faithful servants, and that the just have been tried by sufferings and afflictions in all ages since the beginning of the world, adversity being the touchstone on which true virtue is tried and distinguished from what is only counterfeit" (211-212). Abel, Jacob, Jews in Egypt, Job, Tobias, John the Baptist, Lazarus, etc (212). **Catholic**

William Huntington, *A Correspondence between Noctua Aurita, of the Desert, and Philomena, of the King's Dale* (London: T. Bensley, 1799): "God's choice of his people is made manifest to them in the furnace of affliction... God will bring his own elect through fire and through water: the former shall not kindle upon them, nor shall the latter drown them; in the furnace their election is made sure to them; 'I will bring the third part through the fire, and will purify them as silver is purified, and try them as gold is tried'" (222). "This fiery trial is to try our faith, that it may appear more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire" (237).

### **Nonconformist**

Archibald Maclaine, *Discourses on Various Subjects, delivered in the English Church at the Hague* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1799): "the day of adversity" (226) "calls up faith and hope to enlighten the darkness, and raise them from dejection, by lively views of the promises of their Redeemer... and thus purifies all their virtues from the dross of sensuality and selfishness, as fire makes gold come purer and brighter from the furnace. When the day of adversity is considered in this point of view, how doe its forbidding aspect change, and remove all objections against the goodness and mercy of the Supreme Being!" (227). **Presbyterian**

Robert MacCulloch, *Lectures on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Edinburgh: Thomas and John Turnbull, 1800): on Isaiah 31: 9, the Lord's "furnace [is] in Jerusalem" (3: 21): "A furnace is fitted up for the purpose of melting gold, silver, and other useful metals, in order to separate them from the alloy with which they are intermixed, and to prepare them for the different uses to which they may be applied." This "significantly represents the trying afflictions whereby God is pleased to purify his people from their corruptions, to divide the precious from the vile; those who on account of their excellence and purity resemble choice silver, from those who are worthless and contemptible, like the worst residue." This "furnace was kindled by divine wrath" (22). This is a reference to Zechariah 13: 8-9: "In all the land two parts shall be cut off and die. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried" (86). Likewise Malachi prophecies the Jesus "shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness" (554).

### **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

MacCulloch 1800: on Isaiah 48: 9, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction (553): "Affliction is significantly represented in scripture as a furnace which is used for melting gold, silver, and other metals; to disunite them from the residue with which they are incorporated, that their value ... may be ascertained"; likewise, it's "employed by infinite wisdom to mollify the hearts of God's people, to purify them

from the dross of corruption and the pollution they have contracted” (3: 555).

**Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

J. Rippon, *Addenda in the Tenth—an Enlarged Edition of a selection of Hymns from the Best Authors* (London: J. Bateson, 1800): Hymn, “The Invitation of Wisdom accepted”: “I come for grace, like gold refin’d, T’enrich and beautify my mind; Grace that will trials well endure, And in the furnace grow more pure” (121).

*Missionary Magazine* 16 Dec 1805, “Christianity a Source of Unfading Joy”: “An apostle tells us, that the trial of our faith is much more precious than that of gold that perishes. There is here a beautiful allusion to the purifying of gold in a furnace. The gold is cast into the fire; it loses only its dross, and comes out bright and pure. The same refining tendency hath the furnace of affliction, with this difference, that while the gold, though tried, must one day perish, the trying of the believer in the furnace is connected with final and complete sanctification” (512). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Benedict Rayment (ed.), *The Divine Office for the Use of the Laity* (Manchester: T. Haydock, 1806), Catholic devotional guide quotes Wisdom 3: 1,8: “The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure was taken for misery: and their going away from us, for utter destruction. But they are now in peace. And tho' in the sight of men they suffered torments, their hope is full of immortality. Afflicted in a few things, in many shall they be rewarded, because God hath tried them, and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace he tried them, and as a victim of a holocaust he hath accepted them, and in due time there shall be respect had to them. The righteous shall shine, and run to and for like sparks among the reeds. They shall judge the nations, and rule over people, and their Lord shall reign for ever” (vol 2; separately paginated appendix, xxvi). Wisdom is part of the Apocrypha. **Catholic**

Ambrose Serle, *The Christian Remembrancer: or, Short Reflections upon the Faith, Life, and Conduct, of a Real Christian* (London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1818; orig 1807), “On the Death of Relatives and Friends”: “I have lost a friend,’ says some anxious mind. But who look that friend? Was it not the God, who gave him? And hath he taken more than his own? And, if a pious friend, hath he not removed him to the best advantage?” (246). “Pray then against the overstrong impressions of carnal sense; for all this is the striving of animal life, of mere flesh and blood, against the Lord; and desire thou to find thy will in the Divine will alone. Be silent when it strikes, contented when it denies, thankful when it gives, resigned when it takes away. It is not the gold in the furnace which bubbles and froths upwards, but the dross and scum” (247). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Thomas Tregenna Biddulph, *Practical Essays on the Morning and Evening Services of the Church of England* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1810): “If we are laid on a bed of sickness, we are not authorised to pray, absolutely, for a restoration of health; but we must solicit grace that we may glorify God in the furnace of trial,

and come out of it, either by recovery or death, as gold purified in the fire. Are we in a state of persecution? We are not at liberty to seek exemption from it, but that we may be defended against a murmuring and revengeful temper under it, and that we may be enabled to rejoice that we are 'counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake'" (77). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Francis Martyn, *Homilies on the book of Tobias; being a Detailed History, and Familiar Explication, of the Virtues of that Holy Servant of God* (York: Thomas Wilson and Sons, 1817) on Tobias: "The servants of God, in a state of affliction and trial, are compared by the holy Scripture to gold in the furnace. For as gold by passing through the fire loses nothing of its own substance, but being by this operation cleansed from every particle of dross that adhered to it, comes forth from the furnace more bright and more valuable than it was before; so... the virtues of the Saints receive a new lustre from the persecutions of the world, and the afflictions of this life; are separated from all dross of earthly affection, and are crowned with a much higher degree of merit, as to eternal life. The character of the holy Tobias, which in time of prosperity / appeared so edifying, shone forth with much greater splendour in the afflicting state of blindness and poverty, to which Providence had reduced him. This severe trial stamped his virtues with the seal of heaven, and made it manifest to the world that his good works were not performed from any human motive, or a view to any earthly advantage, but from a pure love of God, and a desire of eternal life" (86-87). (= Tobit, one of the OT books in the Catholic Canon).

#### **Catholic**

Charles Caleb Colton, *Lacon: or, Many Things in Few Words addressed to Those who Think* (New York: C.P. Fessenden, 1832; orig. 1820): "Afflictions sent by Providence, melt the constancy of the noble minded, but confirm the obduracy of the vile. The same furnace that hardens clay, liquefies gold; and in the strong manifestations of divine power, Pharaoh found his punishment, but David his pardon" (1: 183). Colton was an English clergyman who emigrated to America in 1828. **Anglican**

Thomas Roberts, *Remains, Theological and Poetical* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1838); sermon sketch on "Sanctified Bereavement," riffing on Job 23: 10; ca 1820: "The assurance that when the trial ends, they shall come forth with beneficial results. There is a progress in this assurance. 1. They now perceive that the dispensation is from God, either immediately, or permissively, whatever agency effects it, — natural evil, wicked men, or Satan; still he says, 'When he hath tried me;' thus confessing that afflictions do not spring from the ground. 2. They are convinced their sufferings are a trial, an ordeal. 'When he hath tried me.' Designed, first, to prove the genuineness of personal religion, as gold stands the fiery test; and secondly, to improve the quality of their religion, as the furnace detaches the dross. 3. They are fully persuaded the trial will terminate, and the final result will be most beneficial: 'When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold'" (318). **Methodist**

Roberts 1838 continued: "'When he hath tried me.' The period must be left to God. The church in Hosea's days said, 'After three days he will revive us.' To the church of

Smyrna it was said, 'Ye shall have tribulation ten days.' It may be ten months or ten years, but they shall be brought out sooner or later, when the assay shall be completed. They are not in the furnace of unquenchable fire, to be tormented for ever. (2.) They shall come forth with beneficial results... Purified thoroughly in the furnace"; "Greatly ennobled; their piety having proved sterling, they shall come forth as gold from the mint, stamped with the Divine image of Christ, the Royal Sufferer, bearing, in legible characters, his accrediting inscription, 'Holiness unto the Lord'" (319). "Let me now suffer; the Son of God is with me in the burning fiery furnace, and the smell of fire shall not be on me. I walk unburned amidst the flames" (320).

John Walker, *Essays and Correspondence, chiefly on Scriptural Subjects* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1838), *A Sufficient Reply to Mr. [J. A.] Haldane* (1821): "The proprietor of what he knows to be fine gold fears not to expose it to the hottest furnace, in order to manifest its characters. Even so the living God puts into the furnace of affliction and tribulation for his name's sake that precious faith of his elect, the work of which he fulfils in them with power (2 Thess. i. 11.) while the word marks their patient endurance under the influence of his truth as an evident token of perdition to his adversaries, but to them of salvation, and that of God (Phil. i. 28. 2 Thess. i. 5.). You, sir, know that it is many years since I have opposed the popular notion of sanctification, as a progressive amendment wrought in our own hearts, —an improvement into something good of that which was naturally evil. And I must say that those, who think they have attained any such sanctification as this, cannot consistently or seriously pray—'lead us not into trial.' They might rather wish for a trial of themselves, to manifest the happy change which has taken place in their own character" (1: 445). **Anglican**

*Baptist Magazine* 1 August 1825, on Malachi 3:3: "A reference to the process by which gold and silver are purified from their dross, will tend to illustrate this very interesting passage. In this operation, the refiner not only places his crucible on a hot fire, but heaps fire around and above it. Under this process, it, at first, throws out a dark and offensive smoke; which, as the heat and its effects increase, becomes less offensive, until it altogether ceases, and the silver becomes beautifully white. The point of requisite purity and perfection is, when *the refiner sees his own likeness reflected in the pot*. How admirably does this illustrate the gracious process by which, through means of affliction, our heavenly Father carries on the work of purification in the hearts of his children." Also, "pure gold will endure the hottest fire for many months, without appearing to lose any of its weight; and so the afflictions with which the people of God are exercised, burn up their dross and tin, but leave the grace / of God in their hearts undiminished, and shining brighter to his praise" (337-338). **Baptist**

Henry Belfrage, *Discourses on the Duties and Consolations of the Aged* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1827), quoting 2 Timothy 4: 8, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness": "The gay and splendid visions which rise before the fleshly mind produce only a momentary rapture" (455). "The glory of the heavenly state is

the reward of those who have run with patience the race set before them" (457); "the prosperity of the wicked and the trials of the righteous have sometimes shaken the faith of men, but then it will be seen that the afflictions of the good had wrought for them an exceeding great and an eternal weight of glory. These crowns are formed of gold purified in the furnace of affliction, and these palms are taken from trees transplanted from the valley of tears" (463).

James Haldane Stewart, *Sermons principally designed to Strengthen the Faith and Increase the Devotedness of Christians in the Present Remarkable Era* (London: R.B. Seeley and Burnside, 1828), sermon on Job viz God "as a refiner, bringing them into the fire to try them. This is a metaphor often used in Scripture; for scarcely is any thing more expressive of a believer's heart than a piece of untried ore. There is the precious metal, as we may say, in it... But this new nature, like gold in the untried mass, is surrounded by dross-by the original evil of a fallen nature, and still more so by the frequent commission of sin, and by the corrupt habits formed in a sinful world.... To purify them, therefore, he tries them as gold is tried. You know that the effect of fire is to loosen mixtures, and to attract similar substances; and that thus what was mixed together in the mass separates in the fire: the particles of gold unite, and the dross is brought forth. Every particle of the dross was in the untried ore before; but the fire separates it: the gold becomes pure, and the dross is cast away. It is this process which goes forward in these dark providences" (378). "When brought to the knowledge of the truth, the Christian knows little of himself. The golden colour, so to speak, appears at the top; but under this, unknown it may be to himself, the fallen nature of fallen parents, and many acquired and sinful habits, lie concealed" (378-379). Stewart = **Anglican** rector with a strong missionary bent.

Stewart 1828 continued: "The Refiner knows this. Desiring to purify the hearts of his people, he puts them into the fire of tribulation. Oh, then, what dross comes forth! Unbelief, self-confidence, creature-love, murmuring of heart and secret resistance to the will of God, impatience, and indirect modes of obtaining relief, and a great variety of other particles of fallen nature, appear. And as they are seen they are repented of; for it is a distinguishing mark of the children of God, to sorrow for sin. They are brought to the atoning blood of Christ" (379). "You know, my beloved friends, that kings are represented as using golden vessels. It is a certain truth that the King of kings does: that those whose services he uses most are those whom he most refines" (379-380): cites "the most eminent believers in the Scripture," Abraham, Joseph, David, the prophets, Paul. Each of these "was a companion in tribulation... He saw the furnace for refining of metals; but he felt a far more fiery trial" (380). "It is well known, my beloved friends, that when this process is performing, he who is executing it does not leave the crucible; his eyes are upon it: he measures the heat, and only allows the fire to proceed to that point which will fulfil his appointed object. He is careful not to lose one particle of the gold, or to apply more fire than is needful" (380).

Stewart 1828 continued: "But what consolation can a worldly man have in such cases?" (381). "He has no support of that kind to comfort him. He cannot console

himself with the thought, that, whatever his present trial may be, the Lord approves his way. As little can he suppose that, in such circumstances, he shall come out of his trials like tried gold: for, if the hope which some entertain were well founded, that because they suffer now they shall be happy hereafter, this would be to do away the benefit of the death of Christ our Lord. If our sufferings were sufficient to atone for our sins, what need had he to die? No, my beloved friends; one who is neglecting the Gospel has no support when trials come" (382). "Let it be your prayer, that when you are brought out of the fire you may be like the gold. This ought to be much upon the heart of a Christian, that he may not lose the benefit of such a season; they are seasons of special love" (383).

Charles Abel Moysey, *Lectures on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (London: Rivington et al, 1830) on Romans 5:3: "We read thus, 'Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; &c.' Now experience is not the true meaning of the original word. It signifies a test, or here the having endured a test" (136). "The word used in the Greek, is one which in its own direct signification means the assay (as it is called), or the putting of the precious metals (gold and silver) to the test, in order to try their purity. Now look upon the word 'experience' in this sense, which any one who is well acquainted with the original language of the epistles, must know to be the true sense. There you have at once a plain, and a forcible idea, conveyed by the Apostle's words. Patience worketh proof; that sort of proof which is obtained by trying gold in the furnace: that is to say, proof of its genuine character and purity. And proof (such proof as makes the purity of our principles to be apparent, in the patience with which we undergo trials for the Lord's sake), worketh hope" (137). **Anglican**

Thomas Hartwell Horne, *A Manual for the Afflicted: containing a Practical Essay on Affliction, and a Series of Meditations and Prayers* (London: T. Cadell, 1832), "Concerning Afflictions"; "Afflictions are designed for the trial of our faith and obedience" (7). Quotes Daniel 11:35L "Some of them of understanding shall fall, to TRY them. The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts. Thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. (also Prov. xvii. 3. Psal. Ixvi.10" (8).

*Short Comments on Every Chapter of the Holy Bible* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1838), Malachi 3: 1-6: "The believer needs not fear the fiery trial of afflictions and temptations, by which the Saviour refines his gold. He will take care it is not more intense or longer than is needful for his good; and this trial will end far otherwise than that of the wicked" (671). **Anglican**

William Jay, *Works* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1849; orig. 1833): "Survey the Christian's spiritual imperfections and necessities. Without suffering, how can they resemble the Saviour? and be weaned from the world? and be witnesses for God? and be prepared for usefulness?... Is it a strange thing for the husbandman to plough up the fallow ground, to receive the seed? or for the vinedresser to prune the vine? or for the refiner to put his gold into the furnace? Such a needs be is there for all our

afflictions: and he only who is ignorant of it, can wonder at the event. But, Christian, while you look for the fiery trial, so as not to be astonished at the experience—remember, you have enough to encourage you. He who died for you, and rose again, and rules over all, has made provision for every condition in which you shall be found. As thy sufferings abound, thy consolation shall abound also. If the way be rough, thy shoes shall be iron and brass” (1: 84). **Nonconformist**

Theophilus Biddulph, *Plain and Practical Sermons; intended chiefly for Family Reading and Parochial Libraries* (Bristol: J. Chilcott, 1834): the Bible “affords encouragement to *the poor*, for it tells us how good and gracious and merciful the Almighty was to one of their own class, a poor widow woman, who, though she had no friend in earth, had a Friend and Father in heaven. Let me remind them, that the poorer they are for this world, the more reason why they should labour to be rich for another. They know that poverty and hardship and trouble will not by themselves save their souls... ask the Lord to give them His Holy Spirit, that their troubles may be sanctified to them, and that they may come out of them at last, as the gold comes out of the refiner’s fire” (70). **Anglican**

Henry Hughes, *Lectures on the Gospel: As Gathered from the Life of Christ* (London: J. G. and F. Rivington, 1834) on “the Uses of Affliction”: “there is a fixed unalterable law, dated from the time when God first looked upon the work of his hands, and could not pronounce that it was good, that man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. And if it be that ye are called unto glory, if it be that, in the hands of God, this suffering shall make you perfect, and ye shall come forth from it like gold tried seven times in the fire, and if, for the elect’s sake, these days be shortened, so that they be but for awhile, shall we shrink from mentioning them in our prayer? Or rather, / shall not the Christian, when he sees the clouds that lower around him, rejoice that he may look forward to the time when out of darkness shall break forth light, and when his short-lived sorrow shall be turned into everlasting joy; when he shall be made perfect, stablished, strengthened, settled?” (118-119). **Anglican**

Alexander Fletcher, *The Sabbath Remembrancer* (London: George Virtue, 1835), “Sanctified Affliction”: “All believers need affliction. Such is the love their Saviour bears to them, that if they did not need them, he would not send them... The gold requires the *furnace* to purge away the dross. Saints are the gold which belongs to the King of the church, and he casts his gold into the furnace of affliction, to purge away the dross of sin” (1: 39). Later: “A good Christian is not a grave to bury God’s mercies; but a temple to shew forth his praise... No vessel can be made of gold without fire, so it is impossible that we should be made vessels of honour, unless we are melted and refined in the furnace of affliction” (297). **Independent**

Robert Haldane, *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1837), comment on Romans 8:37: “The sufferings of believers ... shall not separate them from the love of Christ; but on the contrary are productive to them of the greatest benefits” (2: 402). “The Christian not only overcomes in the worst of his trials, ... but he is also a gainer by the assault of his enemy. It is better for him than if

he had not been called to suffer. He is a gainer and a conqueror, both in the immediate fruits of his sufferings, as God overrules them for his good, bringing him forth from the furnace as gold refined, and also in their final issue; for 'our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory'" (403). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Mrs. Langford, *A Short Discourse on the Evidence in Favour of Christianity from Reason* (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1837): "afflictions are equally dealt to the just and the unjust in the eyes of man; but then his eye sees not far. Afflictions may visit the just to correct some small and secret failing, which hindered him from perceiving the full lustre of truth at that point, and so far left him without the power of appreciating true happiness. After he has come out of the crucible of his sorrows, he is as gold refined; and if afflictions are not always to correct sin and error, they are a fine and valuable / preparation for death, the dark and painful hour that inevitably awaits all life, and as certainly snatches man for ever from all human and all earthly enjoyments. And what can so well teach him to seek aid and enjoyment elsewhere as that correcting hand that denies pleasures here?" (126-127).

Edward Thompson, *The Rector of Auburn*. (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1837): "It has been said, and in our opinion the sentiment betrays the greatest ingratitude, that the troubles of life weigh so heavily in the balance against its pleasures, that God, so far from intending happiness, has inflicted the greatest miseries on his creatures. That man is born to suffer in consequence of the sin of our fore-father we all experience, but that our afflictions are more than we can endure, considering that they are relieved by the greatest enjoyment, we are far from admitting. We know that half the miseries which men have to endure in this world, are either fanciful or of their own making—not God's" (2: 146); "doubtless God sends us trouble, but for why? not as intending misery for his creatures, but only to tempt them, or rather try them in the hour of adversity. This life we are told is one of probation, consequently we are in a course of trial, we are constantly being proved, and the severer the ordeal it may be the will of inscrutable providence to subject us to, the greater our happiness" (147); "whenever God does tempt or try men, he always leaves a way by which they may escape, and never suffers them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. Circumfused in faith they may tread the rough paths of this life in safety, and / come out of the fire in which they have been cast, like the gold from the furnace, free from the dross and bastard metal with which it was contaminated" (147-148). **Anglican**

Francis A. West, *Memoirs of Mrs. Jane Gibson, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, including Selections from Her Correspondence* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1837): "'Gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.' The greatest saints are generally the greatest sufferers. They mistake who suppose that Mrs. Gibson had not gone through those fiery trials by which 'God maketh the heart soft.' Her afflictions were many and great; her sorrows more and greater. The loss of children is only less than the greatest bereavement we can be called to endure; and Mrs. Gibson was again made to drink that bitter cup [in 1831]. This bereavement

was attended by circumstances peculiarly distressing. On the morning of the 21st of December Mrs. Gibson gave the infant to the nurse, to all appearance, well; and behold, it was, the next instant, a corpse!" (264). **Methodist**

Edward Bouverie Pusey, *Appendices to the Sermon preached... on the Fifth of November, 1837* (Oxford: J.H. Parker, 1838): "vicarious suffering may be so far well-pleasing to God, as having a communion with the sufferings of His beloved Son, and doubtless it may make those, who are partakers of it, more capable of the communication of the merits and influence of His Passion" (25); "it may be needful, in the wisdom of God, for the perfecting of His saints. As all trial implies pain, so the trial of the most precious vessels, it may be, is to be accomplished by pains proportionate. It seems not without special meaning that the analogy of gold is so often pointed out by Scripture. God sheweth us in this natural process an emblem of things spiritual. If even gold, which in the end perisheth, must yet be tried in the fire, how much more must faith, being more precious, so be proved" (26). **Anglican**

David Mitchell, "Gold." *Scottish Christian Herald* 3 (1838); in a general article on gold, devotes the final 20% of it to affliction: "There is an allusion made to gold by the Apostle Peter well deserving the consideration of all who would profit by the evils of life. This experienced saint, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, compares the test of Christian faith to gold tried in the fire. The sorrows of life operate as a touch-stone to decide the genuineness of our belief. As fire causeth the dross to escape from gold in the furnace, so affliction is made instrumental, by the agency of the Spirit, in purging the soul...The woes of this day are frequently difficult to bear, they wound like an arrow and pierce like a dart... Patients are not without pain while physicians probe their wounds, they feel its smarting, but this they must brook. Some, in their timidity, may shrink from the instrument of the operator, still reason will tell them that they are wrong. On the same principle believers will see it their duty and their privilege to submit to the faithful discipline of God. Some, during the season of affliction, become wavering and faint-hearted, while others give more unequivocal tests of the power of divine grace in them, yet all will feel the rod and the power of Him who has appointed it" (217). **Presbyterian**

Mitchell 1838 continued: "Christ, who took unto himself a body in its utmost perfection, experienced keenly the arrows of affliction. He was amazed when he contemplated his great approaching struggle, and in his astonishment he tasted the cup of sorrow. And is it unreasonable, then, that every one of his disciples should feel as in the furnace, and pant as in the flame? If the trial of gold be an important thing in the way of preparing it for ornament and beauty, should believers complain when they are purifying and perfecting for a palace and a crown? Gold though durable, like every thing earthly must perish, but the effects of Christian refining will sustain the lapse of time, and the incalculable infinitudes of eternity, they will go on in perpetual progression adding lustre to lustre. The furnace may seem heated seven times more than usual, and the strength of the fire may appear intense, yet none of the gold will escape, the dross will only be removed; the soul will be purified, but not destroyed; the spirit chastised, not injured; like the bush in the

desert it may burn but it will not be consumed, it will go on to perfection, and advance, like a star increasing in magnitude till, at last, it emerges from its sinful tabernacle into the immediate presence of its God, a spotless trophy of a Saviour's love. The Christian will then experience that the trial of his faith has been 'much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire'" (217).

William Davis, *The True Dignity of Human Nature; or, Man Viewed in Relation to Immortality* (London: Ball, Arnold and Co., 1839): "man must be labouring under a gross delusion who imagines that a preparation for a blissful immortality is a momentary or an easy work. A few sighs, and groans, and tears, and resolutions, extorted by the pains of a sick bed, or produced by the apprehension of approaching dissolution—a few feeble wishes, in such a season, for peace with God... will form a miserably inadequate preparative for standing at the bar of heaven, and meeting the heart-searching eye of Him who is the Judge both of the quick and of the dead. True repentance is / indeed, never too late; but, if sincere, it will spring from correct motives... and he who is the subject of it, if it have been imparted during a season of bodily suffering, will rise from his bed of languishing, which will then have proved to him as refining as the furnace is to the gold, purified from his dross. He will, from that period, exhibit a newness. of life, the natural and necessary result of the renewal of his heart" (165-166). **Anglican**

John Pye Smith, *On the Relation between the Holy Scriptures and Some Parts of Geological Science* (London: Jackson and Walford, 1839) cites Psalms 12:6, "The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times": "The connexion of this passage shews that, by 'the words of the Lord' here mentioned, we are to understand his promises of mercy and protection to his faithful servants, when they are exposed to sufferings from the treachery of falsehearted men, and when their hopes of aid from certainty of their friends are diminished by the death or oppression of the 'godly' and "faithful.' ... the author of this psalm exults in the fidelity of God, and the assurance that the fullest reliance might be placed on every authenticated declaration of the divine will. This is illustrated by the metaphor of metallic purity. Silver and gold occur native, in the proper metallic state; yet, even in that case, they cannot be got free from the stony substances which inclose or penetrate them, without the art of the refiner: but, when the processes of the hammer, the crucible, and the furnace have been duly performed, the precious/ metal is obtained in a state of high purity, and fit for completely answering every purpose in the arts of life, for which it is adapted" (242-243). **Congregational**

John Dawson Hull, *The Church of God; a Book for the Age* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1840): "Affliction is God's pruning-knife, wherewith He detaches from the soul those "superfluties of naughtiness," and those cankers of corruption, which, like redundant foliage and diseases in a tree, would exhaust its strength and prevent its fruitfulness<sup>4</sup> It is "the furnace" into which He casts his precious gold, not to destroy, but refine it. And even as a goldsmith will not leave the mass / in the crucible, and go his way, but sit by it and watch it attentively, to take it out at the critical moment,

beyond which, were it suffered to remain, the whole process would be marred” (123-124). “Nor can we question, but that He will not suffer the trial to continue a moment longer than is absolutely necessary” (124). Anglican curate. Winslow 1840 (asylum director): “No suffering, however acute, could for one moment justify the commission of self-murder.” (40). “That adversity refines and ennobles our nature there cannot be a doubt. The most beautiful features of the human mind are developed in suffering; the ordeal through which we pass, however repugnant and abhorrent it may be to our feelings, produces a moral regeneration in the character. We come out of the ‘fiery furnace,’ like gold and silver, deprived of much of our dross; and life, youthful and innocent life, again dawns upon us and gladdens our hearts” (41). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

*Scottish Christian Herald* 1841, “a Clergyman’s Daughter” on “the Purposes of Affliction” (3: 415): “Affliction may be ... considered as *purifying*. It is the furnace in which the gold and the silver are purged from their dross; while the Refiner sits by, regulating its intensity, watching the important process, and waiting only till the precious ore is pure enough to reflect his image. It is ... the crucible in which all that ‘abideth the fire’ must be melted down, that every alloy may be separated; and that which is destined for ‘the vessels of honour’ in the Master’s house, must be refined with the greatest care,... And truly there is much base admixture left behind in that furnace. The sordid, and the earth-born, and the carnal of our nature is consumed. All the nobler and more ethereal elements of the unfallen spirit, which once bore the Refiner’s image, are recovered from the dross, and fitted for bearing it anew —for reflecting it, in untarnished splendour, to the gaze of an admiring universe throughout eternity” (416). **Presbyterian**

Charlotte Elizabeth, *Helen Fleetwood* (New York: John S. Taylor and Co., 1841; orig. London, 1841), novel about a mill worker: “the debilitating effects of the atmosphere and other evils to which she was exposed throughout the live-long day” and “the mental sufferings which could not but await any modest, right-minded female in such society had a very large share in undermining her bodily health” (346). “This had been the great ordeal to Helen, who, shining still like gold in the furnace, found its heat well nigh insupportable” (347). The novel ends with Helen on her death bed, promising to see her family in heaven; the attending physician remarks: “This was a striking scene... and it teaches us a lesson of submission to many things that we consider hard” (379). Dies following year. **Anglican (Evangelical)**

*Scottish Christian Herald* 1841, “Affliction Necessary and Beneficial to Man, a Discourse” by W.M. Hetherington, Linlithgowshire clergyman: “The trials and afflictions that assail us are not messengers of wrath,—they do not prove that we are the objects of God’s displeasure. On the contrary, they are proofs that God dealeth with us as with sons ... trials and sufferings are useful, not only in reclaiming and correcting, but also in purifying, refining, and elevating the character. Cast the rough golden ore of the mine into the furnace, and if it come out diminished in bulk, it will only be because the dross is gone, and it is now nothing but pure gold. Crush

the aromatic shrub, and you will but cause it to give out a stronger and a sweeter fragrance. And let the human heart be cast into the furnace of affliction, or crushed with the hard hand of adversity, it will be thereby the more thoroughly purified, and all its better qualities called into stronger and more permanent existence" (3: 446).

### **Presbyterian**

William Goode, *The Divine Rule of Faith and Practice... against the Authors of the Tracts for the Times, and the Romanists* (London: J. Hatchard, 1842), "Scripture the Sole Infallible Rule and Judge in Religion": "We do not deny, then, that there may be some particles of the gold of the sanctuary in the records of Christian antiquity. And we subject those records to the test of Scripture, reason, and conscience, that we may, if possible, extract them. And we look to the aid of the Divine Spirit to help us in our inquiries. While certainly it is our belief that such a process would show that the gold bears very, very little proportion to the dross; and that to the great majority, such a search would be as unprofitable as laborious. There is danger, indeed, in the search to all; for the same feelings and prejudices which originally caused the dross to accumulate, are still alive to operate in its favour, and make men often prefer it to the pure gold. Here, then, is the great difference between us and our opponents, that we allow men to judge of that which comes to them by what is called church-tradition, by the light of Scripture, reason, and conscience, and do not allow it to assume the character of an unwritten Word of God, and so to bind the conscience to belief in whatever it may deliver. Our opponents will not allow us to judge of it, but only to be judged by it, and submit to it as a divine testimony" (1: 533). **Anglican**

John Steel, *Reminiscences of a Friend: addressed by a Minister to his People* (Hertford: E.W. Cobb, 1843): "if higher privileges expose to greater dangers, they lead also to nobler enjoyments" (132); "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which / are exercised thereby" (133-134). "The presence of a Redeemer is realized to us—the soul has found a refuge in religion which the world is incapable of affording—the very conflict of the elements around have been made to subserve in the great work of salvation, and the furnace of outward wrath has become, under God, the crucible in which our gold is purified, and our peace established" (134).

Alfred Williams, *Sermons* (London: J. G. and F. Rivington, 1843): "Let reverse / of fortune, health, or other blessings, happen to one towards whom we are not kindly disposed; and how common but how wicked a practice is it, to proclaim it at once a judgment from Heaven" (13-14); "we see in his fall the gratification of our malevolence, and we hesitate not to pronounce that his condition is a judgment from God; as if the pure and holy Being had so far taken part in our malice as to become its executor. What sinful presumption is this! not only to affect the knowledge which is proper to God, but also confidently to pronounce that to be a punishment, which may be sent of God, in His abundant mercy, for the more thorough perfecting of one who has approved himself in his sight, and will yet come

out of tribulation purified as gold in the fire!" (14).

E. Mannering, *Christian Consolation: or the Unity of the Divine Procedure a source of Comfort to Afflicted Christians* (London: John Snow, 1844): "how light are our trials compared with our supports and consolations! those I mean which God has promised to his afflicted people, and which are at all times accessible to the prayer of faith" (223). "The rod is associated with the bond of the covenant; the rock, whose waters ever flow, is opened in the wilderness ; the Refiner sits by the crucible to take the gold out of the fire the moment the process of purification is sufficiently advanced" (224). **Congregational**

William Graeme Rhind, *The Creation, a Series of Letters from a Father to his Children* (London: Samuel Baxter and Sons, 1844) quotes Malachi; "The figure of a refiner is one of the deepest interest:—*the refiner never leaves the crucible*; the precious metal is of too high a value: as it purifies, it gets clearer and clearer, until at last the scum or dross is gone, and the image of the refiner is reflected as in a glass, in the molten gold; and this was the thing desired. So our blessed Lord never puts his children into the furnace of affliction, but to purify them; *to purge away the dross, and make / them more like himself*: and this accomplished, the crucible is removed. How forcibly does the patriarchs Job allude to this..." (104-105). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Walter John Trower, *Similitudes Used in Holy Scripture* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1848), tract on "Gold in the Furnace." He leads with Malachi 3 and refers to 1 Cor 3:13. "As the precious metals are seldom found in a pure and simple state, it is necessary to separate them from the dross with which they are mixed, by melting the ore in a furnace. By this means the dross is consumed, and whatever gold or silver is contained in the ore, is purged or purified from the baser substance with which it was before blended, and preserved for any purposes to which those precious metals are applied. The refiner casts the ore into the furnace, not to destroy the gold or the silver that is contained in it, but to prove its quality and fineness, and to extract it from the ore in a state of perfect purity. And he watches the furnace all the time that the process is going on, that its heat may not exceed the due degree, nor the metals be left in it too long. Whatever comes forth from the trial is precious gold, fit for the royal crown, or to be wrought into the noblest vessels." God is "said to sit 'as a refiner and purifier of silver,' because it is ever His gracious and merciful purpose to sanctify us wholly in body, soul, and spirit, from all that defileth" (37). Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, Oxford graduate. **Anglican**

Trower 1848 continued: "because the precious gold is mixed with so much of earthly / dross, and it is absolutely necessary that what is precious should be separated from what is vile, the trials by which He purges us from our old corruptions and iniquities, are likened to the furnace into which the refiner casts the ore, that the dross may be consumed. They who are altogether 'dross,' will be proved to be worthless and vile by this trial of holy discipline; but those who are 'transformed by the renewing of their mind' from their old and evil conversation, are only purged and purified by their afflictions; and when they come forth from

their trial, they are regarded as 'the jewels' of the Great King, and are as 'vessels unto honour' in His house" (37-38).

Trower 1848 continued: "Our duty then, in seasons of affliction, is still to remember the merciful purpose for which it is sent; and that our gracious Lord does not cast us into the furnace in order to consume and bring us to nothing, but in order to consume and burn up in us what is evil, and to bring us forth (after we have been proved to be true and genuine gold) as vessels unto honour. We should remember that He is ever watching the furnace, that the heat may not be too fierce for our feeble strength; and that as He Himself was present with those faithful servants of God who were literally cast into 'the burning fiery furnace,' so He will not fail to strengthen us, if we look to Him for / grace, under whatever trial may be laid upon us... we should even desire that whatever is necessary for our true purification, may not be withheld. We cannot expect that the work of sanctification can be wrought in us by an easier discipline than is required in the case of so many of our fellow Christians" (38-39). "When we see any fail under their trial, and proved to be only counterfeit gold or worthless dross, may we be moved to more earnest prayer and more faithful endeavours, so to improve the gift of God that is in us that we may come forth from the furnace as pure and genuine gold, not one grain of which shall be lost in the fire!" (39).

#### *instructions*

John Gother, *Spiritual Works* London: n.p., 1718; orig. 1690s): "Afflictions are an Exercise, by which God tries the just, and makes Proof of their Fidelity... the faithful servant is discover'd, when he continues stedfast under his Trial, when he stands firm and unmov'd, notwithstanding all Disquiets and Opposition, and lets nothing, however troublesome, force him from his Duty, or in the least divide him from his Lord. For as Gold is try'd in the Fire, so are the just try'd in Afflictions" (9: 10). "Instructions for Christians": "Tribulations are the Trials of the Christian Fidelity... as many as are now in the Enjoyment of Bliss, have been all Tried like Gold in the Furnace, and... many of them had never come to the Sense of their Duty, had they not been thus awakn'd by the Mercy of a Scourge" (10: 270). Advent sermon: "Since... God has inform'd us that Tribulation is the Way to Glory, and that by it Souls are purify'd like Gold in the Fire against that Day when Christ shall be manifested; hence let us offer our selves to all Tribulations, esteeming all as welcome, which may be a Means of procuring Peace against the last Day, and delivering us from the Anger of our Judge" (13: 9). **Anglican**

Thomas Gwin, *Will and Testament...being some Religious and Serious Considerations* (London: J. Sowle, 1720; new eds 1737, 1792): "whatever Affliction attends you, do not sink under it, nor any way give up your Confidence, but so much the more let your Trust in God be renewed." Three sorts: sent by God, "of Men's procuring," and brought on by ourselves. "Those of God's sending, as are some Diseases, and Sickneses, and Loss of Children, &c. they are Seasons of Trial; and if we quietly submit to his divine Will, we come forth of them, as Gold purified in the Fire, with our Affections the more weaned from temporal and fading Enjoyments: These may

be called God's Jewels, and his People thereby prize him and adore his great Love" (54). Second category drive men "nearer to the Lord" to "take Sanctuary in him"; and third category, e.g. "Vices and riotous Living" is "a hard Case," but God's mercy is available; viz the prodigal son (55). **Quaker**

John Willison, *Afflicted Man's Companion: or, a Directory for Families and Persons afflicted with sickness or any other distress* (Edinburgh: E. and J. Robertsons, 1743; 17 eds through 1794): "It is good for the believer that he is afflicted. Why? It springs from divine love, and it works for his soul's good. Affliction is a seal of his adoption, and no sign of reprobation. The purest gold is ofttest tried, the sweetest grape is hardest pressed and the truest Christian is heaviest crossed. But O how soon will the Christian forget all his groans when he comes to heaven!" (192). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Walter Farquhar Hook, *Sermons on Various Subjects* (London: J. G.F. and J. Rivington, 1841): the well-trained Christian "remembers for his comfort that acceptable men are tried in the furnace of adversity, even as gold is tried in the fire" (203; quoting Zech 13:9). **Anglican**

*poetry*

William Broome, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London: Bernard Lintot, 1727; new eds. 1737, 1750, 1781, 1796), "To Belinda, On her Sickness, and Recover", 6<sup>th</sup> stanza: "Now in her Cheeks, and radiant Eyes,  
New Blushes glow, new Lightnings rise;  
Behold a thousand Charms succeed,  
For which a thousand Hearts must bleed!  
Brighter from her Disease she shines,  
As Fire the precious Gold refines" (29). **Anglican**

John Murlin, "Communion with God in Affliction," *Arminian Magazine* 9 (1786):  
"In mercy, gracious Lord, thou dost chastise  
Thy froward children, when they go astray;  
O Father, let me never more despise  
Thy rod nor wander from the narrow way!  
If the furnace for a season tried,  
Shew forth in me thy love's almighty power:  
Or with thy servant in the flames abide!  
And give me patience in the trying hour.

When thoroughly purged, let me as gold refined  
Come forth, and shine before the fallen race:  
A chosen vessel for thyself designed,  
To teach the world the lessons of thy grace" (460). **Arminian**

Joshua Peel, *Devout Breathings of the Soul to God* (York: Wilson et al., 1793), hymn  
"For Grace to preserve when Tempted or Afflicted":

“Lord, I am thine,—now save thy own  
From scornful wicked men who frown...” (57)  
“Or, if purg’d in affliction’s fire,  
With plenteous grace my heart inspire,  
That like well-tried gold,  
I may the fiery test abide,  
And in they name for help confide,  
Who cannot be controll’d” (58).

John Clark, *Hymns on Various Subjects and Occasions* (Trowbridge: T. Long, 1799;  
Hymn 16, "The Difficulty of Submission under Afflictions"):

"When the Refiner to the fire  
Commits his precious ore  
We much his art, and skill admire,  
Nor doubt his love the more.

So Christians do this truth possess  
Undoubtedly to hold;  
That God will try them more or less,  
If they are his true gold" (26).

"But when the purifying flame  
We once begin to prove;  
We start, we wonder, and exclaim;  
Alas, can this be love!

Oh, for a more submissive mind;  
Then like the passive gold;  
We'll melt, and leave our dross behind,  
And take the heav'nly mold" (27). **Anglican**

*Methodist Magazine* 1802, "A Tribute of Friendship to the Memory of the late Mr.  
John Moon, Preacher of the Gospel" (25: 123):

"Like gold, that in the furnace is refin'd,  
So did affliction purify thy mind;  
Thy faith more precious, silenc'd every moan,  
And Patience, in the fire, resplendent shone" (124). **Methodist**

*London Christian Instructor* 1822 (**Congregational**), "The Minister's Silent Sabbath":

I knew affliction, and had found it's worth,  
*Before* I ministered 'in holy things;'  
It wean'd my heart sufficiently from earth,  
To choose the pittance which my office brings,  
In preference to wealth, and all that kings  
Can give of honour, or exalted rank:  
It tore and tarnished my aspiring wings,  
As light'ning scathes the eagle's, till I sank

From my high eyry to the humble bank...  
The purging fires which purify my dross:  
They burn intense, but all their flames impale  
Only the *allny*; searching to assail  
The deep recesses of incipient sin,  
Until the *gold*, no longer gross or pale,  
Shall shew itself to heavenly gold akin,  
Burnish'd without, and genuine within" (5: 641)

*New Evangelical Magazine* 1824, original poem, "Lines Written to an Afflicted Friend":

"The wicked, where insults are daring the skies,  
Seem healthy, and prosp'rous, and gay;  
Thy children's distresses, extort their deep sighs,  
As they pass the dark shadows away!

'I chasten," he answers,' the souls that I love,  
Induc'd by affection alone;  
Like the gold in the furnace, by trials I prove,  
And the strength of their graces make known.'

'When the fire burns intensely, the dross is remov'd,  
And the metal flows pure from the test;  
'Tis thus I will try to the end my belov'd,  
Then shall they ascend to my rest'" (10: 364). **Nonconformist**

Charlotte Elliott, *Hours of Sorrow Cheered and Comforted* (London: Charles Haselden, 1849; orig 1834), poem "To a Mourner":

Hast thou not meekly learned to bow,  
With acquiescing love,  
To Him whose hand has brought thee low,  
His love to prove!

Does not thy faith strike deeper roots?  
Blest who that faith possess!  
Are there not formed the peaceful fruits  
Of righteousness? /

Oh Yes! The process I behold,  
And joyfully admire,  
Through which thou wilt come forth as gold  
Tried in the fire.

Concealed from man the dross may lie,  
Now with the metal mixed;  
But on it the Refiner's eye  
Is calmly fixed.

Nor will He leave, (this thought is joy,  
The gold He thus refines,  
Till in it, pure from all alloy,  
His image shines" (11-12).

From Wikipedia: "She was an invalid and was often a great sufferer during the last 50 years of her life," i.e. from 1821; wrote "Just As I Am." **Anglican**

Harriet Kiernan (comp.), *The invalid's Hymn-Book* (Dublin: John Robertson, 1850), hymn "for those who watch the bed of fatal, but long protracted illness" (Anglican evangelical):

"Ye, who as anxious months come round,  
The same sad couch of suffering tend,  
Listening to many a mournful sound,  
And knowinf what must be the end;  
Deem not that He whose name in love  
Can err, in aught he please to ordain;  
Doubt not, these dark events will prove  
The sufferer's everlasting gain" (295)

4<sup>th</sup> of 5 verses:

"Christ knows the moment when to say,  
'The hour of my redeemed is come!...'  
Then shall that saint, now sharply tried,  
Forth from the crucible be brought  
As gold completely purified,  
Gold, for the heavenly temple wrought" (296).

A different hymn in the same collection (*Hymns for Invalids*) refers to "the streets of shining gold" in heaven (274). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

### *Letters*

Samuel Rutherford, *Joshua Redivivus, or, Three Hundred and Fifty-two Religious Letters* (Glasgow: John Bryce, 1765; died 1661): To Mrs Stewart: "I find no better use of suffering, than that Christ winnowing putteth chaff and corn in the saints to sundry places, and discovered! our dross from his gold, so as corruption and grace are so seen, that Christ saith in the furnace, 'That is mine, and this is yours: the scum and the grounds, thy stomach against the persecutors, thy impatience, thy unbelief, thy quarrelling, these are thine; and saith, on waiting, love, joy, courage, are mine'" (264). To Alexander Gordon, 1636, on persecution by orthodox Presbyterians: "I find it hard work to believe, when the course of providence goeth cross-ways to our faith, and when misted souls in a dark night cannot know East by West, and our sea-compass seemeth to fail us. Every man is a believer in day-light: a fair day seemeth to be made all of faith and hope. What a trial of gold is it, to smoke it a little above the fire! but to keep gold perfect yellow coloured amidst the flames, and to be turned from vessel to vessel, and yet to cause our furnace sound, and speak, and cry the praises of the Lord, is another matter. I know my Lord made me not for fire, howbeit he hath fitted me in some measure for fire" (295). **Presbyterian**

Mrs. Lefevre, *An Extract of Letters* (Bristol: William Pine, 1796; originally published anonymously, 1757, shortly after her death) letter to a friend, 1756: "is there any way in the spiritual life, which so immediately leads to holiness, as *willing suffering*?... Is there a joy absolutely pure? It is that of suffering" (57). "Mat this be the language of your soul and mine; / then shall we be found unshaken in the fiery trial and come out as gold purified seven times" (57-58). "But after all, what suffering have I had in this illness? It can scarcely be called suffering, when God sensibly supports" (58). **Methodist**

John Newton, *Christian Correspondence* (Hull: George Prince, 1790) samples two letters from 1766. First expresses thanks for his friend's concern about his wife's fever, which is abating: "It will, however, take some time for her to restore her strength, for she has been brought exceeding low. Pray that we may both be brought out of the furnace, refined as gold, and help us to praise the God of our lives" (103). The second rejoices that a friend's wife, Mrs. C., is on the road to recovery: "May he perfect what he has begun, and bring her forth as gold from the furnace, refined, and meet for the Master's use!" (114). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Montagu Pennington, *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter* (London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1808), letter from Elizabeth Carter to a friend re the death of Lord Lyttleton in 1773: "To his friends alone this is a melancholy event; to himself, I trust, it proves most joyful. From a world which so little deserved his virtues, he is removed to the applauding society of saints and angels, and to the righteous Judge who will reward them... the affections of his heart were disappointed in every scheme of that domestic comfort, which he was so peculiarly qualified to impart, and to enjoy. He 'was a noble and edifying example of the power / of Christian principles, in many instances, and very particularly in that absolute resignation to the divine will, which calmed his mind amidst all the storms, which, with almost unremitted violence, beat upon him. In all the conversations upon his misfortunes, to which I have been witness, I do not recollect ever to have heard him utter a single murmur or complaint. It pleased God to try him in the furnace of affliction; and like gold, he came out with the brighter lustre, and the greater purity" (1: 218-219).

*Extracts from the Letters of Elizabeth, Lucy, Judith, and Susanna Ussher, late of the City of Waterford* (London: Charles Gilpin, 1845): letter from Lucy Ussher, dying of consumption, to her sister Elizabeth, 20 April 1795 (she was 19 at the time; family were Quakers): "It grieves me to hear of my aunt's indisposition: were you not with her I know not what she would do; you must certainly be a great comfort to her in her present situation, stretched upon a bed of languishing, but I trust the great Physician who has laid her on it, stands by her and gives her the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and that the present dispensation will tend to brighten her, and that she will come forth as gold seven times tried, and as a corner stone polished after the similitude of a palace: assure her of my most affectionate duty and love" (40). **Quaker**

*Christian's Elegant Repository* (London: Button and Son, 1800; "A Remarkable Letter written by a Woman without Hands or Feet"): "God leads his people the sure way, though not at all times the most pleasant way" (30). "The Canaanites still abide in the land; the Lord promises to drive them out by little and little, and I believe that in his own time he will deliver me... He will try me as gold, and bring me forth when meet for himself" (31).

John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart* (New York: Conner and Cooke, 1838): Scott to Southey, 9 May 1817, reaction to Southey's poem, "Pilgrimage to Waterloo": "I shed sincere tears over the Pilgrimage to Waterloo. But in the crucible of human life, the Surest gold is tried by the strongest heat, and I can only ope for the continuance of your present family blessings to one so well formed to enjoy the pure happiness they afford." Notes: "Pilgrimage to Waterloo... contains a touching allusion to the affliction the author had recently sustained in the death of a fine boy" (273). **Presbyterian**

John George Breay, *Memoir of the Rev. John George Breay: with a Selection from his Correspondence* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 1841; letter to his sister Mary, 1825): "My Dear Mary,—You judged rightly in supposing that a few lines from you would give me pleasure. Let us trace up every stream of earthly comfort to the fountain of eternal love. In the world above, the inhabitant shall no more say, 'I am sick.' From that happy land sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away. I trust, my dear sister, that you have had much of your Saviour's presence in the fire, and that you will come forth from it as gold purified seven times. Real religion is an important and difficult work, and afflictions, in some / shape or other, are continually necessary" (122-123). **Anglican**

John West, *Memoir of Mrs. John West, who Died at Chettle, Dorset, March 23, 1839* (London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1842); letter from Horatia West to her sister, 1836; she died three years later, she's "wounded, bleeding, but still alive. Oh! my sister, what is life? What would it be but for the bright hope? ... it is only by looking forward that I live on—or, rather say, it is only through sovereign mercy that I live on, that my soul is yet in life. Oh! may the gracious purposes of my God and Saviour be yet accomplished in my soul, and I shall, at last, thank him even for this. The work must be done;—the great work—the sanctification of the soul—though the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual, it must be done, if there be any gold, that the dross at length may be consumed. Oh! when, when will it be? But, dear sister, let the thought cheer your heart, that it is but for an appointed time. I am quite sure we both feel that our mercies are far more than our sufferings" (108). To a different sister, 1836: "I am more than ever convinced, that it is no easy matter to be a Christian. I think of all God has done for us, of all he must do in us, to make us meet in Christ in that glorious state of inheritance which he has purchased for us with his own blood, till I tremble; while at the same time I am filled with admiring gratitude and love.... Will he wait for this until the full number of his redeemed people shall meet in heaven, and together sound his praise? Is it not rather as he watches the gold in the fire, purifying, refining, stirring until his own image is reflected there?"

Let us rejoice, then, in the midst of our tears. The will of God has been done in us” (120). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Anne Ross Collison, *Memoir of Mrs. Agnes Bulmer* (London: J. G. and F. Rivington, 1837): Letter from Agnes Bulmer to “a near relative”, January 1827 (80): “You... have been very painfully reminded, by sickness, in the course of the past year, of the uncertain tenure by which we hold all earthly things; but I trust that you have felt, as a believer, the firmness of your foundation in Christ. What a test to our faith, and hope, and love, and patience, is the furnace of affliction! but our strength shall be according to our day, and we shall come out as gold purified in the fire, to reflect the glory of God with brighter and intenser rays. This we know is the design of the merciful Father of spirits; and it is absolutely essential to our deriving much benefit from our chastisements, that we should bear these things in remembrance, that our hope in God may be steadfast, and that while we pray to him to search and try our hearts, to show us in an especial manner his design in every visitation of his providence, we may be enabled to bear the scrutiny, to learn the necessary lesson, and to attain to a more perfect acquiescence in the Divine will” (81). **Methodist**

Isaac Beeman, *Remains... consisting of the Substance of Sermons, and Letters to Various Correspondents* (London: John Eedes, 1844), letter to a friend, 28 Nov 1836: “I received yours, and was sorry to find you so tried; all I can say in your case is, the God you serve, he will deliver you. The Lord's furnace is in Zion, and he has said that he will bring the third part through the fire, and try them as gold is tried, and purify them as silver is purified. But it is also said that he sits by the fire and regulates the heat, that no temptation should befall his but what is common to those of his household, and promises to make a way for their escape that they may be able to bear it. But we often think, how shall we be able to bear it?... burden after burden is to be borne; for through much tribulation you must enter the kingdom; the flesh cleaves to flesh and sense, but faith, when in exercise, looks to invisible things, things eternal, where corruptible flesh shall cause no disturbance, where you will rest from your present labour, and your work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope will follow you. (2: 456). **Methodist**

Ann Johnstone, *Memoir of the late Mrs Ann Johnstone, Willow Park, Greenock* (Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Sons, 1846), letter to a friend regarding “the state of my dear husband’s health,” 24 Feb 1837: “His complaint is thought to be tic doloireux, which is both of a very painful and tedious nature, but we are in the hands of a gracious Father, whose love and wisdom are infinite, and I trust he is sanctifying it to my dear husband, and will in his good time bring him out of this furnace, as gold seven times tried” (164). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Catherine Cecil, *Memoirs of Mrs. Hawkes, late of Islington; including, Remarks in Conversation and Extracts from Sermons and Letters of the Late Rev. Richard Cecil* (Philadelphia: Washington J. Simon, 1840): “Mrs. Hawkes' vigour of mind, and natural strength of con/stitution, had hitherto wonderfully sustained her under long continued suffering; but she now felt every natural prop sinking from under her,

and premature old age advancing” (290-291). “In the month of February, 1822, she says, in a letter to Mrs. F: ‘My beloved friend would wonder to see how old, and almost helpless, I am grown... A few weeks past, I thought I had obtained leave to depart: but the gold had more dross to be taken away, ere it could be fitted, as a pure vessel, for the Master’s use. Decaying, sluggish nature, shrinks from the purifying fire: but, as far as it is renewed, it tries to say, “The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it?”’” (291). Letter to a friend in 1823: “Have you heard of the death of M. V. and her sister? Death is thinning every circle. Let us keep it ever in view; and in proportion as we are enabled thus to live by faith, we shall say, ‘These light afflictions are but for a moment’ ... It is said, the trial of faith is ‘much more precious than gold.’ Let us remember this under our sharpest exercises, and pray mightily for grace to abide the fiery trial, whatever it may be” (295).

### **Anglican (Evangelical)**

John Hannah, *Memorials of the Life, Ministry, and Correspondence of the Rev. Theophilus Lessey* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 1842); Lessey to Thomas Jackson from Isle of Wight, where he’s stranded owing to bad weather and threat of war with France; he’s also recovering from illness (24 Dec 1840): “I hope that, by God’s blessing, I am recovering, though very gradually; but I am admonished by past experience to ‘rejoice with trembling.’ ‘My times,’ I know, ‘are in the hands of / God,’ and I feel confidence in His wisdom and love. Earnestly do I long and pray for grace to qualify me for a profitable use of this continued discipline of my heavenly Father, that I may come forth as gold purified. —My present situation, though comfortable, is very secluded and solitary” (293-294). **Methodist**

### *Letters from clergymen to congregants*

John William Fletcher, *Works* (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1836), letter from Fletcher to Charles Wesley, 22 March, 1759: “You cannot yet be rendered perfect by suffering; your father and mother have never forsaken you: but no matter, you have no doubt your afflictions! And probably the Lord puts you secretly in a crucible, that you may go forth as gold seven times tried in the fire. May he lay his hand upon you and fill you with his strength!” (4: 313). English **Methodist** theologian, 1729-1785.

William Romaine, *Works* (London: T. Chapman, 1796; rector, St. Andrew by the Wardrobe, a London Anglican church), to a female congregant in 1777: “I hear you are still very poorly in your health” (7: 396). “You are kept low for very good reasons. He, who gave his Son for you, and his Spirit to enable you to receive him by faith, has your best interest in view” (397); “in infinite love he puts faith to the trial. He keeps you low in body: this is the furnace in which your gold is to be found genuine. He tries your faith, not for his own sake, but for yours... He sits as a refiner over the process. The furnace shall not be a bit too hot. The gold shall not lose an atom: but the believer shall call upon the Lord in the fire, and he shall say... ‘The Lord is our God’” (399). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Romaine 1795, letter to a congregant 1780: "Wave after wave—trouble after trouble—no ceasing, till we get into the haven. I do not wish you out of them, but to profit by them" (213). "The furnace is to refine gold; / so faith, proved, improved, yea perfected by trials" (213-214). "Mind what the great Refiner says" (quotes Zechariah 13:9). "O blessed furnace... It is great, an uncommon great trial: the furnace is heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. Still, this is not to destroy faith, but to refine and exalt it" (214). "I am thankful, however, for the grace of God, given unto you at this trying time. The furnace is intended in the Father's hand, to prove faith, and to improve it. He puts it into the fire, like gold, that, upon trial, it may appear sterling, and that, losing nothing but dross, we may learn to trust him better. You now see and know that his trials of faith are acts of love" (215).

**Anglican (Evangelical)**

Anne Bury, *Cardiphonia* (J. Buckland, 1781), letter from John Newton to Bury in 1775: "you have a good right to say to your soul, Why art thou cast down and disquieted?" Respond by saying, "Though he slay me I will trust in him, for when he has fully tried me I shall come forth like gold" (2: 221). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

*Methodist Magazine* 1808, letter from John Wesley to Miss Loxdale, 9 March 1782, opens with "Gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity" (31: 328). "It is true, that the usual method of our Lord, is to purify us by joy in the Holy Ghost, and a full consciousness of his / love. But I have known several exempt cases, and I am clearly satisfied yours is one" (328-9). **Methodist**

James A. Park, *Memoirs of William Stevens* (London: Philanthropic Society, 1812), reprints letter from Stevens to Mrs Gunning, 8 Dec 1794: "It was no small relief, after the wretched account given of your health, to hear that though you had very many hours of darkness and horror, you had some of light and gladness, and had experienced that the sharpest afflictions, through the tender mercy of God, have their intervals of ease and comfort. Gold is tried in the fire, and for every trial it comes forth the purer, as you have the satisfaction to find. When the furnace is heated seven times more than it was wont, it is that the vessel may be the fitter for the master's use, purged from all dross, and sanctified" (101). **Anglican**

*Gospel Herald* 1843, female reader sends in a letter she received from her "worthy pastor, which I found... to be food to my soul" (11: 370). "My dear young friend, your God in covenant ordained the time, place, manner, and means, how you should have and hold all the sweets and bitters. He rebukes, but it is in love; he chastises, but it is in judgment, not in wrath... Cast into a furnace, you must be, for it is already settled, unchangeably, 'I will bring the third part through the fire, and will try them as gold is tried, and purify them as silver.' You will be fearful, but you will not be a loser. Read Rom. viii. 28, 38; Dan. v. 27. What you know not now, you will find hereafter to be all right; every wave of doubting and fearing will be gone" (373). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Andrew A. Bonar, *Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray M'Cheyne* (Dundee: William Middleton, 1852; orig 1844), pastoral letter by M'Cheyne, 1839, on Job: "Affliction will certainly purify a believer. How boldly he says it, 'I shall come out like gold.' Ah, how much dross there is in every one of you, dear believers, and in your pastor! 'When I would do good evil is present with me.' Oh, that all the dross may be left behind in the furnace! What imperfection, what sin, mingles with all we have ever done! But are we really fruit-bearing branches of the true vine? then it is certain that when we are pruned we shall bear more fruit. We shall come out like gold We shall shine more purely as 'a diadem in the hand of our God.' We shall become purer vessels to hold the sweet smelling incense of praise and prayer. We shall become holy golden vessels for the Master's use in time and in eternity" (189).

### **Presbyterian**

#### *Diaries/ journals*

Samuel Fothergill, *Seven Pamphlets including Six Sermons* (Dublin: Robert Jackson, 1783) quotes from Felix Farley's Bristol journal, 5 Nov 1768, on a dead Quaker, Abraham Hawksworth, "who, a little past the meridian of life, after a short illness, full of peace, cheerfully resigned his spirit into the hands of him who gave it, cleansed and purified as gold tried in the fire" (19). **Quaker**

John Lancaster, *The Life of Darcy, Lady Maxwell, of Pollock: Late of Edinburgh* (New York: Lane and Tippet, 1848), quoting from Lady Maxwell's diary, 27 Sept 1780, on the death of her father Thomas Brisbane (she was a Methodist): "O that I may glorify God under this bereaving dispensation! I attempt to roll my burthen upon him, and believe he will not suffer me to be materially moved. The surface of my soul is much agitated, but at bottom are the grounds of safety, comfort, and joy, as usual. The present is a season of heaviness through manifold temptations. O that I may be brought out of them all as gold tried in the fire!" (178). **Methodist**

Joseph Beaumont, *Memoirs of Mrs. Mary Tatham, Late of Nottingham* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1838), journal entry of Mary Tatham, November 1786 "On Receiving Injury": "when we suffer wrongfully for God's sake, and take it patiently, then it is manifest we are approved of him. Such as are not willing to suffer, are not the true friends of the cross of Christ; and the perverse and rebellious, who bring sufferings upon themselves, will not willingly endure, or bow beneath the rod; yet, if such humble themselves when they are chastened, and amend their ways, they shall find favour: their sorrow shall be turned into joy, and, their sufferings being sanctified unto them, they shall come forth as gold purified in the fire. God frequently permits afflictions and persecutions to come upon his own people, to answer various ends; sometimes for the trial of their faith, and the exercise of their patience, and resignation to his will; sometimes to humble them, and purify them from self-love and the love of the world; and sometimes to draw them nearer to himself, and bring them off from all human dependence to trust in him alone" (68). **Methodist**

Thomas Gibbon, *Memoirs of Eminently Pious Women* (London: J. Duncan, Longman and Co., 1827; orig 1804) on Margaret Walker, an Edinburgh merchant's wife: "Mrs. Walker's married life became soon a life of trial. She thought she had learned that it was to be through much tribulation she was to enter into the kingdom; she now found that, to make it so, it was to be continued tribulation. Long protracted sickness, with its weary and dark approaches, "darker every hour," began to undermine her family; and at last, death came to ravage it" (2: 346). Quotes her diary, 1794: "The storm of war still rolls along. The history of no times seems to record such strange events. Multitudes, multitudes, are hurried into eternity. At home, too, there are alarming appearances. A general spirit of disaffection prevails to our good and salutary government; the lower classes, dissatisfied, would usurp the dignity of being highest. But I must not too deeply engage in these matters, lest I forget my own duties of watchfulness and of submission to the hand which corrects me, in the continued illness of my youngest daughter, who is still kept in the furnace, yet, like burnished gold" (357). In 1802 she was approaching death: "To one who came in / she said, "This is Jordan, but he shall not overflow his banks. My Jesus meets me in the flood, and will bring me safely through. This is the trial of faith, but it will stand the trial; I shall come forth as refined gold. I am the happiest of women! Such promises! such prospects! such a God! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, my God, I adore thee!" Her pain (from inflammation of the bowels) still increasing, she often prayed, " Lord Jesus, dismiss my spirit!" (361-362).

Edward Stallybrass, *Memoir of Mrs. Stallybrass, Wife of the Rev. Edward Stallybrass, Missionary to Siberia* (London: Fisher, Son, & Co., 1836), journal entry of Sarah Stallybrass, missionary to Siberia, from December 1817 in St. Petersburg; she fell ill as she was about to head east: "From the circumstance of being wholly denied the power of assisting myself at this juncture, when so much is to be done, I have been compelled to acknowledge how very much better things are done for me, than I could possibly have done for myself. But I am not satisfied with this, though a useful lesson. I do crave to be more conformed to the will of God. I do wish to come out of this affliction like gold purified, and fit for the service of God. Mine is a high and holy calling. O for a sanctified heart, to fulfil the duties of it! O for more of the mind and Spirit of Christ! Without this, I fear greatly that I shall become a stumbling-block, instead of an example, to the heathen" (71). **Congregational**

Elizabeth Lachlan, *Jehovh-Jireh: or, The Provisions of a Faithful God: as Manifested in His Wonderful Dealings with Mrs. Eliz. Lachlan* (London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1850 (diary entry from 1834, London): "O God, merciful and gracious Lord, I come before Thee, in all the trials of my state, under the weight of those sorrows, which, as floods, rains, and storms assail and vehemently beat over the Christian's head, and which would overwhelm and entirely overthrow him, but for the Rock he stands on" (72). "With a debt for my week's lodging; with but four shillings in my purse, and three of them owing, (money procured with my trinkets and rings pledged); with my husband also in debt, and weakly, requiring country air; with my scanty resource of two or three articles of furniture, and very little property besides of any sort; with all this, a mind tempted to wander; a heart tempted to mourn; a world

around me, cold and wrapped in self; moreover, a world raising its voice to condemn all I do or say" (72-73). "O my divine Lord, I know there is indeed a need—be for all these trials; and that when the end is accomplished, for which they are sent, Thou wilt that moment remove the gold from the furnace, or put out the furnace from under Thine own precious metal, that the vile dross of this body of corruption may be burnt out and burnt up, and that the vessel may be fitted for Thine own service" (73). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

*missionaries*

Job Scott, *Journal of... Life and Travels* (New York: John Gough, 1798; British Quaker missionary, 1751-1793), describing travels in Virginia including "an exercising meeting at Clubfoot-Creek" (222) and "meetings at Nues, Bear-Creek and Turner's Swamp—all trying" (223): "Oh! he well knows what he is about, in suffering his chosen followers to be thus closely tried—indeed this is the way they become *chosen*; for he ever *chooseth them in the furnace of affliction*; here he refines them as *gold seven times in the fire*: thus they bear his holy law; thus they are made able to *dwell with* that which, to every thing sinful, is as a *devouring fire, and everlasting burnings*, and not be hurt; the fire shall not kindle on them to devour; the smell of it shall not be on their garments; but every thing in them that is chaffy shall be burnt up, in and by this unquenchable fire; so the weighty substantial wheat comes to be gathered into the garner" (230). **Quaker**

*Death-bed*

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of All the Books of the Old and New Testaments* (London: W. Baynes, 1804; orig 1708), prefatory life of author quotes Henry's father diary re death of Henry's daughter Elizabeth: "death had a commission; a sharp trial to the tender parents, being their only one; God support them under it, and do them good by it, that when they are tried, they may come forth as gold" (1: xxvi).

**Nonconformist**

*Evangelical Magazine* 1795, obituary of Elizabeth Laskey, who converted to Christianity in 1785 after "the Lord, who had some time before taken her husband, saw fit to lay his afflicting hand upon her only son," aged six (3: 217); on his death bed he asked for a godly neighbor woman to console him since his mother had never told him about God (218). On her own sick bed, in 1789, "she had not one penny in the world, yet during her long and painful illness she never knew the want of any necessary comfort." She said at the time: "My Lord knows that I want purifying, and I am sure that when I am tried I shall come forth as gold, for he hath given me that good word of promise" (221). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

*Evangelical Magazine* 1797, article on "the experience and joyful death" of Samuel Furlly, a Cornish rector (5: 265). Ca 1783 he was "attacked with a violent and uncommon pain in his face," later diagnosed as cancer; recurred in 1794 (266). "His agonies were beyond description great" until his death in August 1795. "In the midst

of this furnace of affliction, his reliance on his God was firm and unshaken... Not one complaining word ever escaped his lips... 'I know (said he) that my heavenly Father sends me this affliction in much love, and shall I not patiently bear it? Is it not a proof that the Lord treats me like a dear child? ... My God sees that I want the furnace! May I but come out like gold that has undergone the refiner's fire!'" (267).

**Anglican (Evangelical)**

William Hey, *Tracts and Essays, Moral and Theological* (London: Hurst, Robinson, and Co., 1822; originally in *Christian Observer*, 1802), obituary of his daughter, Alice Hey: "When she was twenty-three years of age, she was seized with a spitting of blood, which brought her life into some danger. However, it pleased God at that time to restore her health; but the disease returned in her twenty-sixth year, and brought on a con/sumption, which proved fatal to her soon after she had completed that year" (314-315); "a little before the attack of her last illness, she was harrassed with violent temptations to despair. The great enemy of souls was permitted to assault her with ideas of the most distressing kind. She was led to doubt the reality of her former experience. She feared she had been a hypocrite before God, and this terrified her to a very high degree. Her sleep was broken, and the agonies of her mind sometimes made her body tremble. I shall never forget the state of agitation, during which she entered my study one morning early, to communicate to me her fears of eternal perdition, and to beg my prayers" (315). "In this furnace of affliction, her gracious / Saviour meant, I doubt not, to purify her soul; and, indeed, she came out of it as gold purified in the fire. As her disease increased, the tranquillity of her mind was restored; and she was at last enabled to rejoice in God her Saviour" (315-316). **Anglican**

*Missionary Magazine* 15 Nov 1802, "Death of Mrs Walker": "No pen can do justice to the contrast that / was exhibited, through the whole of Sunday, between excruciating agonies, and the triumph of faith... looking with tenderness on her family around her, [she] exclaimed, 'O, may none of you, in dying, suffer what I now do! Oh, dissolution! dissolution! How difficult to endure! It is not easy to separate soul and body; but it is all I have to suffer'" (470-71). "To one who came in, she said, '... This is the trial of faith, but it will stand the trial; I shall come forth as refined gold. I am the happiest of women...'" (472). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Lekh Richmond, *Annals of the Poor* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1834; orig 1814), "The Dairyman's Daughter": "It has not unfrequently been observed that when it is the Lord's pleasure to remove any of his faithful followers out of this life at an early period of their course, they make rapid progress in the experience of divine truth" (59), "through a deeper sense of inward corruption, and a clearer view of the perfect character of the Saviour...Whatever consolations from the Spirit of God they may have enjoyed heretofore, they become now doubly anxious to examine and prove themselves, 'whether they be indeed in the faith.' In doing this they sometimes pass through hidden conflicts of a dark and distressing nature: from which, however, they come forth, like gold tried in the furnace. Awhile they may sow in tears but soon they reap in joy" (60). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

James Hay and Henry Belfrage, *Memoir of the Rev. Alexander Waugh* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 1831), on death of Waugh's daughter Jeane: "We feel that no apology will be required by the reader for the following short sketch of the illness and death of this member of Dr Waugh's family. The design is not to eulogise her character... The intention of the writer is to exhibit the peculiar kindness of God to the children of the good, who tread in their steps,— to show the happy influence of a fathers piety, and the faithfulness of God in his answers vouchsafed to such a parent's prayers" (459); "it was not till / the spring of 1830 that the disease put on appearances fatal to all hopes of her recovery. At this time she was seized with an attack of determination of blood to the head, which much depressed her, and threw her mind, for a short time, into a state of great excitement in regard to the state of her heart towards God, and the foundation on which her faith had been reared. God, in his loving-kindness, smiled, however, upon the dark cloud; his promises broke through it; the day, the unclouded day, arose upon her mind; and she came forth from the fiery trial that tried her as gold purified seven times. From this period she laid aside the indulgence of all hope of eventual recovery" (459-460). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

*Scottish Pulpit* 1833, funeral sermon by Thomas Brown on death of Rev John Geddes of Glasgow: "for the Christian to die, is gain, because death sets him free from the temporal ills of his mortal condition... The most prosperous and happy of our race never depart out of life, without drinking more or less deeply of the waters of affliction and sorrow... But, however severe and protracted the distresses of our condition may be, they are not without their use to the Christian. If he has been sharply tried and long kept in the furnace, the gold shines with brighter lustre in the regions above. Death is the last foe the Christian has to encounter. The weary arc at rest when they have fallen under the stroke of this all-conquering foe. All the ills of mortality are only, in yonder upper world, as waters that are poured out, or as the dreams of a winter night" (2: 288). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

*Baptist Magazine* 1844, obituary of Thomas Dupree, Hackney Bank of England clerk, "exemplary as a Christian... and also in the various relations of domestic, social, and civil life" (26). Concludes with a "description of the scenes that occurred in Mr. Dupree's sick room during his five years' painful and fatal affliction... Inexpressibly distressing as it must have been [for his wife] to witness so much suffering which she could neither ward off nor alleviate... she was privileged both to hear his constant prayer and to witness its blessed though severe fulfillment—

'With me in the fire remain,  
Till like burnished gold I shine,  
Meet, through consecrated pain,  
To see the face Divine'" (28). This hymn was written by Charles Wesley, 1767.

### **Methodist**

James Peddie, *Discourses* (Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Sons, 1846): "If a good man, towards his end, could invite his friends to approach that they might see how a Christian can die, much more instruction in the art of dying was to be learned by

attentive observation of the Saviour himself. The Lord Jesus was the same in death as in life. In that hour, which puts to the severest test the character and principles of men, he showed the same piety toward God, and the same benevolence towards men, the same meekness, and faith, and patience, as ever. When melted in the furnace, no dross appeared; all was pure gold. At the foot of the cross they must have seen, must have heard, much that indicated the extreme pain he suffered; that there was an internal conflict with spiritual darkness and with strong temptation, as well as an outward conflict with bodily suffering. But did they, could they, see or hear any indications of distrust in God, or of a vindictive spirit against his murderers? No" (216).

### *Job*

Thomas Brooks, *Complete Works* (Edinburgh: James Nichols, 1866; orig 1652): "The design of God in all the Afflictions that do befall them, is only to try them, 'tis not to wrong them, nor to ruin them, as ignorant Souls are apt to think. *He knoweth the way that I take, and when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as Gold*, saith patient *Job*." Likewise Daniel. "God afflicted them thus, that he might make known to themselves and others what was in their Hearts" (1: 53). **Anglican**

John. Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized; or, the Heavenly Use of Earthly Things* (Newcastle: M. Angus and Son, 1800; orig. 1669) on Job: "though the furnace of affliction discovered some dross in him (as it will in the best of men) yet he came forth as gold" (543). Constantius ruled "that all who would not renounce the Christian faith, should lose their places of honour and profit. This presently separated the dross from the gold, which was his design" (544); "the fire of persecution, or sufferings for religion, may be judged intense, and high enough to separate gold and dross" (574). **Presbyterian**

George Horne, *Discourses on Several Subjects and Occasions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1779): "Through patience Job endured the loss of all things, and the utmost malice of the tempter, and came forth as choice gold from the furnace of adversity, an example for all ages and generations to follow" (2: 275). **Anglican**

William Huntington, *Light Shining In Darkness, or, Heavenly Rays from Dark Sayings* (London: T. Bentley, 1796), sermon on Job, punctuated by the passage "He knoweth the way that I take, and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold" (66-71) with additional commentary: "God had tried his temperance and liberality with an uncommon store of plenty; and, upon trial, gold was not his confidence, nor the love of money his ruin" (68); "his faith was honoured, and all his predictions of future enlargement were fulfilled, and he comes forth as gold: rich in faith, rich in promises, rich toward God, and in the full assurance of a treasure in the heavens, where no moth corrupts nor thief approaches" (71). **Nonconformist**

W. Day, *A Collection of Songs and Hymns for Public Worship* (Evesham: John Agg, 1795), hymn based on Job 23:10:

“When in Affliction’s Furnace try’d,  
Was Job in Days of old,  
‘Twas then in stedfast Faith he cry’d,  
*I shall come forth as Gold...*  
I shall sustain no real Loss,  
So in his Word I’m told,  
He only means to purge my dross,  
*And bring me forth as Gold*” (229).  
5 other verses, all ending in “forth as Gold” (229-230). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

*Evangelical Magazine* 1795, obituary of Mary English, Wooburn minister’s wife;  
“Under apprehensions of her approaching dissolution, she expressed her acquiescence in the divine purpose... One morning, being asked how she was, she replied, ‘I often think on poor Job... I know that “When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold!” This night I have enjoyed unexpected ease; the Lord has been better to me than my fears” (3: 179). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Robert Traill, *Works* (Glasgow: William Paton, 1795): “In all the trials of your affliction, believe this, that God’s eye is on you, when you cannot see him.” Cites Job. “I take it, says he, when I am tried, I shall come forth as gold” (3: 155). **Puritan**

Thomas Etherington, *The Being and Attributes of God, deduced from the Works of Creation* (London: Rivingtons, 1799): “he who, like holy Job, is the richest, the happiest, and the best of men, shall, if God see it necessary to prove him in the furnace of affliction, that his virtue may appear like gold tried seven times in the fire, soon experience a sad reverse of fortune, and mourn over his poverty and wretchedness, sitting in sackcloth and ashes” (64). **Nonconformist**

Samuel Medley, *Hymns. The Public Worship and Private Devotions of True Christians* (London: J. Johnson, 1800; hymn based on Job 23: 10):

With joy let each afflicted saint  
This cheering truth behold:  
That, when he’s try’d, he shall not faint,  
But ‘shall come forth as gold” (250).

This privilege, dear Lord, I claim;  
Nor am I here too bold,  
That from the trying, fiery flame  
I may come forth as gold.

Herein his wisdom and his love  
Will God to me unfold,  
And, from the furnace, I shall prove,  
He’ll bring me forth as gold.

He'll kindly thus consume my dross,  
So in his Word I'm told;  
Nor can I suffer real loss,  
But shall come forth as gold.

Thus he'll conform me to his Word,  
And cast me in that mould;  
And thro' the goodness of my Lord,  
I shall come forth as gold.

Thus will I sing his praises here,  
Whose mercies are of old;  
And, when in glory I appear,  
I shall come forth as gold" (251). **Baptist**

Robert Carr Brackenbury, *Sacred Poetry; or, Hymns on the Principal Histories of the Old and New Testament* (London: G. Whitfield, 1800; on Job):

"But why did God his Fav'rite treat  
This seemingly severe?...  
'Twas to refine his faith, like gold  
When melted in the fire,  
And in the scale of bliss prepare  
His soul to mount the higher" (207). **Methodist**

Edmund Butcher, *Sermons for the Use of Families* (Chiswick: C. Whittingham, 1805 on Job: "The cruel treatment which he afterwards receives from his friends, occasionally destroys the balance, even of the mind of Job; but he soon recovers himself) and, at the close of the divine address to him, fully acknowledges the pride and impatience which, sometimes, obtained a short victory over him" (2: 36). "What was faulty in this excellent character was completely rectified by the trials he had undergone. His furnace had been made very hot, his dross, which was but little, was separated from the sterling metal, and he came forth, like gold, *seven times purified*" (37). **Unitarian**

*Missionary Magazine* 17 March 1806, "On Eternal Punishment": "Affliction is not in its nature calculated to change the heart. It may be the means of purifying persons already renewed, but it will never renew or purify the impenitent. This consideration proves also, that the sufferings of the damned cannot be corrective, because they are not proper subjects of corrective suffering. The fire will purify the gold from its dross, but will never make the dross gold. When Job was tried, he came forth as gold, because he had the root of the matter in him, but suffering had no such effect upon Pharaoh; his heart remained hard against God" (101). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Thomas Roberts, *Remains, Theological and Poetical* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1838; sermon, ca 1820, on "Job's Sincerity") "Let this be your consolation, even should your foes exult, and your friends reproach and desert you, and you walk in

darkness and have no light: Your heavenly Father knoweth the way you take, for he is leading you in it ; and when he has tried you, he will bring you forth as gold. Only hold fast your integrity. Mind the root of the matter” (290). **Methodist**

Christmas Evans, *Sermons on Various Subjects* (Beaver, PA: W. Henry, 1837) on “The Faith of Job in a Living Redeemer”: Job’s friends “argued that these temporal judgments by which he was visited, evidently proved him the greatest / hypocrite that ever existed”; Job countered “that all these afflictions, and the grievous events of divine providence, were designed only to prove him, and that he would come forth from the furnace like gold purified in the fire.” God “settled the dispute, and the verdict was given in favor of Job... then the wheel turned round for his comfort and joy. Job and his friends had an experimental knowledge of the evil of sin and hypocrisy; of the value and importance of godliness, or the fear of God” (93-94). Welsh **Baptist** preacher (1766-1838); translated from Welsh by J. Davis.

Benjamin Clark, *The Domestic Sanctuary; being a Comment upon a Portion of God’s Word for Every Day in the Year* (London: T. Allman, 1847) on lesson of Job: “The Almighty, against whom we have so frequently rebelled, is presented to us under the most benign aspect— as merely requiring, in order to a recovery to his favour, that his offending child admit the justice and gentleness of the parental infliction, humbly acknowledge and heartily forsake his evil doings, and resolve henceforth carefully to avoid incurring righteous anger. It is the language of submission, confession, promise, and desire, and, when issuing from a truly contrite spirit, evidences that the furnace of affliction has accomplished the end designed, and that such have ‘come forth as gold.’ God does not afflict us for his pleasure, but our profit: assured of this we shall seek not so much the removal as the sanctification of the trial, and that we thereby may be made partakers of his holiness... the priming knife is applied to the branch when the axe might justly be laid to the root” (13). Concludes by citing the hymn starting “Gold in the furnace tried” (see *Collection* 1782).

Richard Cobbold, *The Comforter; or, Short Addresses from the Book of Job: A Thank-Offering* (London: William Edward Painter, 1850) on Job 23:10: “Trials are appointed for all men—trials of the flesh, trials of the soul, trials of the spirit—that the man of God might come out perfect, thoroughly moulded by his Master's hand, and fit for the station He may appoint him in His Church” (205). “How many take the visitations of God with murmurings! How many see not the hand of God in their trials, but remain without any devotion of the heart, any correction of their dispositions and searching after God, until the merciful object of his affliction is / found to be unavailing, and the sinner, instead of coming forth as gold, refined and purified from the dross, comes forth the same base metal he was before—pursues the same course again—and takes no warning whatever from the past! What a dreadful state is that man's condition, who, after many warnings, is at last given over to a reprobate mind!” (207-208). **Anglican**

### **Death and illness**

Mrs. Lefevre, *An Extract of Letters* (Bristol: William Pine, 1796; originally published

anonymously, 1757, shortly after her death) includes in a letter to a friend from 1756 an original poem:

“Suffering faith shall brighter grow,  
As gold when in the furnace tried:  
Only Jesus will we know,  
And Jesus crucified” (25).

Quoted by Hannah Ball 1796, attached to: “May 16 [1769]. The grace of GOD I find superior to my present trials” (23). Also quoted in a letter Sarah Broster from a friend following a death in the family, 1823 (Turner 1839: 92), prefaced by: “Poor, dear Mr. B! It seems as if the Heavenly Refiner would take him out of the furnace, to place him in His heavenly cabinet.” (All = **Methodists**).

James Stonhouse, *The Sick Man's Friend* (London: Francis and Rivington, 1788) includes Zech 13:9 on his list of quotes for use in “Helps for Conversation between the Sick, and those, who may attend them” (45); the section it's in opens with: “We should often turn to some of the most supporting *Promises* made to the afflicted, and treasure them up in our Memories” (44). **Anglican**

Huntington *History* 1799 (Steward responds to Shepherd, regarding Little Faith's afflictions: why doesn't Steward come to Little Faith's aid?: “When the King intends to chasten a child for his folly, he will *make friends and acquaintances stand aloof*, that they may not ward off the blows... I love him dearly, but I will not nurse his pride, nor humour him in his folly. I hope the King will sanctify the affliction; and if he does, when he is tried, he shall come forth as gold” (328). **Nonconformist**

*The Female Mentor; or, Select Conversations* (London: T. Cadell, 1796): conversation 43 is “Death of Amanda” (an older character, “past the meridian of life”): “A few days after our last meeting, Amanda was seized with a disorder,” saddening all the other kids (3: 224). Narrator says: “we cannot fail... to feel the loss of such a character; yet / at the same time, while we allow ourselves to lament, let us also draw all possible consolations to our aid; let us endeavour to imitate Amanda, who not being above the tender feelings of humanity, did not give way too much to unavailing sorrow. She supported herself under various afflictions, with Christian and uniform patience, and like gold purified in the fire, she has risen from the trial brighter than ever” (230).

*Brief Memoirs of Remarkable Children, collected by a Clergyman of the Church of England* (London: James Nisbet, 1823), on Samuel Fay, London, died 1808 “aged ten Years and seven Months” (166). “The Bible was the book which he most highly valued, having found it early sanctified to his good. Dr. Watts's Hymns, the Pilgrim's Progress, with notes by the Rev. Mr. Burder, and the Youth's Magazine, were likewise much blessed to him. When his illness prevented him from reading, he would say, what a mercy it was he could recollect what he had read and learnt. He had early committed to memory the following Hymn of Dr. Watts, and enquired the meaning of the different verses” (169); followed by full extract of above hymn (169-171). **Anglican**

Thomas Bowdler, *Memoir of the Life of John Bowdler* (London: A. and R. Spottiswoode, 1824): "It is now time to turn to scenes of a domestic nature, where we have to record some of those afflictions with which the faithful are often visited, who are taught, however, to see therein, not the displeasure of a harsh and angry master, but the care and discipline of a tender parent, who chastens those whom he loves, and tries them like pure gold... It has pleased God to make pain and sickness his instruments in calming the temper, subduing the unruly passions, and bringing the soul to him" (191). In 1799 his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, "was seized with a disorder which threatened very dangerous consequences... after some years of mitigated suffering, she was removed from a world for which a frame so weak, and a spirit so delicate were little adapted"; died in Hastings Dec 1810 (192). **Anglican**

Thomas Wright, *Farewell to Time, Or, Last Views of Life, and Prospects of Immortality* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1829), "Devotional Exercises for the Use of the Sick": "Even the afflictions and the disasters of life have all been overruled to me for good,—and while I thought not so, neither did my heart / intend it, thou hast made even 'my backslidings to reprove me,'—and hast often made me come out of great tribulation, like gold that was refined" (231-232). Later: "as trouble is part of the lot that is given unto all men under the sun, O sanctify to them whatever distresses thou mayest appoint for them,—let them not be the instruments, in any case, of procuring disasters for themselves,—and, when they are tried, may they come like gold from the furnace, and thus may all things work together to them for good" (260).

### **Presbyterian**

Thomas Roberts, *Remains, Theological and Poetical* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1838; memoir by James Buckley on Roberts in 1815): "The thick clouds of providential darkness which totally eclipsed the objects of vision, led Mr. Roberts into a further trial of his faith, for which the premonitory admonition of his Divine Lord had prepared him: 'I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction,' not as a mark of Divine displeasure, but of paternal wisdom and love, which will appear when God becomes his own interpreter in the light of eternity. This was the sure anchorage of his hope and patient endurance, while passing through the furnace of a more than ordinary heat, knowing that the trial of his faith was more precious than that of gold, though tried in the fire, that it might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (107-108). **Methodist**

Susanna Corder (comp.). *Memorials of Deceased Members of the Society of Friends* (Lindfield: The Schools of Industry, 1839), memoir of Joseph White (1713-1777), a Quaker who emigrated from Bucks County to England in 1758 (1). "He was, from his youth, subject to frequent attacks of indisposition; but as he advanced further in age, intermissions of health grew short, and pains increased, which brought on other bodily infirmities, all which he bore with patience and resignation; often praying he might not be off his watch when his pains were exquisite, nor his faith fail in the time of trial. He believed it to be through the goodness of God, that he was thus dealt with, in order more and more to wean him from all outward connections and

nearest ties of nature; that, being as the pure gold refined through the furnace, he might with triumph join the redeemed that were gone before, which he at times had a foretaste of; but the time when, as he himself sometimes expressed, he did not then see, believing it to be consistent with divine wisdom to keep it hid from him. During the latter part of his time, for several months, he slept but little in the night season, being at times engaged in reverent intercessions and divine contemplation, and appeared to be waiting for the solemn moment of dissolution” (3). **Quaker**

*Bible Christian* 1840 (Belfast), obituary of Frances Classon, who died May 1840 “after a lingering and painful illness, which she bore with unshrinking fortitude” (3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 2: 177). “For the last years of her life it pleased divine Providence to afflict her with a most severe and agonizing disease, which slowly preyed upon her frame; wearing her down by extreme and almost unceasing pain: and which was, for years before her death, known to be incurable. The agonies that she endured, were such as no tongue could tell: but they neither rendered her morose to those around her, — nor occasioned discontent in her own mind,—nor abated her zeal in the service of her fellow-creatures, while she remained capable of exertion:—nor diminished her faith and trust, and pious hope in God... The anchor of her soul maintained its hold, sure and steadfast; and this anchor was the Gospel of Christ, as understood and embraced by Christian Unitarians. Her faith was put to a fiery trial, and it came out as pure gold from the furnace” (179). **Unitarian**

Catherine Cecil, *Memoirs of Mrs. Hawkes, late of Islington; including, Remarks in Conversation and Extracts from Sermons and Letters of the Late Rev. Richard Cecil* (Philadelphia: Washington J. Simon, 1840): “Mrs. Hawkes had scarcely entered upon the year 1795, when it pleased God to visit her with an attack of illness, by which she was confined nearly two months.” From her diary, Feb 1795: “If this sickness be not unto death, O let it be that thy Son may be / glorified; and let me come out of it as gold purified in the fire!” (113-114). In 1797 she lost her home in Holloway (not clear why): “The following memorandum exhibits the spirit in which she was preparing to meet this painful catastrophe. ‘Instead of fainting under the stroke, I would cry, Let the refiner do his work, even though the furnace be made seven times hotter. Let the dross be burnt up, that I may come out purified as gold. Enable me to endure chastisement, to receive it as to the design of it; to take it up willingly; and to show a proper disposition under it, though touched to the quick” (136). She wrote a friend in 1815: “Keep always the crucible in your hand, to distinguish gold from alloy” (245). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Henry Edward Manning, *Sermons* (London: James Burns, 1843), sermon “The Sleep of the Faithful Departed,” preached at St Paul’s: in death, a holy man is free from ‘the clinging power of spiritual evil’; “earthliness of heart” and “dull musing heaviness in the life of God,—all these burden even saints with an oppressive weight. But from all this... they rest. The sin that dwelt in them died, when through death they began to live” (313). “The Refiner shall perfect His work upon them, cleansing them seven-fold, even as gold is seven times tried; and all the taint and bias of their spiritual

being shall be detached and corrected; till, by direct and intense vision... they shall become pure even as He is pure" (314). **Anglican**

*The Invalid's Hymn Book* (Dublin: John Robertson, 1845):

"O cheer thee, cheer thee, suffering saint!  
Though worn with chastening, be not faint!" (180)  
(verse 5):

"Then cheer thee, cheer thee! though the flame  
Consume thy wasting suffering frame;  
His gold shall suffer harm, nor loss, [181]  
He will but purge away the dross,  
And fit it, graced with many a gem,  
To form his glorious diadem" (182)

## **Hell**

James Kershaw, *The Grand Extensive Plan of Human Redemption* (Louth: Sheardown and Son, 1797): is there a hell? Some think "that the purifying flames of hell will purge them from sin; after which, they will come forth, like Gold from the furnace, and be admitted to all the glories of heaven. To which may be added, that some think that this will be the case with devils also" (153).

J.E. Smith, *The Antichrist, or Christianity Reformed* (London: B.D. Cousins, 1833), discussion regarding location of hell: sun or center of the earth?: "Where this Hell is situated... I shall not attempt to decide; but it is evident, from the authority of an eminent philosopher on one hand, and one of the chosen servants of the Lord on the other, that the presumption is in favour of a luminous place of residence for the wicked; and it is to be hoped that this redoubted fire in which they are to be enveloped, is of such a nature as only to prove destructive to evil, leaving all the good principles not only unhurt, but purified and refined, like gold in the furnace" (240). **Anglican**

## **Poverty**

John Cennick, *Discourses on Important Subject* (London: H.D. Symonds, 1803; orig 1762) on Beatitudes: "Blessed are they who are mean, and little, and worthless in their own eyes, as a bit of dust, as a poor small and contemptible worm, who are to such belongs the kingdom of heaven; for such Christ died; out of pity to such he was extreme poor, that they, through his poverty, might become rich; and by his having nothing and being a servant, they might possess all things, and be kings and priests to God, rich in faith, and with that gold tried in the fire, and having got the / treasure hid in the field, spoken of by our Saviour, they shall be esteemed rich indeed of God, and all the angels in eternity" (84-85). **Methodist**

Samuel Glasse, *A Word of Comfort to the Poor, in their Present Necessity* (London: Rivington, 1795), sermon on Philippians 4:11 re "be content" (3). "Exhortations to

contentment... it must be acknowledged, seem to imply a state of suffer/ing, and are chiefly to be directed to such as are excluded from the sunshine of prosperity; over whose tabernacle a dark cloud is spread; and whom GOD, in the unsearchable decrees of His infinite wisdom, sees fit to try, as *gold, in the furnance of adversity*. To these it is our duty, and it is our pleasure also, to endeavour to suggest the arguments, which the Scriptures offer, for their consolation and support" (5).

### **Anglican**

Douglas Jerrold, *Men of Character* (London: Henry Colburn, 1838), describes his protagonist in opening chapter, "Adam Buff: The Man 'Without a Shirt'": "shut your eyes to the half-sole of the left shoe—but look at the man, or men, and tell us, if ye do not look upon a prosperous patron... "Sir,—he has not a shirt to his back!" How often does this avowal convey the dreariest picture of human destitution. All our sympathies are expected to be up and crying for the victim. A whole nunnery might have wept for Adam; yet was he in his dearest want, most rich. It is true, the conflagration of the preceding night had put our hero / to the coldest shift that poverty can lay on human flesh; and yet, like thrice-tried gold, he came forth pure and glittering from the fire!" (1: 11-12).

### **Temptation**

John. Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized; or, the Heavenly Use of Earthly Things* (Newcastle: M. Angus and Son, 1800; orig. 1669): "Prosperity, success, and the increase of outward enjoyments, are to grace what fire is to gold... Put the best gold in the firing-pot of praise, and it is a great wonder if a great deal of dross do not appear"; cites Isa 34 (538). **Presbyterian**

William Dyer, *Christ's Famous Titles and a Believer's Golden Chain* (Aberdeen: J. Boyle, 1788: "The saints' temptations... are but the trial of faith [1 Pet 1: 6-7]. And should we be grieved that our faith is tried? The goldsmith rather useth than avoideth the fire for the trying of his gold; neither is the gold diminished, but rather its worth more fully known, when the dross is gone. This is the trial that doth try the faith of every child of God" (309). William Dyer, 1632-1696, London **Puritan** preacher who was expelled from Anglican Church in 1662

Philip Skelton, *Complete Works* (London: Richard Baynes, 1824), "A Preservative against Temptations" (1754); leads with Proverbs 18:3, "The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold; but the Lord trieth the heart." God "tempteth all men, that is, he tries their faith and obedience, not for his own information... but for the exercise of their virtue, and the manifestation of his own justice and mercy. In order to these ends, the wisdom and goodness of which we shall presently perceive, he... lays open, to ourselves or others, both the principles of our minds, and the dispositions of our hearts, by a kind of torture resembling that, wherewith the qualities of 'silver are proved in the fining-pot,'and the purity of' gold in the furnace" (1: 196). Chastises those who argue that God "could neither tempt them himself, nor suffer them to be tempted, because temptations might lead them into sin, and sin into misery": "whether men are tried by God, or tempted by the devil,

God is justified in permitting the one, and doing the other” (197). Skelton (1707–1787) was an Irish Protestant clergyman; this vol = *Controversial Discourses: chiefly on the Evidences and the Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity*. **Anglican**

H. Kirkpatrick, *Sermons on Various Subjects* (Warrington: W. Evans, 1785): “The unattended, forsaken and disconsolate condition, wherein [Jesus] was in / the wilderness, and the mean appearance he had ever made in the world, might lead to an imagination of thus employing the power he had received from God.” The fact that he considered giving in to this temptation only gave him “an opportunity of exercising more exalted virtue, and shining with brighter lustre. That character is worthy of double honour, which resists the strongest temptations; and like gold, comes out of the furnace purified and refined” (78-79). **Nonconformist**

Jones, William. *Considerations on the Natural History of the Earth and it's Minerals* (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1787): “the properties of metals are very considerable, and would afford us much instruction, if the limits of this discourse would / admit of it. As gold stands the test of fire, such is the constancy of true piety, which grows brighter and purer with every trial. And, as gold cannot be pure without being refined in the furnace, so cannot any man be fit for God's acceptance, till he hath first *endured temptation*. The father of the faithful was put to the fiery trial of offering up his own son for a sacrifice” (16). NB: gold is never found in pure state. **Anglican**

George Hay, *The Pious Christian Instructed in... the Principal Exercises of Piety used in the Catholic Church* (Dublin: P. Wogan, 1788) on meditation: “What then must a person do who is in [a] state of desolation and aridity? A. His principal care must be resolutely to resist the views of Satan, whose aim in all the temptations he excites in his mind while in this trial, is to make him disgusted with the exercise of meditation, and leave it off entirely” (18); “all good accrues to the soul by persevering with humility, confidence and resignation in this prayer of aridity. It is the true school of humility, it is the crucible in which the soul is purified like gold in the furnace, and it is the infallible touchstone by which our fidelity to God is manifested” (20). **Catholic bishop**.

*Christian's Magazine* 1791, “The Furnace”: “It is necessary for the Lord's people, while in this wretched howling wilderness, to pass through the fire... As a Heavenly Refiner, [the Lord] will not take his precious gold out of the furnace 'till the dross is separated / from it. And, Christian, if thou hast been long in the fire, *and art yet in it*, it is probable there is something that still remains, perhaps a little pride or worldly mindedness, or some vanity or other; God means to have all these burnt up before thou art released” (2: 146-147). “But it is a pleasing thought, that he never puts thee in the furnace to be destroyed, but to be refined” (147). **Presbyterian**

Margaret Althens, *The Chistian Character Exemplified* (London: J. Walker, 1793). London servant named Margaret Jasper from 1776-1784 when she married; collected by John Newton. Diary from 21 April 1777: “A day of great temptation. The

enemy pressed upon me many things in which he charged me with being a vile hypocrite both to God and man” (61). “A sermon I heard in the evening from Zec. Xiii. 7. Proved very applicable to my case... It was observed, the Lord, for wise reasons, puts his children into furnaces and fires, temptation is one of them. Indeed, thought I, I have had a hot bout in it this morning. Lord grant I may lose nothing by the fire, but dross, and come forth purified like gold. My soul was much broken down under the Word, and I trust I was enabled to see the hand of the Lord in the trial” (62). **Nonconformist**

J.H. Prince, *Original Letters and Essays* (London: Parsons, 1797), citing Johnson in *The Rambler* (3: 263): “That *integrity* which has yet been attacked by no temptation, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which therefore the true value cannot be assigned” (194). This by way of teaching the lesson “to take care not to be too much elated with prosperity or blessings of any kind” (189).

*Miscellanea Sacra, or, the Theological Miscellany* (Halifax: Wells, 1799), section X, “If Christ is precious to us, we shall adhere to him in all Conditions” (2: 254); cites Job 23:10 and comments: “the man is blessed that endureth temptation; the issue will be glorious; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life. We are therefore admonished not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, as though some strange thing happened to us. By our steady adherence to Christ and his cause in the midst of all, we have the fairest opportunity given us, of proving how precious he is to our souls” (257).

Samuel Carr, *Sermons, on Practical Subjects* (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1801): “Temptation signifies either a trial of our strength, for the improvement of our virtue, or an allurements to sin. In the former of these senses, God himself is said to tempt men; that is, to call them to some hard and severe conflict in the spiritual warfare; that their virtue, being tried like gold in the furnace, may shine forth with redoubled and increasing splendour. It was thus he tempted Abraham to sacrifice his only son” (1: 202). Copied by Robinson 1815, entry TEMPTATION). **Anglican**

Thomas Shaw B. Reade, *Christian Retirement: or Spiritual Exercises of the Heart* (London: Kirkby Lonsdale et al., 1836; orig. 1810): “This life is a state of probation. Hence trials are necessary in order to prove us, as gold is tried in the fire... Common prudence and worldly interest, as well as natural conscience, may prevent an unconverted man from committing many crimes which would outrage society. The fear of punishment, and the dread of public infamy may operate to the prevention of those evils, which would bring a man under the lash of the violated laws of his country. The certain consequence of disease and poverty attendant on some vices, proves a partial check to their commission; though, alas! too weak to arrest the general torrent of licentiousness. Thus by the constant operation of these inferior motives, and through the goodness of a restraining providence, we are happily preserved from that inundation of iniquity, which would otherwise destroy the fabric of society” (275). **Anglican**

Reade 1836: The believer 'can bear with calm composure the taunts of men; he can patiently submit to be accounted a fool for Christ's sake; yea, he can suffer joyfully the spoiling of his goods, and even the loss of life itself: but he cannot endure the inward workings of corruption. He cannot submit to the power of indwelling sin" (326). "How precious is the blood of Jesus at such seasons! He flies to the strong for strength. He takes refuge in the wounds of Jesus, and is safe. This trial, like every other, is over-ruled for good. A holy watchfulness, an increased dread of sin, a jealous, godly fear, a spirit of prayer, a more simple dependence on Christ, a more hearty loathing of self, a more ardent breathing after holiness and heaven, are excited in the soul. Thus, through grace, Satan is defeated, and the tempted believer comes out of the furnace, as gold tried in the fire, leaving nothing but the dross behind" (327). **Anglican**

Francis Cox, *Female Scripture Biography* (London: Gale and Fenner, 1817): "While considering the terrific facts of the existence and works of the devil, recollect the *limitation of his agency*. If no kind of restraint were imposed upon his efforts, if his untractable malice were allowed to act with all its diabolical force, and were absolutely under no restrictions, the idea of his being and of his malignity would be unutterably appalling: but the giant foe is held in the mighty grasp of Omnipotence" (2: 317). "The influence of Satan resembles every other test that Divine Wisdom sees fit to apply to human character. It is probationary. The people of God are put to the proof, and their principles subjected to fiery trials. But gold will endure the furnace, and real piety will 'resist the devil, and he will flee'" (318). **Baptist**

Edmund Butcher, *Sermons for the Use of Families* (Chiswick: C. Whittingham, 1819: "the human heart is greatly, and in a degree, necessarily attached to present things; and that it finds great delight in them: this delight is always in danger of becoming too intense and permanent, and the great object, of true piety, is to check and keep it within due limits. The love of the world is the dross of the soul, and affliction is the refining fire of heaven to separate this dross from the pure gold. Unless by the power of the Gospel, a deep and serious conviction of the importance of divine things is wrought in the mind, the affections will cleave to worldly objects. Alas! what multitudes are in this state! The world contains every thing that is dear and precious, in their estimation; and when they find what bubbles and shadows its best blessings are, they are overwhelmed with astonishment and dismay" (3: 60).

### **Unitarian**

Edward Irving, *The Church and State responsible to Christ, and to One Another* (London: James Nisbet, 1829): "If the temptations were coming upon us in darkness, I would dread destruction; but seeing they are coming upon us preceded by the warnings and interpretations of many servants of the Lord, I look for purification and salvation and length of days unto the church. I think that through the much tribulation gathering over us on every side, we shall enter into the kingdom. If men will but take knowledge of the hand of God; if ministers will but take observation of the signs of the times, and teach them to the people; then I believe that the church shall come forth like gold refined" (167). **Nonconformist**

*Scottish Christian Herald* 1839 on Abraham: “God does often tempt his own servants, in the sense of proving, and thereby perfecting those graces he has himself implanted in their hearts,—as the refiner casts his ore into the furnace that he may purge away the dross, and beats and polishes the precious metal till every blemish being removed, it shines with heaven’s own lustre, and reflects the refiner’s own image. But while in this sense he tempteth his saints daily... he knoweth at the same time ‘how to deliver the godly out of temptation’ ... As God suffereth not any of his people to be tempted above that he enables them to bear, so did he strengthen Abraham” (1: 620). **Presbyterian**

*Spiritual Magazine* October 1846, “On Repentance” by “An Old Puritan”: “Believers mourn most before God for those lusts which appear least before men. Others cannot mourn in secret for public sins, but we should mourn in public for our secret sins... It is a hearty mourning for our transgressions, which makes way for a happy funeral of our corruptions” (234). “When a sinner repents the angels rejoice: and give me such a mourning on earth as creates music in heaven. Many are battered as lead by the hammer, who were never battered / as gold by the fire. Sometimes that repentance which begins in the fears of hell, ends in the flames of hell” (236-237)

### **depravity**

Ralph Erskine, *The Fountain-Head of All Blessings* (Edinburgh: A. Alison, 1740): “see the reason why God treats mankind as he doth, both with judgment and mercy. Why, the world is polluted; and God hath a mind to purify it. Why doth the Lord shine upon you with the sun of a kindly providence? It is even to melt you, that you may part with sin, and that his goodness may lead you to repentance. Why doth he cast you into a furnace of affliction? It is to purge away dross; and that you may come forth as gold tried in the fire. Why was the whole earth washed with a deluge? Why, it was polluted, and needed to be cleansed. And why will he again melt it with fire? Because it must be purified before it be a new earth” (1: 325). “The man that is destitute of gospel purity, is in a state wherein he is capable of total apostacy. The true gold will abide the fire; but the furnace carries off the dross” (384).

### **Presbyterian**

Catherine Cecil, *Memoirs of Mrs. Hawkes, late of Islington; including, Remarks in Conversation and Extracts from Sermons and Letters of the Late Rev. Richard Cecil* (Philadelphia: Washington J. Simon, 1840), letter from Mrs Hawkes to Mrs Jones, Dec 1791: “my heart smites me, and I am filled with shame when I consider how little I render to the Lord for all his benefits; and how much unbelief, foreboding fears, and inward depravity, pride, impatience, and self-will yet remain. However, the process of the refiner, is, I trust, still going on; and my earnest prayer is, that like Job, when I am tried, I may come forth as gold. Every stroke I more than deserve; but every favour, every mercy, is the purchase of an adorable Saviour, freely bestowed, for his own name’s sake. Pray for me that I may ever thus think and feel; for I can do so no longer than enabled by grace” (49). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

### **Church renovation**

Thomas Henry White, *Fragments of Italy and the Rhineland* (London: William Pickering, 1841) on the cathedral in Freiburg, Germany: "This reverend pile has of late days undergone the fiery ordeal of a thorough restoration, a process sometimes little less fatal to similar buildings than a thorough conflagration; but it has emerged like gold seven times tried. The new stained windows are perhaps the most palpable evidences of the operation; for although they are well executed, and their purples and scarlets afford evidence that the art of glass painting is not so degenerated as we are apt to think, still they have a raw, harsh, glaring look, rendered more conspicuous by that mellow alchemy of ages, which so pensively illuminates the hoary array of their lordly brethren" (368).

### **Reason as a test of Christianity**

Thomas Brooks, *The Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod* (Glasgow: William Duncan, 1736; orig 1652): "Error, as a glass, is bright, but brittle, and cannot endure the hammer or fire, as gold can, which, though rubbed or melted, remains firm and orient" (74). **Puritan**

Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (London: John Lawrence, 1709), "Characters of Christ, borrowed from Inanimate Things in Scripture":

"Is [Christ] a fire? He'll purge my dross:

But the true gold sustains no loss:

Like a refiner shall he sit,

And tread the refuse with his feet" (117). **Nonconformist**

Philip Doddridge, *Three Sermons on the Evidences of the Gospel* (London: J. Waugh, 1752): "The Cause of Christianity has greatly gained by *Debate*, and the *Gospel* comes like *Gold out of the Furnace*, which the more it is tried, the more it is approved" (66). Approvingly quoted in *Imperial Magazine* 2 (1820): 82. Plagiarized in Fleetwood 1766: xxxviii. **Nonconformist**

Paul Henri Holbach, *The System of Nature* (London: Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, 1817; 1770) on Platonism: "Such a philosophy is rather fantastical, yet / it would seem we are required to subscribe to its positions without being allowed to compare them with reason, to examine them through the medium of experience, to try the gold by the action of fire; thus we have in abundance the terms spirits; incorporeal substances; invisible powers; supernatural effects; innate ideas; mysterious virtues, possessed by demons... which render our senses entirely useless, which put to flight every thing like experience" (2: 195-6). **Athiest**

*Monthly Ledger* 1773, "On Superstition": "Superstition... is lessening in Europe; people of all ranks have in some degree detected its machinations, and are less attached to its interests; the wisest and worthiest of all parties concur in wishing this corrupt tree might be extirpated, and the weak and wicked... only fear to lay the ax of truth to the very root of it: but the fears of the well-meaning are groundless;

for true religion, like gold, will not be diminished in value, not lose any of its lustre by being separated from the base alloy of superstition” (1: 176).

*Monthly Ledger* 1774: “There may be some corrupt leaven still left in the reputed pure Christian church; if there is not, a free rational SPECULATION cannot obscure, but will manifest, its brightness and purity. TRUTH never fears and enquiry... Truth like pure gold can suffer nothing by a fiery trial;—its parts are homogeneous, and, when separated from the dross of error, will attract one another the stronger, and cohere in a still closer contact” (2: 211).

*Monthly Review* 1779: critic of Joseph Priestley, who was scolded by MR for his strictures on Priestley, defends his anti-materialist stance: “For though truth, like gold in the crucible, can never suffer by the strictest scrutiny, yet the operation may raise fumes very pernicious to the by-standers” (61: 400).

John Goldie, *The Gospel Recovered from its Captive State, and Restored to its Original Purity* (London: printed for the author, 1784): superstition is the leading obstacle to “inquiring after real, or true knowledge, or undisguised truths of the gospel... he that is afraid to canvass both sides of the question, in which he is interested, is a disgrace to truth, though even upon his side; for truth is like gold, the more it is tortured in the furnace, it comes forth the purer, and shines with all that greater lustre, and can never possibly lose any of its parts. For truth is never afraid of error; but error, even trembles at the most distant hearing of truth” (180). John Goldie, 1717-1809, Kilmarnock wine merchant and writer on natural theology. **Presbyterian**

Edward Stone, *Discourses on Important Subjects* (Oxford: J. and J. Fletcher, 1784): “*human Reason* is a proper *Judge of religious Subjects*, and ... it is the *Duty* of every rational Being to try them by it... certainly it will not be said, that we may judge of Superstition, but not of Religion: The Permission to try *base*, and not *sterling* Gold, carries an Inconsistency with it: How are we to distinguish, till we have tried them?” (227). “If... counterfeit Religion may be brought to the Balance of Reason, true Religion may stand the same Test” (228). **Anglican**

Joseph White, *Sermons preached before the University of Oxford, in the Year 1784* (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1785; Bampton lectures): “The gospel was not, like the Mahometan imposture, proposed to a people rude and uncivilized, or at a time when universal ignorance and barbarism had prepared mankind to receive, without hesitation, any impressions from the artful and designing; but in an age, which perhaps above all others, was distinguished for curious speculation, and philosophical research. The Roman empire was at that time in its full glory; and a long and profound peace, together with the patronage and encouragement of authority, had contributed to raise the arts and sciences to a height unknown before; and which later ages, with all their boasted improvements, have scarce been able to exceed. At such a period did the religion of Christ invite, and endure, the test of the severest scrutiny: till, at length, like pure gold, it came forth unsullied, and undiminished from the flames” (155). Excerpted in *Miscellanea Sacra* 1797: 291; also plagiarized (?) by Fawcett *Summary* 1797. **Anglican**

Mark West, *Sermons on Different Subjects* (Dublin: R. Marchbank, 1785), sermon on "The Necessity of cultivating and improving the Understanding": "Indolence and Inattention, Prejudice, Sensuality, and Superstition, [are] the great Obstacles to the improvement of our Reason, and a right Knowledge of Religion!" (325). "Let us avoid Superstition, as to Parent of Weakness, Error and Folly, as the Murderer of all sound Principles, and the cruel Destroyer of the very Essentials in Virtue and Religion! On the other Hand, let Diligence and Attention conduct all our Researches, especially in Religion!" (327). "Let us vainly fear that such a Conduct is the slightest Insult, or can prove the smallest Injury to Religion! Pure Religion, such as that with which God has / blessed us by the Revelation of his Will through his only Son, bears the most impartial Enquiry, nay derives additional Strength from the Freedom with which it is examined, and, like Gold, the Fire only proves its genuine Purity!" (327-328). "The Faith, which we possess... stands not on the precarious Ground of Ignorance, supports not iteself by the Laziness of unenquiring Indolence!" (328).

### **Anglican (Irish)**

Jerom Alley, *Observations on the Government and Constitution of Great Britain* (Dublin: William Sleater, 1792) vs Price, Priestley, and Paine: "Religious liberty is the absolute right of all; and its tendency, instead of being noxious to truth, is promotive of wisdom. If it subject the gospel to every species of criticism and scrutiny, it subjects it, in fact, but to ultimate illumination. Long since would Christianity have fallen, had it not been formed to bear the test of the most rigid enquiry... it is well able to sustain hostility far more dangerous than any it has hitherto experienced... it is the gold, which, amid the trials of the furnace, has only exhibited new proofs of purity without alloy." In other words, bring it on! (67). Adds in note: "learning and christianity were intimately associated at the aera of the reformation" (68). **Anglican (Irish)**

Neil Douglas, *A Monitory Address to Great Britain: A Poem in Six Parts* (Edinburgh: J. Guthrie, 1792): "our national guilt and danger are increased, not only by those who pour open contempt upon the duties of religion and morality; even persons that have some some claim to a negative kind of virtue, and may pass in the world for worthy good sort of people, contribute their share... Being free of grosser vices, sins of omission... / present a much more serious object of alarm than all the publications, which are apprehended to contain materials so dangerous to the safety of the State. So far as these employ salacious reasoning to impose on the ignorant and unwary, the better they are known the sooner will they sink into contempt—Error cannot abide the light, but flies to shade and subterfuge: but truth, like gold, will bear the strictest scrutiny, and gain by every renewed trial" (xxv-xxvi).

### **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Mary Hays, *Letters and Essays, Moral, and Miscellaneous* (London: T. Knott, 1793): "The world, like every individual, has its progression from infancy to old age: the present age is more mature than the last. The reformers did much, we have done more, and more still remains to be done by future ages. Every doctrine that shuns investigation, excites in us a suspicion of its origin; the truth must be a gainer, by

free and unrestrained inquiry, and in the end 'approve itself to the conscience of every man;' and like the pure gold, come out uninjured from a trial by fire, which can consume only the dross that obscured its lustre" (77).

George Lawson, *Considerations on the Overture, Lying before the Associated Synod* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1797): "A candid enquirer into truth is never afraid of having his notions examined. If they are, they will come forth from the trial, like gold from the fire. If they were formerly believed, the belief of them will be strengthened and confirmed; and the confirmation of our faith in the truths which we profess, is of no small consequence in a free-thinking age" (62). Lawson was a leader in the Associate Synod, a Presbyterian splinter group est ca 1795. **Presbyterian**

James Lindsay, *A Sermon, preached at Monkwell Street Meeting-House* (London: J. Johnson, 1797): "Not only is the day of Popish superstition hastening to an end; but... even the less exceptionable establishments of religion, of they are not soon reformed, will be soon destroyed. Christianity will then be left to its own strength, unincumbered by that worldly policy with which it has been forced into an unnatural connexion. Thus left, it will stand firm upon the strong ground of its intrinsic excellence" (5). "But whilst we admit and rejoice that this is true, it must be acknowledged... that a very general prejudice is spreading, both against Christianity itself, and against every description of its public teachers... she suffers almost equally from the bigotted supporters of ancient abuse, and the outrageous advocates of violent innovation... But let this be our consolation, that she will come forth from the controversy, like gold from the furnace, purified and exalted. The more she is tried, the more glorious and permanent will her triumph be" (8).

### **Presbyterian**

Thomas Belsham, *A Review of Mr. Wilberforces's Treatise* (London: J. Johnson, 1798): "Of course, the whole class of unbelievers, consists of persons who have thought, more or less, upon the subject; and as persons of sense seldom discard at once all the principles in which they have been educated, it is not wonderful that many who begin with the highest orthodoxy, pass through different stages of their creed, dropping an article or two in every step... This, to a superficial and timid observer, appears to be an objection to freedom of enquiry" (258). Not so: "without enquiry truth cannot be ascertained, and if the christian religion shrinks from close examination / in this bold and inquisitive age, it must, and it ought to fall. But of this issue, I have not the smallest apprehension. Genuine christianity can well bear the fiery trial through which it is now passing, and while the dross and the rubbish are consumed, the pure gold will remain uninjured, and will come forth from the furnace with increased issue" (258-259). **Unitarian**

William Davy, *A System of Divinity, in a Course of Sermons* (Lustlegh: printed by himself, 1798): "No Man that is a real Friend to Religion, can be willing to oppose a rational Examination into the Truth of any Opinions or Doctrines, that come recommended to us by the Authority of so venerable a Name... because the Interest of Truth itself must be injured by it; which may give Room for Suspicion, when it declines a / Scrutiny, but will, like Gold in the Furnace, retain all its Weight and

Purity in the Trial, and shine even with a greater Lustre for the Severity of it” (7: 23-24). “But then likewise every Man who professes himself to be a free Inquirer into Religious Concerns, should bring with him a Mind duly disciplined to render his Inquiries successful” (24); this is from a sermon on “The Sin of ridiculing Religion, considered and censured” (23). **Anglican**

Margaret Bryan, *A Compendious System of Astronomy, in a Course of Familiar Lectures* (London: J. Wallis, 1799): if “you perceive any of your fellow-creatures doubtful of an over-ruling Providence, or deviating from the paths of moral rectitude; then indeed the conviction such subjects as these bring with them renders them indispensable... the arguments these studies furnish you with being more likely to effect that desirable purpose than all the remonstrances you could advance, being truths which cannot be confuted by the most subtle arguer; for, like gold in the furnace, the more they are tried, the brighter and more beautiful their intrinsic worth will appear” (105).

Adolf Knigge, *Practical Philosophy of Social Life; or the Art of Conversing with Men* (London: T. Cadell, 1799): “The principles of religion and its essential tenets, were never more fully discussed than at the time of the reformation... The gold was only separated from its dross. Ignorant, bigoted and wild fanatics only will dread the free discussion of religious subjects, while the enlightened adorer of GOD will rather challenge than check it” (2: 311).

Christopher Hunter, *Scepticism not Separable from Immorality; illustrated in the Instances of Hume and Gibbon* (London: G. Nicol, 1799): “Christianity is compared by a learned writer to the *stone* that assays gold; it tries the human heart, and ascertains its purity or its debasement. The arguments by which *Christianity* is supported and confirmed, must be examined with diligence and attention; must be applied with honest and impartiality; and appear only to ingenious minds with the full radiance of truth” (5). Cites Grotius. Northamptonshire rector. **Anglican**

James Birch, *The Book of Cherubical Reason, with its Law and Nature* (London: n.p., 1800): “when this spiritual *virgin*, daughter of Faith, has waded through the power of Reason, and made her true offerings before the God of Faith, and obedience to the internal angel, and come through as *refined gold*, then at the hour of death her prayer strongly ascends to God, whereby he is graciously pleased” (24). Christ “is graciously pleased to descend in spirit, and unite with this *virgin daughter* in the soul of man, *i.e.* the bride, prepared as *pure gold*” (105).

John Martin, *Letters on Nonconformity* (London: J. Barfield, 1800) vs Dissenters “who will not admit that the church of England is a church of Christ.” If that church “hath built on the true foundation that sort of wood, hay, stubble, which the fire of truth will destroy, must the gold, silver, and precious stones, be destroyed also, and the whole fabric be pulled down because it is not erected to our taste?” (32). **Anglican**

William Jones, *The Scholar Armed against the Errors of the Time* (London: Rivington, 1800), vs a tract by “Dr. Taylor, of Norwich” (probably John Taylor, a mid-18<sup>th</sup> century dissenter), who “prejudges the Scripture before we come to it, and inculcates into inexperienced students of divinity, the very principle that hath ruined us, and given us up as a prey to the Deists” (2: 41). Student who read him “will take the doctrines of nature, and work them up with the doctrines of the Scripture: that is, they will throw natural religion into the Scripture, as Aaron threw the gold of Egypt into the fire: and what will come out? Not the Christian religion, but the philosophical calf of Socinus” (42). He makes the same argument against allowing student to read Locke’s Reasonableness of Christianity (42-43). **Anglican**

George Frederick Nott, *Religious Enthusiasm Considered: In Eight sermons, preached before the University of Oxford* (Oxford: The University Press, 1802): “as fine gold cometh purer from the fire, so the cause of our Establishment, the more it passeth the severe ordeal of investigation, will be found more and more to justify our adherence to it. But, though we assert our own fidelity, we presume not to judge those, who, countenanced by the solemnity of deliberate and national decisions, have thought it best to adopt a different communion. That they have abandoned the one Apostolical Church is too true. But if they did it not to gratify a spirit of party, or of pride; and if they have approved themselves to be in other points generally pure in faith, and illustrious in obedience, shall we prescribe bounds to God's forgiveness? Charity forbid! Believing that mercy may be extended to any offence, that proceeds not from an heart of malice, with a feeling of inexpressible joy we look forward to a moment, when, sitting down in the kingdom of Heaven with the faithful of other communions, we shall praise with one mouth that Saviour, whom with one heart we have loved” (125). **Anglican**

Hannah More, *Hints Towards Forming the Character of a Young Princess* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1805): on Church of England: “it is her luminous exhibition of Christian truth, that has been the grand spring and fountain of the good which she has produced” (1: 307). On CE liturgy: “The errors of the Romish Church were to be rejected, but the treasures of ancient piety which she possessed, were not to be abandoned. Her formularies contained devotional compositions, not more venerable for their antiquity, than valuable for their intrinsic excellence, being at once simple and energetic, perspicuous and profound. What then was more suitable to the sober spirit of reformation, than to separate those precious remnants of ancient piety from their drossy accompaniments,—and, while these last were deservedly cast away, to mould the pure gold which remained into a new form, fitted at once to interests and to edify the public mind?” (1: 308). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

William Hazlitt Sr., *Sermons for the Use of Families* (London: J. Johnson, 1808): “wherever the spirit of truth is, there the mind is always free and open to conviction. The spirit of error, we have seen, is fettered by prejudices, and is either determined to examine nothing, or not to yield to the most positive evidence. This spirit makes enquiry only to evade truth, and be confirmed in old opinions. When it is most diligent, therefore, / every thing against it is overlooked: or, if it stumble upon an

argument to which no plausible reply can given, it will take refuge under the wisdom of numbers, or antiquity, and be at peace. But, the spirit of truth will try every thing, knowing that truth, like gold, will appear to the greater advantage upon every repeated trial” (15-16). **Unitarian**

Thomas Shaw B. Reade, *Christian Retirement: or Spiritual Exercises of the Heart* (London: Kirkby Lonsdale et al., 1836; orig. 1810): on Berean Jews (Acts 17), who “did not resort to the base refuge of ridicule and persecution... Knowing the importance of the apostles' doctrine if true, they judged it, not only expedient, but due to the greatness of their message, to receive the Word. They admitted them into their synagogue, and with all readiness of mind, with a cheerful disposition of heart, listened to their preaching... they proceeded to search the Scriptures. They brought the doctrine of the apostles to the test of God's holy word. This they did, not superficially, but carefully... with unwearied assiduity, like those who were in earnest to discover the pure gold of divine truth... The effect of this ready reception of the word, of this daily searching of the Scriptures, was, that they believed” (341). **Anglican**

Peter Gandolphy, *A Defence of the Ancient Faith... or A Full Exposition of the Christian Religion. In a Series of Controversial Sermons* (London: Keating Brown and Keating, 1814; orig. 1811; English Jesuit) on use of the term *Catholic* in the early Church to distinguish true believers from heretics. The term “was constituted the mark of sound faith, by which every article and point of doctrine was to be tried like gold in the furnace ; and could they not stand this ordeal of truth, they were rejected as spurious and heretical. However powerful the argument adduced to support a particular sentiment or opinion, however strengthened by authority, learning, and example, its weakness and fallacy were discovered in its defect of Catholicity, or in other words, in the absence of that necessary qualification, that of having always been the uniform and avowed doctrine of the Church” (186). **Catholic**

Thomas Gisborne, *The Substance of the Speech ... for the Purpose of forming a Staffordshire Auxiliary Bible Society* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1812), speech at meeting to form a Staffordshire Auxiliary Bible Society: “Where was our Prayer Book before the days of Henry the Eighth, while the Scriptures were a dead letter in the land? Parts of it undoubtedly were subsisting: for parts of it have existed from the early times of Christianity, perhaps even from the Apostolical age. But they were buried under the rubbish of ignorance and superstition. When the light of the Reformation appeared, when the Bible was circulated, then came forth our Liturgy: then came forth the pure gold, separated from baser metals: then was it compacted into its present form to be a model for the devotions of that day, a model for our own devotions, a model, I trust, for the devotions of distant generations. The Prayer Book of the Church of England is the daughter of the Bible” (27). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

John Somers, *A Defence of the Constitution of Great Britain and Ireland* (Hereford: E. G. Wright, 1817): “Some have asserted that a Test-law is injurious to true religion, by giving a false bias to the mind, which ought to be left free; but it will appear, that

a' Test-law, instead of being injurious to true religion, is of the highest service to it I for the Test is a criterion to discriminate sincere from corrupt believers; as gold, after passing the test of the refiner, is increased in value. False brethren, tho' many in number, never promote the interests of true religion. Public utility and truth, were the motives that induced the State to enter into alliance with the Church: it follows, that falsehood must be rejected, as destructive of the public good: the consequence of this is, that the State must, for the sake of public utility, seek truth, and be allied with that religion which teaches it. Thus the State hath the greatest interest and concern with true religion; and that Christianity, as it is professed in this country, is the true religion" (51). **Anglican**

Samuel Charles Wilks, *Christian Essays: to which is added An Essay on the Influence of a Moral Life on our Judgment in Matters of Faith* (Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1829, orig. London, 1817) on importance of examining religion "with the unsparing impartiality of a neutral inquirer"; when someone does this, "Christianity he perceives is founded upon evidence, and assumes new claims to credibility in proportion as his scrutiny is more severe. The same process therefore that melted away the dross, would serve only to purify the gold. The wheat would become more valuable, by being separated from the chaff" (137). Earlier in the same essay, he compares the best means of testing religious doctrine with that used when "finding ourselves possessed of a suspicious bank-note," viz, asking where it came from (136). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Francis Thackeray, *A Defence of the Clergy of the Church of England* (London: Rivington, 1822): Bacon "went on developing some of the most wondrous of nature's arcane, and forcing to the stubborn test of experience, the delusive though specious theories of his predecessors. But he knew where to stop; he presumed not to put the pure gold of Christianity into the crucible of metaphysics, nor to gauge with his finite understanding, the infinite decrees of Providence"; likewise Newton and Locke (190). **Anglican**

Andrew Crichton, *Converts from Infidelity; or Lives of Eminent Individuals who have Renounced Libertine Principles and Sceptical Opinions, and Embraced Christianity* (Edinburgh: Constable and Co., 1827): "During the last two centuries, the tolerant maxims of the government, and the unrestrained freedom of the press, gave ample scope for inquiry and discussion; and the abettors of atheism and moral anarchy were not slow to avail themselves of the indulgence... Accordingly, the authenticity of the Bible, more especially of Christianity, was assailed at all points, by a host of free-thinkers and sophistical reasoners, with a versatility of skill unknown to its ancient adversaries, and a zeal as indefatigable in its exertions, as it was bold and ingenious in its contrivances... The result has proved how little Christianity has to fear from the malice or the subtlety of its bitterest opponents... They have shewn that it can never be subverted by the force of reason or argument; that it is in no danger from the most rigid scrutiny; but, like pure gold, will lie for centuries in the furnace without losing a single grain; whereas, / were all the tinsel and embroidery of Deism or Infidelity put into the same crucible, and burnt down, there would not

be found at the bottom of the melting-pot an ounce of metal that was not dug from the mine of Revelation” (1: vii-viii). **Presbyterian**

*Christian Teacher* 1841 (“The Christian Rule of Faith,” sermon by Joseph Blanco White, 1830): “The Israelites, when just called out of Egypt, in a rude semi-barbarous state, to wander in the desert, had a leader to guide them whose communication with God is represented as that of a man talking with his friend face to face. A less plain and decisive rule of Faith and action would not have sufficed for the people whom Moses had to lead to the borders of the land of promise: a people, indeed, who, in spite of daily miracles, were constantly ready to break out into rebellion” (n.s. 3: 103). By Jesus’s time, most Jews weren’t up to the task of recognizing Christ’s divinity; hence “in proportion to the increase of our natural powers of discrimination, and our means of weighing evidence, will our trial in regard to religious truth become more difficult and delicate” (104-105). “As God permitted the appearance of false prophets among the Israelites, that the attachment and love of his people to him might be exercised by perplexity; so the obscurity of controversy has been given to Christians, that their love of Christ... may be tried as gold in the furnace. We, therefore, must not expect to find an infallible rule by which to remove all doubt in the interpretation of the Scriptures” (105).

### **Anglican**

*Prompter* 1831; letter to Melbourne (Home Secretary) from Joshua Hudson, representing Ashton dissenters, on behalf of Robert Taylor, a jailed dissenting minister: “any system of religion which requires the aid of the civil power for its supports, and the infliction of pains and penalties upon those who criticize its pretensions, such religion must be founded in error, or it would not shrink from the most scrutinizing examination; as, if it is founded in truth, it will rather court inquiry, from a consciousness that, like pure gold, it will come forth with its full weight, and shine the brighter for being tested” (749). **Nonconformist**

*Educational Magazine* 1 (1835), art. “On the Union of Scientific Knowledge with Religious Instruction”: “The fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, like all other fundamental principles of the Divine action, are involved in impenetrable obscurity. Whether we descend into the arcanum of nature, or whether we would dive into the mysteries of revelation, we are alike perplexed. But as in the natural world, all that is really good for us, becomes more truly valuable and serviceable the more we become acquainted with its properties and uses, so in the spiritual world all that is of importance to us is made doubly advantageous when it is separated and cleansed from the rust which ages have thrown round it, and is restored again to its native beauty and pristine purity. And as in the one case, society is benefited by the inquiry, and the research, and the experiment,—so in the other is true religion improved; indeed, it comes out like gold from the furnace—the more pure from having been tried; and the man who rubs off the rust with which superstition has obscured truth, also rubs off the rust of prejudice from himself” (153).

John Robertson, “The History of Protestant Nonconformity,” *London and Westminster Review* 6 (1837): “Fanaticism, which is the raving of the weak when

very much in earnest, whether about religion or politics, and charlatanerie, which is the making of dupes by self-advertisement, will always exist in societies vigorously and seriously active... but these are the mere refuse from the crucible of the refiner, the dross which is necessarily produced by the process towards perfection by which the gold brightens, until it reflects truly and beautifully the forms and colours presented before it. He who belongs to no sect acts most unwisely if he remains ignorant of what sects are and of what sects are doing" (218).

Origen Bachelier, *Discussion on the Authenticity of the Bible* (London: J. Watson, 1840; debate with Robert Owen): "Christianity has been opposed by formidable enemies from its very commencement to the present hour. All manner of objections have by them been urged, and have been considered by the world; and still this religion prevails... From all its fiery trials, it has come forth like gold seven times tried"; mentions Voltaire, Rousseau, Hume, Hobbes, Gibbon (192).

Edwin Lunn, *Divine Revelation Examined* (Manchester: A Heywood, 1840): we don't oppose Christianity per se. "What we war with, is that *bundle* of absurdities which constitutes *Christianity*, as now taught and practised." World is 6000 years old, fall of man via apple, redemption via Jesus, "inherent depravity of man," existence of Satan (3) etc. "If this *is* the case, it need not fear the most close investigation, or the severest scrutiny. It need not fear being put into the hottest furnace of discussion; for like the genuine gold, it will come out the purer from the *fiercer fire*" (4). **Athiest**

Gerald Wensley Tyrrell, *The Ritual of the United Church of England & Ireland Illustrated* .(London: John W. Parker, 1840), defending Book of Common Prayer vs dissenters: "many Protestants who dissent from the Church, aye, and many churchmen, have not considered the care, the piety and learning, the time and singular and providential circumstances under which it has grown up to its present excellence... The hand of Providence seems to have been eminently displayed in not permitting it to be established all at once in its permanent form, and in subjecting it to a variety of examinations and controversies calculated to try it to the utmost, and bring it out at last, *like fine gold seven times tried in the fire*, at once beautiful and useful" (21). **Anglican**

Isaac Taylor, *Ancient Christianity, and the Doctrines of the Oxford Tracts for the Times*. (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1844), anti-Tractarian: "Intelligent Romanists do not need to be told what the admitted rules and axioms of historical logic... they know how solid are the grounds on which we reject all interested and unsupported testimony, and how safely we follow the native impulses of the moral sense, and of reason together, when we spurn, as unworthy of examination, what is offensively absurd, preposterous, childish, sottish, and impious. Judged by these rules, and analyzed calmly, rigidly, and precisely as we should any testimony touching life and property, in a court of law, what must be the fate of the vast mass of wonder-tales which the Church of Rome has been used to glory in? How many of these legends will come forth from the furnace of inquiry as gold purified? One in a thousand may, perhaps, occasion a reasonable man a moment's perplexity; and he may even excuse himself from any endeavour to offer a satisfactory explication of it. Such instances of

the "inexplicable" are not wanting in the round of human affairs. But... the mass is a heap of the most pitiable folly, and the most frightful impiety" (2: 410). **Anglican**

John Pridham, *The Church of England, as to Her Excellencies and Defects* (London: L. and G. Seeley, 1842) on Church of England: "A great number of the most cordial admirers of the Church are grieved at the existence of evils and corruptions which impair her beauty and diminish her native strength, and are terrified at the approach of dangers, which they fear will overwhelm her. And yet when we look stedfastly at her intrinsic excellence, and call to recollection all God's gracious interpositions in her behalf, when we take into consideration the prayers which her devoutest children are daily offering for her, is it unreasonable to believe that 'the gates of hell shall never be suffered to prevail against her?' That she may be melted down in the assaying crucible of affliction is not improbable; for God assures us that he sits as the refiner and purifier of the sons of Levi, but she will lose nothing by the fiery process, except the scum and dross of her imperfections. She 'will come forth ultimately as gold purified seven times in the fire'" (xiv). **Anglican**

*Churchman's Monthly Review* 1844, review of E. Mannering's *Christian Consolation*, which "presents... the great topics of consolation which the gospel supplies to the mourner" (72). "We rejoice also to see works of this catholic and experimental character proceeding from the various bodies of orthodox Christians, and are persuaded that they will do more to heal the breaches of the Church than whole libraries of angry controversy. Those who love Christ, and love each other for his sake, when they find the truths they cherish reflected in each other's hearts, will be drawn by degrees into full and perfect union. Their prejudices and errors will drop away, and, like gold refined in the furnace, they will melt into one" (73). **Anglican**

William Simcox Bricknell (ed.). *The Judgment of the Bishops upon Tractarian Theology* (Oxford: J. Vincent, 1845), quoting Hugh Pearson, Dean of Salisbury, 1842 vs Tractarians: "If... He who sits and watches over the sons of Levi, 'as a refiner and purifier,' to purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer 'unto the Lord an offering in righteousness,' should so illuminate the minds and 'teach the hearts' of the Clergy of this land, that they may detect the sophistries which at present perplex, and discern, amidst the errors with which it is studiously and too successfully enveloped, 'the truth, as it is in Jesus;' and, above all, should give them grace to believe and love that truth, and faithfully to preach it, I anticipate, with delight and joy, the dispersion of the clouds which now obscure it" (659). **Anglican**

*British Quarterly Review* 1843 on Eliot's translation of *The Life of Jesus*: "We cannot say that we share in the regret and dismay which we have heard some good people express, because of the appearance amongst us of this translation of Dr. Strauss's famous *Leben Jesu*. We think, indeed, that we could have done quite as well without it, and are of opinion that the translator might have employed his talents to much better purpose. But we have no alarms as to any serious influence it is likely to exert upon the religious convictions of the community; and as for any real or permanent detriment which may accrue from it to the cause and claims of Christianity, we have

a mind perfectly at ease upon that score” (5: 206); “it ill becomes the follower of Christ, when called to contend anew for his religion, to be either unwilling, or timid to meet the assailant. If the votaries of pagan philosophy could proudly introduce her as exhorting them not to be vexed when she was assailed by calumny, 'for I know,' says she, 'that nothing becomes worse by being ridiculed, but, on the contrary, if it be really good, like gold purified from dross, it only shines the brighter, and becomes / more illustrious '—how much more ought the disciples of that divine religion which is truth itself, and from which there is no dross to be thrust off, to regard her as exhorting them to retain an unshaken confidence and an easy mind, whatever may be the assaults to which she may be exposed” (207-208). Quoe is from Lucian.

Charles Benjamin Tayler, *Sermons for All Seasons, chiefly on the Subject of Tractarian Error* (London: Sampson Low, 1850) on “Tractarian errors” and the need to root them out: “We enter into the labours and reap the fruits of those wise and good men who have laboured successfully at separating the gold from the dross and sand in the works of the Fathers. But, to the generality of readers, the task is out of the question; still, if it were not so, it is very doubtful if any great benefit could arise from it. One thing is certain, that, to most persons, the time needed for such an extensive range of reading, or any portion of the time, would be far better bestowed upon the searching of God's holy Word” (244). *British Quarterly Review* 1852: “In the ministry to come there must be no assigning of reasons taken from religion for what is wrong in its own nature. No preaching up of creeds or forms, or even of spiritual experiences, to the neglect of those virtues of truthfulness, honesty, and kindness, which society has a right to expect in the every-day conduct of men who profess to be Christians” (43). “In the ministry to come the preachers themselves must be men of this order of goodness, and men who will dare to insist on it in others. If in the fiery process before it, Christianity is to come forth as gold, there must be more—much more done to separate between its pure gold and the dross thus adhering to it. In the category of the proscribed must be the lusts of the *spirit*, no less than the lusts of the *flesh*” (44). **Anglican**

### **Scripture as a test of Christianity**

Benedict Pictet, *True and False Religion Examined* (Edinburgh: J. Ogle et al., 1797; orig 1716) on Protestant vs Romish and Greek communion: “God hath given us a rule by which we may examine whatever doctrines are taught; and that... rule is the holy Scripture. This is the divine fire, whereby we may and ought to examine all things; which makes the pure gold to shine, and which consumes all the rest. Therefore, in order to judge of these three Religions, we must put each of them all into the Crucible of the word of God” (109). (Pictet was a Swiss Reform protestant from Geneva (1655-1724; 1797 was first English transl of this book). **Calvinist**

*Encyclopædia Britannica* 1797, entry Simplicity: “in all other writings there is a mixture of local, relative, exterior ornament, which is often lost in the translation from one language to another. But the internal beauties, which depend not on the

particular construction of tongues, no change of tongue can destroy. Hence the Bible preserves its native beauty and strength alike in every language, by the sole energy of unadorned phrase, natural images, weight of sentiment, and great simplicity. It is in this respect like a rich vein of gold, which, under the severest trials of heat, cold, and moisture, retains its original weight and splendour, without either loss or alloy; while baser metals are corrupted by earth, air, water, fire, and assimilated to the various elements through which they pass" (17: 503).

### **temperance**

*National Temperance Magazine* 1 (1844): "The greater part of Europe is at this moment in a transition state. Britain is in the van. Every thinking head on her surface is striving to answer questions which are thundered in its ears and demand attention. But, amidst all, we firmly believe that humanity is equal to all social exigencies, and that it will pass through this fiery furnace, and be like gold seven times purified. We have ground for hope in the rapid progress of the Temperance Movement and Educational Institutions" (176).

### **Persecution**

Samuel Rutherford, *Joshua Redivivus, or, Three Hundred and Fifty-two Religious Letters* (Glasgow: John Bryce, 1765; died 1661): letter to George Dunbar, 1637, shortly after his exile to Aberdeen on charges of Nonconformity: "O the ravishment of heavenly / joy that may be had here, in the small gleanings and comforts that fall from Christ! ... O what then must personal possession be! I find that my Lord Jesus hath not miscooked or spilt this sweet cross; he hath an eye on the fire and the melting gold, to separate the metal and the dross" (116). To William Gordon: "I am here the Lord's prisoner and patient, handled as softly by my Physician, as if I were a sick man under cure... The dross of my cross gathered a scum of fears in the mire, doubtings, impatience, unbelief, challenging of providence as sleeping, and not regarding my sorrow; but my goldsmith, Christ, was pleased to take off the scum, and burn it in the fire. And, blessed be my finer, he hath made the metal better, and furnished new supply of grace to cause me hold out weight; and I hope he hath not losed one grain Weight, by burning his servant. Now his love in my heart casteth a mighty heat: he knoweth, that the desire I have to be at himself paineth me" (165).

### **Presbyterian**

Thomas Watson, *Sermons and Select Discourses* (Glasgow: William Bell, 1798; orig. 17<sup>th</sup> century): discourse on the Sermon on the Mount cites Proverbs 17:3 and Daniel 12:10: "Afflictions are refining... Fiery trials make golden christians; afflictions are purifying" (2: 350). **Puritan**

Watson 1798 returns to Daniel 12:10: "persecution is the touchstone of sincerity; it discovers true saints from hypocrites (2: 351). Job 23:10; "Job had a furnace-faith; a christian of the right breed, will 'hold fast his integrity,' Job ii. 3... Purity; God lets his children be in the furnace, that they may be partakers of his holiness... The cross is physic, it purgeth out pride, impatience, love of the world" (352). "The ministers of

Christ are his chosen vessels; now as the best vessel of gold and silver passeth through the fire, so God's chosen vessels pass often through the fire of persecution: all times are not like the silver age wherein Constantine lived" (353). "God hath two fires; one where he puts his gold, and another where he puts his dross; the fire where he puts his dross, is hell-fire; the fire where he puts his gold is the fire of persecution; God honours his gold when he puts it into the fire... Ignatius called his fetters his spiritual pearls; saint Paul gloried more in his iron chain, than if it had been a gold chain" (390). **Puritan**

*Christian's Magazine* 1792 reprints letter from Peden of Galloway to "the Prisoners in Dunnottar Castle, 1685," south of Aberdeen, where Covenanters (Presbyterian activists) were put: God "intends to search Jerusalem with lighted candles, and to visit all our chambers" (3: 382). "The storm must not continue long when the people of God have the worst of it, when the wind is both on their back and face. A great fire in God's furnace will soon divide the gold from the dross... God is giving his saints a trial a little sharper than ordinary, that they may run, and be ready at the beat of Christ's drum to exercise themselves into godliness" (383). **Presbyterian**

*British Magazine* 1767, "Wrote under a Print of Mr. Whiston":

"Whiston, untemperizing sage,  
Bore meekly persecution's rage;  
His suff'rings fix'd his strengthen'd mind;  
So gold by torturing is refin'd" (8: 440).  
(expelled from Cambridge for Arianism)

Neil Douglas, *Britain's Guilt, Danger and Duty; Several Sermons* (Dundee: n.p., 1795: "The operation of God's judgments is twofold. While they purify and perfect his Church, as gold is purified and refined by the furnace; they consume his and her enemies like fire" (54). "With what judgments was she redeemed from Egyptian servitude, from the threatening danger in Mordecai's days—from the malice and persecution both of Jews and Heathens, and from the tyranny of Popery at the reformation, and other occasions!" (55). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Samuel Barnard, *Spiritual Songs for Zion's Travellers* (Hull: J. Ferraby, 1799):

Hymn 132, "Saints despised by the World":  
"The sons of Zion we are told,  
The Lord himself compares to gold,  
They're *valuable* in his sight,  
And ever will be his delight.

As gold when tried sustains no loss,  
But brighter shine more free from dross;  
So in the furnace God does shine,  
Upon his sons and them refine" (147).

Hymn 352, "God's People in the Furnace":

"God will avenge his own elect,

Who do their pray'rs to him direct..." (387)

"When troubles come and grief oppress,  
They to their Father have access,  
They thro' the furnace all must come,  
It stands within their passage home.

But the refiner sits thereby,  
The precious gold to purify;  
And see that it sustains no loss,  
Except its worthless tin and dross" (388). **Nonconformist**

Thomas Gisborne, *A Familiar Survey of the Christian Religion, and of History as connected with the Introduction of Christianity* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1799): "When the Divine Author of Christianity had withdrawn his visible presence from the earth; his religion speedily experienced, according to his predictions, the encreasing enmity of a world whose practices it condemned, whose forms of worship it superseded. The pure gold was to be tried in the furnace of adversity. Scarcely had the apostles of Christ opened their commission, when a violent persecution, commencing with the martyrdom of Stephen, was raised 'against the church which was in Jerusalem'" (276). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Alexander Knox, *Remains* (London: James Duncan, 1834; letter from 1816): "that the deep anti-ecclesiastical spirit, which has been working for half a century, and now works more strongly and extensively, and on a higher/ level ever, will go off in mere noiseless, insensible evaporation, is more, I confess, than either the reason of the thing, or the signs of the times, authorise us to conclude " (1: 50-51). "I am comforted by the persuasion that, whatever befalls the English Church, will be for its greater good. If 'gold be tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity,' it is natural to suppose a like discipline necessary, for the perfection of collective bodies, and corporate institutions... Her excellence...gives ground for confiding, that Providence never will abandon her; but her want of influence, would seem no less clearly to indicate, that Divine Wisdom will not always suffer her to go on, without measures for her improvement" (51). "If, under deep moral disadvantages, the Church of England has produced numberless specimens of the meekest wisdom, and the most amiable goodness, what might not be looked for from her, when she should be as gold tried seven times in the fire?" (60). "Such are the considerations by which I comfort / myself against events which I think I see approaching" (60-61). **Anglican**

Isaac Beeman, *Remains... consisting of the Substance of Sermons, and Letters to Various Correspondents* (London: John Eedes, 1844), letter to a friend, 29 May 1833: "My text at Lewes was Zechariah xiii. 6—9, which led me into the cause of the Saviour's being wounded, and though the sword of justice slept for many hundred years, and sacrifices in proxy stood for the Lord Jesus, yet these being insufficient, in the fulness of time he appeared; and when the hour came to finish transgression and sin, in that hour did the sword of justice awake against him, and smote and

wounded the shepherd, the man that was the fellow of the Lord of Hosts: no other could sustain the stroke, and be a gathering shepherd to Israel. This great work of his has been declared for hundreds of years; yet in all ages the greatest part reject the tidings, are cut off and die; but God has reserved a third part, which he brings through the fire to refine them and try them as silver and gold, to purge their filth and let them / know what they are as sinners, and as such to call upon him, which they would never do if not put into the furnace, where God promises to hear them and own them, and then gives them to see and know that they belong to him, and may claim interest in him" (2: 408-409). **Methodist**

Hugh Smith, *The Poetical Miscellany of Morals and Religion* (Irvine: R. Macquistan, 1832), to J. P. "upon his making a public profession of religion" (168):  
"With wicked reproaches, with taunts, and with jeers,  
The foolish may labour to tarnish his name;  
But gold unadulterated only appears  
More glowing, the oft'ner 'tis brush'd by the flame" (169).

Thomas Jones, *The True Christian: or, The Way to have Assurance of Eternal Salvation* (London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1838): "What description of people, most commonly, grow eminent in grace? Generally, deep sufferers, the tried and tempted... God has a furnace in Zion, where he purities his children; and when they are tried, they shall come forth as gold, purified seven times in the fire. The very best generation of Jews were those that suffered in the wilderness for forty years. And the purest generation of Christians which the world ever saw were those, 'that had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonments'" (141).  
"Afflictions alone will not purify the soul. Pharaoh had plenty of plagues, but was none the better for them. The Son of God must be with his servants in the furnace, before it can do them any good... And if he is with us, we are sure to come out of trouble better than we went in, and shall have to say, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted: before I was afflicted I went astray, but now keep I thy commandments'" (142).

Robert Shittler, *National Religion: or, The Voice of God to the Church and Nation* (London: Francis Baisler, 1838): "Our beloved nation, so highly favoured of God, so exalted and honoured as the grand depository of divine truth, has long been, and still is, under the most awfully interesting and pe/culiar circumstances; and whether we may be given up as a prey to the machinations and power of our enemies, or come out of the furnace 'as gold seven times tried in the fire,' to be consecrated as an 'holy people unto the Lord,' is known only to him who is 'the governor among the nations'" (xix-xx).

John Aikman Wallace, *The Seven Churches of Asia* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1842), commenting on Revelation 1:20 (seven churches of Asia = golden candlestick): symbolizes the "very close connexion between Christ and the Church he has purchased with his blood" (15). "The power of the fiercest persecution, or the fire of the hottest furnace, may bring her to a deeper conviction of her own helplessness, and teach her the folly of trusting to an arm of flesh; but the action of

the furnace will cause the light of eternal truth to blaze forth with a clearer flame from the lamps of the golden candlestick, and even the gold of the candlestick itself will stand the violence of the fire, and shine forth in the midst of it with a brighter lustre than before" (16). "And while the great Redeemer is thus walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks, taking the oversight of all their interests, sustaining them in the furnace of / affliction, and preserving them from destruction, nothing can be more elevated or more secure than the position which is assigned to their angels—their ministe" (16-17). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

*Manchester Temperance Reporter* 1849, article "The Happiness of the Good Man": "The true religious man, amid all the ills of time, keeps a serene forehead, and entertains a peaceful heart. This going and coming in, amid all the toils of the city, the agony of the plague, the horrors of *the thirsty tyrants*, the fierce democracy abroad, the fiercer ill at home, the saint, the sage of Athens, was still the same. Such an one can endure hardness, can stand alone and be content... Such trials prove the soul as gold is proved. The dross perishes in the fire; but the virgin metal, it comes brighter from the flame. What is it to such a man to be scourged, forsaken, his name proverb, counted as the offscouring of the world? ... He knows that he has been seen by the pure and terrible eyes of Infinity" (1: 40).

#### *Early Christians*

Charles Walmesley, *General History of the Christian Church* (n.p., 1771) on early Christians up to Constantine in 313 AD: "The Pagans persuaded themselves, that by dint of tortures and severities, they could totally crush the Christians, and extinguish their very name; but their expectations were frustrated... The heavy pressures the Church laboured under, served to purify her members like gold in the furnace, and from the fire of persecution / she rose up, like the Phoenix, more bright and more vigorous" (43-44).

James Paterson, *Sermons* (Edinburgh: Charles Elliot, 1786) quotes Chrisostom, "as gold is tried in a furnace, so an acceptable man in the furnace of adversity" to support his point that "it has often been the will of God, either to promote the general or particular gracious ends of his providence, to afflict the best of men with very great calamities" (114). "In the times of the gospel there have been many such instances; witness the Apostles, and all who suffered persecution and death for the testimony of Jesus and a good conscience, while such monsters as Nero seized the imperial sceptre; and how different do we often see the state of the irreligious and pious even in our *own* days, when Religion is too much despised, and even laughed at, and the man of plain manners made frequently the subject of ridicule" (115).

#### **Anglican**

Antony Coyle, *Collecanea Sacra; or, Pious Miscellany*, in Verse and Prose (Strabane: John Bellew, 1788): lives of the saints "are so many bright precedents of imitation and emulation, inviting examples to follow, and unerring guides to walk by" (1: 17). "Every one likes the reward of virtue; but virtue is known by trial, as gold is proved by fire. We all love the reward, but we shrink in, and shudder at the sight of the fire"

trial, the one is sweet, the other is bitter; he deserves not the sweet, who will not take the sour. We cannot expect the reward without a warfare; if we fail in the latter, we forfeit the former for ever" (18). **Catholic**

William Gahan, *A Compendious Abstract of the History of the Church of Christ* (Dublin: T. M'Donnel, 1793: "The heavy pressures the members of [Christ's] Church laboured under in the reign of / the Pagan emperors of Rome, served but to purify them like gold in the furnace, and to make her rise up from the fire of persecution more bright and more vigorous. His disciples have always encreased in number and strength, the more they were oppressed, as the Jews in Egypt had done under the Pharaoh" (294-295). **Catholic**

John Witherspoon, *Sermons* (Edinburgh, n.p., 1796; late President of Princeton, 1723-1794), sermon on "the death and sufferings of the Son of God" (166). "In all after ages.. the deepest laid contrivances of the prince of darkness, have turned out to the confusion of their author... Persecution has been but as the furnace to the gold, to purge it of its dross, to manifest its purity, and increase its lustre" (167). Julian noticed this, and tried to suppress Christianity by ignoring it and encouraging Judaism instead (viz restoration of temple). This didn't work either (168).

### **Presbyterian**

Thomas Gisborne, *A Familiar Survey of the Christian Religion, and of History as connected with the Introduction of Christianity* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1799): "When the divine author of Christianity has withdrawn his visible presence from the earth; his religion speedily experienced, according to his predictions, the encreasing enmity of a world whose practices it condemned, whose forms of worship it superseded. The pure gold was to be tried in the furnace of adversity. Scarcely had the apostles of Christ opened their commission, when a violent persecution... was raised" (357). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

### *Catholic saints*

Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Primitive Fathers, Martyrs, and other Principal Saints* (Edinburgh: J. Moir, 1798-1800; orig 1756) on St Waltrude, 7<sup>th</sup> century, who "suffered much from the slanders of men." Her life teaches us "to despise the unjust censures of the world. It persecutes by its calumnies those by whose lives its false maxims are condemned: but it can only hurt a counterfeit virtue, as the fire consumes only the dross, but renders true gold brighter and more pure. Solid virtue is not only tried by humiliations, but gains the greatest advantage and improvement, by making a good use of them" (4: 97). **Catholic**

Butler 1799 on Saint Teresa of Avila: "She sometimes suffered interior trials of darkness in the mind, and great anguish of soul, joined with extreme pain of bodily sickness, so that the powers of her soul seemed on some occasions suspended through excessive sorrow... For these afflictions God made her very ample amends; for thou were always followed with a great abundance of favours, and her soul seemed to come out of them like gold more refined and pure out of the crucible, to

see our Lord within herself. Then those troubles appeared little, which before seemed insupportable, and she was willing to return again to suffer still greater tribulations and persecutions; for all in the end bring more profit" (10: 357).

### **Catholic**

Butler 1800 on Saint Winebald, 8<sup>th</sup> century English Benedictine monk: he "was afflicted many years with sickness, and had a private chapel erected in his own cell in which he said mass when he was not able to go to church... in his last moments [he] earnestly exhorted his disciples to advance with their whole might towards God... For this in the earnestness of our desires we ought to pour out our tears day and night. Our saint had made them as it were the very food of the soul, and having been tried and purified by a lingering sickness as the pure gold in the furnace, went to God on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December, 762" (12: 268). **Catholic**

*Life of Baroness de Chantal* (London: Fry and Couchman, 1787; Jeanne-françoise De Chantal, 1572-1641, French saint who founded the Order of Visitation after she was widowed in 1600), on her husband's death: "It is thus that God, by sudden and unforeseen strokes, disengages from the world those whose hearts which he would possess without division" (58); "she saw herself in a state truly afflicting; but the same strokes which bruise the chaff separate it from the good grain, and as gold is purified in the same fire in which the dross is consumed, so the same afflictions which harden the wicked and lead them to doubt of a providence, purify the faithful, and tend to increase their faith and love" (59). **Catholic**

James Raine, *Saint Cuthbert: With an Account of the State in which His Remains Were Found upon the Opening of His Tomb in Durham Cathedral, in the Year MDCCCXXVII* (Durham: F. Humble, 1828) quotes a 12<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript regarding Elfred Westone, who used to "cut the overgrowing hair" from the head of St. Cuthbert, who was buried in the cathedral at Chester-le-Street, County Durham. He "was occasionally in the habit of shewing to divers of his friends portions of the cuttings of his hair, and by way of experiment, after he had filled a censer with burning coals, he would, by the aid of a pair of silver scissors, *which he had fabricated* for this express purpose, expose those portions to the flames in the sight of all. But the hair would immediately, *after the fashion of gold*, glisten in the midst of the fire, and undergo neither injury nor diminution; and after the lapse of an hour, when removed by the scissors, it would, to the great astonishment of all, lay aside the brightness of gold, and assume its former character... If any trick was ever played with the bones of St. Cuthbert, my reader will, I think, agree with me that Elfred was the man" (59). Later, when Raine describes the exhumation of Cuthbert in 1826, he returns to this re gold wire that was found wrapped around the saint's head: "Well might it glitter in the fire like gold, when it was gold indeed" (212). **Catholic**

### *Polycarp*

Butler 1798 (orig 1756) provides detailed account of events leading up to execution of Polycarp followed by paraphrase of Eusebius; "the body of the martyr" resembled

“not roasted flesh but purified gold or silver, appearing bright through the flames; and his body sending forth such a fragrancy, that we seemed to smell precious spices. The blind infidels were only exasperated to see his body could not be consumed, and ordered a spear-man to pierce him through, which he did, and such a quantity of blood issued out of his left side as to quench the fire” (1: 298). Those present collected his bones and buried them. “His tomb is still shewn with great veneration at Smyrna, in a small chapel” (299). Same passage from Eusebius summarized in Staughton 1791: 15 (*Lives of the Primitive Fathers*); *New and General Biographical Dictionary* 1761, 9: 408 (new eds 1784, 1795, 1798); quoted in Millar 1726: 516 (new ed 1789);), 90. See also Hinds 1828, 1: 290-291. **Catholic**

Joseph Milner, *The History of the Church of Christ* (York: G. Peacock, 1794-1800) on Polycarp (Bishop of Smyrna, burned at stake ca 155 AD; quoting Eusebius): “when he had pronounced Amen aloud, and finished prayer, the officers lighted the fire. And a great flame bursting out, we, to whom it was given to see, saw a wonder” (1: 239). “For the flame forming the appearance of an arch, as the sail of a vessel filled with wind, was as a wall round about the body of the martyr. And it was in the midst, not as burning flesh, but as gold and silver refined in a furnace. We received also in our nostrils such a fragrance, as of frankincense... At length the impious observing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, ordered the Confeator to approach, and to plunge his sword into his body... and all the multitude were astonished to see the difference thus providentially made between the unbeliever and the elect” (240). **Anglican (Evangelical)**

Henry Stebbing, *History of the Christian Church* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green & Longman, 1833) uncritically quotes “the persons who wrote the Epistle from the church of Smyrna, and who were present at the spectacle” of Polycarp’s death: “his body having the appearance not of burning flesh, but of gold and silver refined in the furnace; while a fragrant smell, like that of frankincense, or some other precious perfilme, filled all the air” (1: 78). **Anglican**

*Tracts for the Times* 17 December 1835 is on “The Martyrdom of Polycarp”: “the fire taking the shape of a dome, like the sail of a ship when filled with wind, compassed all round the body of the martyr; and he appeared in the middle, not like buning flesh, but like gold and silver tried in the furnace. Yea, we perceived too such a sweet odour as from the breath of frankincense, or some other precious perfume” (8). **Anglican**

Robert W. Evans, *Biography of the Early Church* (London: J. G. and F. Rivington, 1837) on Polycarp: “The fire was then lighted around him, and, when it had risen into a vast flame, bellying like a sail, it encircled the martyr as it were in a chamber of fire, where his body remained unconsumed, like gold in the furnace. At the same time an exquisite fragrance, as of frankincense and other spices, issued forth, to the great comfort and delight of his flock. On seeing the resistance which his body offered to the flames, his impatient enemies ordered him to be run through with a sword. The quantity of blood issuing from the wound was so great as to quench the

fire. Thus the body was preserved; but his followers were not to have the satisfaction of paying it the last honours. It was denied to them, owing to the malicious misrepresentations of the Jews, who suggested that the Christians would forsake their crucified God, and worship him" (90). **Anglican**

Charles Boileau Elliott, *Travels in the Three Great Empires of Austria, Russia, and Turkey* (London: Richard Bentley, 1838): "The most interesting even connected with Smyrna is the martyrdom of Polycarp" (2: 42). Long quote from Eusebius, via Milner (42-44). "Standing on the spot which witnessed this memorable event, the Christian must be cold indeed whose heart does not kindle with a fervent desire that a double portion of the spirit of Polycarp may rest upon him!" (44).

William Fleming, *A Gazetteer of the Old and New Testaments: to which is added the Natural History of the Bible* (Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Printing and Publishing Company, 1838) on Polycarp. "Tradition has vested his death with some superstitious particulars. It is pretended ... that the flames formed a kind of arch over the holy martyr, who stood in the midst of it not as if his flesh were burnt, but as bread which is baked, or gold or silver glowing in the furnace" (2: 450).

*Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol 15 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 1797) quotes a different transl of Eusebius in its entry on Polycarp (323).

*Scottish Christian Herald* 1841, "Life of Polycarp", quoting "an ancient encyclical epistle, written in the name of his Church and under the character of eye-witnesses, to the Church of Philadelphia": "When there arose a great flame, we, who were permitted to see it, and who are preserved alive to relate what then happened, saw a marvellous spectacle. For the fire, composing itself into the form of an arch, or half circle, like the sail of a ship bellying with the wind, enclosed within a vacant space the body of the martyr; which being in the midst of it, appeared not like burnt flesh, but gold or silver refining in a furnace; and presently we smelled a most fragrant odour, as if it had been that of frankincense, or of some other of the precious sweet-scented spices" (3: 423). **Presbyterian**

### *Puritans*

Richard Burnham, *Pious Memorials: or, The Power of Religion upon the Mind in Sickness and at Death* (London: J. Oliver, 1753) on John Bradford, burned at stake 1555, who wrote his mother from prison: "The wheat is so far from being hurt by the wind, that thereby 'tis cleansed and better known to be wheat. Gold, when 'tis cast into the fire, is made more precious; and so are God's children by the cross of afflictions" (66). **Puritan**

### *Protestants (vs Catholics)*

*The History of Mademoiselle de St. Phéle* (London: Edmund Parker, 1738; orig. 1690; also 1722, 1761, 1787): "the Miraculous Conversion of a Noble French Lady and her Daughter to the Reform'd Religion" (title page): "when a Person renounceth the

Errors of the Church of *Rome* to embrace the Purity of Faith... the Devil and the World seem to be let loose against that Person; God suffers him to be exposed to the sharpest Trials, to discover his Iniquity and Hypocrisy, if he return again into the false Church; whereas the true Children of God, having their Duty always before their Eyes, never fail to continue in the Fear of the Lord unto the End. Thus you see that the same Fire of Persecution, the same Furnace of Afflictions show the difference that there is between the Gold and the Dross that is found within it, which cannot be so well distinguished when they are both taken out of the Mines together. But as the Fire distinguished Gold from the Earth or Dross, so Calamities distinguish the Children of God from Hypocrites, and Sufferings discover what in Prosperity lay concealed” (196). **French Protestant**

John Erskine, *Discourses Preached on Several Occasions* (Edinburgh: William Creech, 1801): “The united power of men and devils, must prove too feeble, in opposition to the thrice happy men, who have God for the shield of their strength, and the sword of their excellency. If the Church is cast into a furnace, in that furnace she only loses her dross, and is brought out of it, as gold tried in the fire, purified seven times. Let not her enemies rejoice over her: for, though she fall, she shall arise again; though she walk in darkness, the Lord will give her light. There is no counsel or might against the Lord, All created power is upheld and limited by him, and therefore can never act without his wife permission: and that permission then only he gives, when it is truly best for his people that he should give it. All things therefore shall work together for good, to them that love him, and that are the called according to his purpose” (437). **Presbyterian**

Laetitia Matilda Hawkins, *Rosanne: or, A Father’s Labour Lost* (London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1814), description of a Huguenot woman whose parents left France after revocation of edict of Nantes (1685): “Subsequent trials awaited her, and only served to show how pure was that gold, which, proved to the uttermost, yielded no dross, and how powerful is the influence of Christian virtue, in keeping steady the friendship of this world” (2: 85). **French Protestant**

*British Critic* 1836 on Anglican Church in US: “The thirty years which followed the American revolution were a period of incessant struggle; during which the Church appeared, at times, to be pressed beyond measure and above strengths We must content ourselves with a brief notice of the more prominent occurrences, which distinguished that protracted and fiery trial, from which she has since emerged, as gold comes forth from the furnace” (20: 282). **Anglican**

Richard Oastler, *Letter to the Arch-bishop of York* (Huddersfield: Thomas Kemp, 1836): “No Session of Parliament should be allowed to pass, without a motion being made, for a repeal of the Roman Catholic Emancipation and the Poor Law Acts.” If this doesn’t happen, Oastler predicts that the Church of England will make “an unhallowed retreat, before the conquering armies of ROME” (26)—whereupon Rome will “once more, pour forth her Vials of Wrath, against *all* Heretics indiscriminately ... In that day, my Lord Archbishop, that Furnace Day for the

'Reformed protestant Churches,' the Dross will run off, down the Common Sewer of 'Expediency,' into the Cess-pool of Popery; but the Gold, after having been ten times refined, will be safely lodged in the hollow of His hand, who is THE FIRST AND THE LAST" (27). **Nonconformist**

C.H. Timperley, *A Dictionary of Printers and Printing* (London: H. Johnson, 1839): in 1548 Nicholas Naile, Paris bookseller, "with several other persons, were martyred by fire, for professing the reformed religion. One of them was a tailor, for working on a *saint day*. The king, Henry II. was present.

Their bodies scorching flames endure,  
The soul's salvation to secure;  
Martyrs, like gold, are tried in fire,  
And purify as they expire" (302).

(might be original verse: no hits apart from Timperley in google books).

John Manners, *England's Trust, and Other Poems* (London: J. G. F. & J. Rivington, 1841), "England's Trust:

"Ah! ever since that wild and sinful hour  
When England bowed to Revolution's power.  
As one by one her rights were swept away,  
The Church has mourned our national decay  
In Faith and Truth, and as each year rolled by  
Still fainter grew the terrors of her eye;  
Till now of pristine pomp, and glory shorn.  
Our holy Mother sits, and weeps forlorn.  
Yet may we humbly trust, that not in vain  
Has the wild tempest stirred the ruffled main.  
That, of all earthly props and aids bereft.  
Still to the Church her own keen sword is left;  
And as pure gold is proved by trying fire.  
So through the clouds may She to Heaven aspire!" (36). **Anglican**

*British and Foreign Review* 1843: "The Germans may well be proud of the many noble figures which the history of their Reformation displays among the higher orders. In no other aristocracy did so much real gold come out of the furnace of that great trial" (15: 129). **Anglican**

### *Missionaries*

*Missionary Notices* 1 May 1824, letter from West Indies Mission society in Barbados, Feb 1824: "religion has flourished more than ever was known before in Barbadoes. Many... are adoring their christian profession on earth, and showing that nothing can separate them from the love of CHRIST, remaining steadfast in the midst of persecution, nay, even shining the brighter, and being purified as gold in the fire" (263). **Methodist**

*Congregational Magazine* 1832, "American and English Preaching" (i.e. the second Great Awakening): "The first aim... of an American preacher is to produce convictions of sin. In order to do this, he is continually opening up, and pressing the obligations of the sinner, and urging him, in the most direct terms, and by every motive which Scripture will sanction, to the exercise of evangelical repentance without a moment's delay... This style of preaching it is evident will materially affect the phenomena of conversion. It is by no means inconsistent with a full recognition of Divine Sovereignty to assert that the peculiar circumstances which mark conversion, as well as many points in the future character of the converted, are commonly decided by the influence of the ministry under which the change has been accomplished. The fine gold which comes out of the crucible is all purified alike by the refiner's fire, but the outward fashion of it depends on the mould into which it falls. Thus it is in conversion. A sinner converted under a New England preacher is, in many respects, differently fashioned from one who is equally made a new creature in Christ Jesus under the ministry of a dissenting minister in England. The same observation holds true, with regard to different denominations. A Churchman, a Wesleyan, an Independent, and a Scottish Presbyterian, may be all equally born again under the same gospel, and yet there will be in them certain important differences which may be traced most clearly and decisively to the character of the ministry, and the discipline of the Church under the instruction of which they have been regenerated. With these views, we consider it by no means unimportant to inquire what style of preaching is best adapted to form strong men in Christ Jesus" (15: 363). The implication is that British can learn from the "powerful awakenings" going on in America (364). **Congregational**

Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey, D.D., Late Missionary to Bengal* (London: Jackson and Walford, 1836), journal entry of William Carey, missionary in Bengal, 19 April 1794: "When I first left England, my hope of the conversion of the heathen was very strong; but, / among so many obstacles, it would entirely die away, unless upheld by God. Nothing to exercise it, but plenty to obstruct it, for now a year and nineteen days, which is the space since I left my dear charge at Leicester. Since that I have had hurrying up and down; a five months' imprisonment with carnal men on board the ship; five more learning the language; my Moonshi not understanding English sufficiently to interpret my preaching; my colleague separated from me; long delays and few opportunities for social worship; no woods to retire to, like Brainerd, for fear of tigers (no less than twenty men in the department of Deharta, where I am, have been carried away by them this season from the salt-works); no earthly thing to depend upon, or earthly comfort, except food and raiment. Well; I have God, and his word is sure; and though the superstitions of the heathen were a million times worse than they are, if I were deserted by all, and persecuted by all, yet my hope, fixed on that sure word, will rise superior to all obstructions, and triumph over all trials. God's cause will triumph, and I shall come out of all trials as gold purified by fire. I was much humbled to-day by reading Brainerd. O what a disparity betwixt me and him! He always constant, I as inconstant as the wind!" (168-169). **Baptist**

John Howard Hinton, *Memoir of William Knibb, Missionary in Jamaica* (London: Houlston and Stoneham, 1849) quotes a letter from Knibb, Baptist minister in Jamaica, to Dyer, 14 Feb 1832, reporting on “lawless revenge” by planters in response to slave revolt; much of which was directed against missionaries (117): “This day seven years ago I landed on this island, and do I repent coming? No! With eternity and a jail in prospect, I do not. I mourn over my sins, I long to be more active in the service of God, and earnestly do I pray that I may come forth from the / furnace of affliction purified as gold seven times tried” (127-128). **Baptist**

### *Methodists*

John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (Bristol: Felix Farley, 1762), “I am determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified” (257):  
What though Earth and Hell engage,  
To shake my Soul with Fear,  
Calmly I defy the Rage  
Of Persecution near:  
Suffering Faith shall brighter glow,  
As Gold when in the Furnace tried:  
Only Jesus will I know,  
And Jesus crucified” (258).

Quoted as a coda to a passage from Margaret Davidson’s memoir; she was “a poor, blind woman among the People called Methodists, but rich towards God” (Davidson 1782: title page). Passage recounts the obstacles facing an itinerant Methodist preacher who used her home as a base: “Giving me one of Mr. Wesley’s books, he bid me farewell, commending me to God. I had much of the consolation of heaven to support me that day, and indeed I stood much in need of it; for, the waves of tribulation swelled higher than ever, and the fire of persecution waxed still hotter. But I could then truly say...” (37); hymn. **Methodist**

Henry Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.: Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford* (London: John Kershaw, 1825): Charles Wesley to John re preaching in York, 1756: “A pious sensible Dissenter cleaved to us all day, and accompanied us to the preaching. I discoursed on my favourite subject, ‘I will bring the third part through the fire.’ We glorified God in the fire, and rejoiced in hope of coming forth as gold” (2: 190). Quotes John Wesley following the separation of 175 Methodists from “their brethren”: “it is certain, some have lost what they then received. A few, (very few compared to the whole number,) first gave way to enthusiasm, then to pride, next to prejudice and offence, and at last separated from their brethren. But although this laid a huge stumbling-block in the way, still the work of God went on. Nor has it ceased to this day in any of its branches. God still convinces, justifies, sanctifies. We have lost only the dross, the enthusiasm, the prejudice and offence. The pure gold remains, ‘faith working by love?’ and, we have ground to believe, increases daily” (226). **Methodist**

Hester Ann Rogers, *Account of the Experience of Hester Ann Rogers* (New York: T.

Mason and G. Lane, 1840; orig. Bristol, 1796; letter to John Wesley, 1782): "I was yesterday employed in visiting members of the classes with Mr. R.; a business which has been much neglected here of late, and which, I trust, will be made a blessing to many. I find it profitable. Mr. R. has suffered much through the prejudices of some; but he is as gold purified in the fire: it has been an unspeakable blessing. It has cut off his intimacy with those, who would perhaps have proved snares and hinderances to his soul and his labours; and united him more closely to the little flock, who are rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom" (268). **Methodist**

John Nelson, *An Extract from [his] Journal* (London: G. Paramore, 1796; itinerant preacher): "Wherever I went to preach, for ten days together, I was told that the Constables had orders to press me... At night I was met, as I was going to Adwalton" and informed that he would be pressed and detained for the night, then impressed into the army in Halifax. He responded: "God is on my side... if I fall into the hands of wicked men, God shall be glorified thereby, and when he hath proved me in the furnace, he will bring me forth as gold" (70). Not clear if he's actually pressed.

**Methodist**

Edward Morgan, *Ministerial Records* (London: H. Hughes, 1840), on Daniel Rowland, a Welsh Calvinist Methodist (1713-1790); recounts a time he tried to preach in Angelsey and someone plotted to set fire to his pulpit: "afflictions, through the overruling providence of God, become *beneficial*. Yea, we are purified from vanity, self-sufficiency, and other corruptions, in the furnace of affliction; and we come out of it as gold purified from its dross. Spiritual pride will ever derive support even from our gifts and graces. Paul, in consequence of the revelations granted to him, was in danger of being puffed up, therefore the Lord was pleased to afflict him with a thorn in the flesh. So Rowlands no doubt benefitted greatly by these troubles from within and without, and was made a more complete and experienced preacher" (104).

**Methodist**

*Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 1841, obituary of Mrs. Jacob Stephenson, converted age 32, died age 56, "an upright member of the Methodist society" for 24 years, "adorning the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things. She suffered much opposition in her Christian course for the first seven years; but when God had tried her, he brought her forth as gold" (20: 503). **Methodist**

*Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1846, "Clerical Persecution" on an Anglican clergyman who demanded rent from a poor dissenting widow for land adjacent to the parish church. When she couldn't pay, he destroyed her potato crop in retaliation (27: 626-628). *PMM* comments: "let us pray that the widow may be comforted in the furnace of trial, and that she and her children may be as gold purified by the fire. Should any be ready to help her to recover her loss by a legal process, we shall thankfully receive their liberality for this object. Or should W. wish to have the case submitted to the Home Secretary we shall be glad to forward his design, if he will obtain facts that cannot be gainsayed" (628-629). **Methodist**

*Unitarians*

Joseph Priestley, *The Duty of Forgiveness of Injuries* (Birmingham: J. Thompson, 1791, post-Birmingham riots): "Having ... shewn the ignorance of our adversaries as a motive for a disposition to forgive them... I proceed to shew what we may learn from the late awful scenes... we may be assured that, whatever have been the designs of men, those of God are ever just and kind, and that he will bring good out of all evil" (26). "What we have suffered has no tendency to change our opinions, or abate our zeal for them. The circumstances we are in call alike for patience, and for firmness, and by no means for relaxation with respect to our religious principles. As gold is tried by the fire, so are our principles, and our integrity in maintaining them, by such scenes as this" (27). **Unitarian**

### *Baptists*

*Baptist Magazine* 1 Sept 1828, Cornwall meeting: "That the Baptist Missionary Society should be opposed by the god of this world, and subjected to severe and afflicting trials, cannot be considered surprising. No strange thing has befallen it in such a visitation... is not paternal love manifest in every trial which recalls them to humble dependence on that God who will not give his glory to another? Viewing the afflictions fo the Society, it becomes 'thrice dear for all its sorrows;' and will doubtless, 'when tried, come forth as gold'" (437). **Baptist**

### *Anglicans*

Edward Bouverie Pusey, *A Letter to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, on Some Circumstances connected with the Present Crisis in the English Church* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1842) quotes Alexander Knox "on the Situation and Prospect of the Established Church" (1816), which he hopes will "be consoling to those who view with anxiety what they account approximations to Romanism" (152): "We actually see the reverence for both aristocracies, (the ecclesiastical and the political,) ... going down together"; one cause it "that the aristocratic character has been injured by a neutralizing blendure; that is, by making men of low descent, Peers, and by making men of low Church principles, Bishops" (153). "But, amid these apprehensions, I am comforted by the persuasion, that, whatever befalls the English Church, will be for its greater good. If 'gold be tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity,' it is natural to suppose a like discipline necessary, for the perfection of collective bodies, and corporate institutions" (154). **Anglican**

Charles Forster (ed.), *Thirty Years Correspondence between John Jebb... and Alexander Knox* (London: James Duncan, 1836): Letter from Knox to John Jebb, January 1816: "What Divine Providence may intend, we cannot presume to say; but I should think / the claims of turbulent dissenters will be made, long before they are actually listened to" (2: 282-283). "If 'gold be tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity,' a valuable institution, intended to be made still more valuable, is likely to be brought under an analogous discipline. I am sure the church of England, as a public exhibition of the christian religion, is, at this day, matchless,

in point of purity, consistency, and substantial vitality. I am certain, that to drink in its full spirit, is to possess such unmixed excellence, as is not, elsewhere, to be found on earth. But the perfection of the christian church is, in my view, comparative, not absolute. I believe it is yet to be, what it now is not, and what now no church could be" (283). **Anglican**

*Church of England Magazine* 1836, sermon by Thomas Bissland, Hants rector, "The Duty of Adorning the Gospel" (1: 121): "How important is it... that they who profess to receive the Gospel, should habitually adorn that Gospel, and testify that they do indeed experience it to be 'the power of God unto salvation.' ... they may thus come forth from the fiery trial of invective and reproach, as gold refined and purified, and be able to refute the slander of those who have maligned their characters, depreciated their religious attainments, and represented their holy deportment as the result of a Pharisaical and self-righteous spirit, and put on to hide some deformity of character, and to cloak some darling cherished indulgence" (124).

**Anglican**

*Church of England Magazine* 1837, review of Francis Hawks's *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States of America*, volume relating to Virginia: it's "full of instruction to us under existing circumstances; for that Church has passed through an ordeal similar to, but far more severe than, that to which our own beloved Church is now being subjected; and it has come out of it, as we trust ours will also, like gold purified in the fire" (2: 272). **Anglican**

George Ayliffe Poole, *The Present State of Parties in the Church of England* (London: James Burn, 1842): "where can there be greater incentives to love, than those which are presented by the history and present position and character and maternal offices of the Church of England? How much hath Providence done for her, to mark her out as beloved of God, and to make her lovely among men! How soon was the soil of this land wet with the blood of martyrs! How soon did our Church send her Bishops to testify her faith to the whole world! ... at a time when all the churches of the Roman obedience were degraded most painfully, she was divinely permitted to exert her native energies, and to exercise her inviolable right to reform herself; and through the good providence of God, (and we accept the gift as divine the more certainly from the unworthy channel in which it flowed,) she alone, in all Protestant Europe, maintained the form and body of a visible Church" (44). "Popery and Puritanism, in their turn, were iron furnaces of affliction, in which the faith and patience of the saints were tried, and from which they came forth as gold purified seven times in the fire" (45). **Anglican**

*Catholics (in England)*

*Letter of the French Bishops residing in England* 1800 (Dublin: H. Fitzpatrick, 1800; to Pope Pius VI): If by this trial, which God has permitted, our faith and perseverance are put to the test, how much does such a circumstance redound to our glory! From this we may, however unworthy, entertain a well-grounded hope, that we are not rejected by God, but that we are acceptable to his Divine Majesty; for

it is written: *as gold is tried in the fire, so are acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation*" (13). **Catholic**

#### *Irish Catholics*

*Report of the Debate in the House of Commons of Ireland* (Dublin: J. Chambers, 1795), Fletcher (MP) arguing in favor of a bill "for the further Relief of his Majesty's Popish or Roman Catholic Subjects": "The code of proscriptions, under which the catholics groaned for a century, is almost without example in the annals of mankind... For a century have the catholics, in silent anguish endured this code—their patient resignation has stood the test of arduous times—domestic calamity and public misfortune, three rebellions and five foreign wars, by affording opportunities of insurrection, only served, as gold is tried in the furnace, to prove their loyalty. Shall not an ordeal like this, be deemed a sufficient trial of fidelity?" (93). **Catholic**

#### *Jesus's suffering*

John Cennick, *Sermons* (Bath: Hazard and Adams, 1796; sermon "The Excellency of Christ" by Jonathan Edwards, 1734): "Christ's holiness never so illustriously shone forth as it did in its last sufferings... When it was tried in this furnace, it came forth as gold, or as silver purified seven times... For his yielding himself unto death was transcendently the greatest act of obedience that ever was paid to God by any one since the foundation of the world" (256). **Congregational**

Jonathan Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption* (Edinburgh, W. Gray, 1774; written 1739): "all the virtues which appeared in Christ shone brightest in the close of his life, under the trials he met with then. Eminent virtue always shows brightest in the fire. Pure gold shows its purity chiefly in the furnace" (197). **Congregational**

Jonathan Edwards, *Remarks on Important Theological Controversies* (Edinburgh: J. Galbraith, 1796; published posthumously): "Those last sufferings of Christ, were in some respect like a fire to refine the gold. For, though the furnace purged / away no dross or filthiness, yet it increased the preciousness of the gold; it added to the finite holiness of the human nature of Christ" (380-381). **Congregational**

William M'Ewen, *Grace and Truth* (Edinburgh: Gray and Alston, 1768): "In the tabernacle and temple, over against the table, there was a golden candlestick ... the tongs and snuff dishes were pure gold, as the candlestick itself... The pure beaten gold of this candlestick may denote the spotless holiness, and the invaluable worth of Jesus, who was made perfect through suffering" (276).

James Frame, *The Inscription on the Cross* (Edinburgh: Balfour and Smellie, 1781, SPCK sermon in Edinburgh): "How low, in appearance, was the church of God, when Jesus was hanging on the cross, and the title over his head read with scorn and derision by the Priests and Scribes? What seeming triumph to the powers of darkness... Here, indeed, was a dark and comfortless night; but it is soon succeeded

by a splendid and glorious day. The church, now in tribulation, comes forth like gold when it is seven times tried" (32). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

John Bennet, *Redemption, a Poem* (Oxford: n.p., 1796), poem in voice of John the Baptist:

"as refiners purify their gold,  
With fire intense, from all its drossy mould,  
So will the great Messiah you refine  
And like pure gold, will make your nature shine" (26). **Anglican**

David Dick, *An Explanation of the Revelation of St. John the Divine* (Edinburgh: Turnbull, 1799): Rev 3: 18 viz "gold tried in the fire"; "I understand gold to mean the blood of Jesus Christ, which he shed when he was tried in the fire of the wrath of almighty God for our sins" (32). **Baptist**

John Kitto (ed.), *A Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*. New York: Mark H. Newman, 1845; orig Edinburgh 1845), entry "agony": cites Meyer (qv) to support his claim that it was a trial of temptation, not fear of crucifixion, that produced Jesus's "external signs of distress" as he approached the cross. Mayer: "he was here put upon the trial of his obedience. It was the purpose of God to subject the obedience of Jesus to a severe ordeal, in order that, like gold tried in the furnace, it might be an act of more perfect and illustrious virtue; and for this end he permitted him to be assailed by the fiercest temptation to disobey his will and to refuse the appointed cup. In pursuance of this, the mind of Jesus was left to pass under a dark cloud... [and] the cross appeared in ten-fold horror, and nature was left to indulge her feelings, and to put forth her reluctance." Mayer adds: "Pious and holy men have looked calmly upon death in its most terrific forms. But the pious and holy man has not had a world's salvation laid upon him" (1: 86). **Nonconformist**

Charles Benjamin Tayler, *Sermons for All Seasons, chiefly on the Subject of Tractarian Error* (London: Sampson Low, 1850): as Jesus approached the cross, "manfully, resolutely, and joyfully, he looked the suffering that was his appointed lot, full in the face. His / iniquity was pardoned—the Lord had put away his sin—there was now no condemnation; but it was necessary for the gold to be be put into the furnace, in order that its dross might be purged away. It was to be gold tried in the fire, otherwise it could not be pure gold, even a vessel of fine gold, fit for the sanctuary—fit for the Master's use. Suffering was the refining-fire! Who that loves the Lord Jesus Christ—who that looks to dwell with Him for ever—would shrink from suffering?" (262-263). **Anglican**

#### *Other Biblical examples*

William Dodd, *Comfort for the Afflicted, under Every Distress* (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1764): "Enslaved and afflicted in *Egypt*, and obliged to serve with rigour, the whole nation of the *Israelities*, considered as the peculiar people of God, may, with propriety, be said to set us an example of suffering affliction. Selected from the families of the earth, and taken into the immediate protection of the most

high, they were not protected by him from the stroke of affliction; but were proved, and tried, as gold is tried in the furnace” (24). **Anglican**

Robert Macculloch, *Lectures on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Edinburgh: Turnbull, 1794) on Isaiah 31, destruction of Assyrians by God; “And his furnace his Jerusalem”: “A furnace is fitted up for the purpose of melting gold, silver, and other useful metals, in order to separate them from the alloy with which they are intermixed, and to prepare them for the different uses to which they may be applied. In this view, it significantly represents those trying afflictions whereby God is pleased to purify his people from their corruptions, to divide the precious from the vile... In Jerusalem this furnace was kindled by the fire of divine wrath, in order to refine the inhabitants from those heterogeneous mixtures of hypocrisy and wickedness which spoiled their beauty and utility” (3: 22). Jump ahead to Isaiah 48:10, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction”: repeats above account of what furnaces and affliction do; with new bit: affliction forms men “in the mould of his word, and impress[es] upon them more deeply the divine resemblance... The various calamities that beset the Jewish people, were mercifully intended to promote these valuable purposes” (555). **Presbyterian (Evangelical)**

Joseph Reeve, *Practical Discourses* (London: P. Byrne, 1796) on Mary: “What troubles... what afflictions, what trials of her faith and confidence had she not to undergo? What alarms from Herod’s bloody designs against her Son, what perils from her sudden flight into Egypt, what apprehensions from the barbarous people of that inhospitable land? But over all these her patience triumphed, her faith and fortitude shone forth, like gold from the furnace, more bright and precious” (261). **Catholic**

*Sunday Reading: Noah* (London: John Marshall, 1797) on Noah’s ark: “The ark alone survived that dreadful storm, and rose, as it were, from the ruins of the old world. The ark of Christ alone survived the dreadful storm of divine vengeance” (6). “The church endures through the storms of affliction, the nights of temptation, and the long day of trial and fatigue... She now appears tossed with tempests and afflicted... Sufferings are the royal highway to Glory: sorrows and chastisement, the frowns of the world, the persecution of the wicked, are the works of the children of the kingdom. Jesus will try and correct those whom he loves: The furnace will separate the dross from the fine gold” (7).

Thomas Shaw B. Reade, *Christian Retirement: or Spiritual Exercises of the Heart* (London: Kirkby Lonsdale et al., 1836; orig. 1810): “The graces of the Spirit generally thrive most in a rugged soil, and in tempestuous seasons. Like the Israelites in Egypt, they increase in the midst of opposition, persecution, and suffering; for as gold shines brightest in the furnace, so the Lord’s people glorify him most in the fires. (Is. xxiv. 15.)” (326). **Anglican**

*Short Comments on Every Chapter of the Holy Bible* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1838), on God’s command that Aaron kill his son: “Never was any gold tried in so

hot a fire. Who but Abraham would not have argued with God? Such would have been the thought of a weak heart; but Abraham knew that he had to do with a God... Faith had taught him not to argue, but to obey" (32). **Anglican**

John Kitto, *The Pictorial History of Palestine and the Holy Land, including a Complete History of the Jews* (London: Charles Knight, 1844): "The Jewish doctors count up ten trials of Abraham's faith and obedience. Nine of these we have told. The tenth and last was of all these the most terrible, and from which, proportionably, the character of the patriarch came forth with the greater splendour—with the resplendence of gold refined in many fires: (1: 62). **Nonconformist**

### **Purgatory**

Thomas Haweis, *An Impartial and Succinct History of the Rise, Declension, and Revival of the Church of Christ* (London: J. Mawman, 1800) on Catholic church ca 963: "though the clergy had little theological science, they were well trained in all the tricks of priestcraft; and knew how to make the fire of purgatory a crucible of gold, to melt down the riches of the laity. From the torments of this fearful purification, enforced by all the most terrific oratory, men were glad to redeem themselves, or abridge their sufferings for a thousand years... at as good a rate, as they could purchase the necessary masses, or procure the superabundant merit of some eminent saint" (2: 150-51).

William M'Gavin, *The Protestant, a Series of Essays on the Principal Points of Controversy between the Church of Rome and the Reformed* (Glasgow: Khull, Blackie and Co., 1823) vs Catholic "Dousy Doctors" who cite 1 Cor. 3:15, "Saved so as by fire," to support the existence of purgatory. "Let any man of ordinary understanding read the enire passage, and he will see that it does not contain the most / distant allusion to a middle state between this world and the next. Besides, it is not said that a man shall be saved *by fire*; but *so as by fire*. The Apostle had been speaking of metals. Fire is the instrument by which these are tried, and purified, and separated from things of a gross and more perishable nature. Now, if any Christian were to lose sight of the foundation of his hope, or so far forget the character of that foundation, as to build improper things upon it, God would, by some trying dispensation, destroy his work. He would suffer the loss of all his labour; and so, *as by fire* the dross is separated from the gold, he would be separated and saved from his errors and corruptions. Whether this will be considered a satisfactory view of a difficult passage, I cannot tell, but it seems very evident that it has nothing to do with purgatory" (2: 201-202). **Presbyterian**

Kenelm Henry Digby, *Mores Catholici: or Ages of Faith* (Cincinnati: Catholic Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge, 1841; orig. 1831; Catholic) on "the zeal of men to assist their departed friends" in the medieval Church (2: 304). "This was to provide against that purifying trial which may follow death, and against that day of which the prophets spoke, when the Lord should wash away the filth of the sons and daughters of Sion, and obliterate the blood from the midst of them with the spirit of

judgment, and with the spirit of burning, when he should sit burning and purifying as if gold and silver” (303). **Catholic**

Thomas Brock, *Experience of the Truth—The Preservative against Error. A Sermon* (London: Seeley, 1844) on St. Paul: “all his writings breathe the sweet savour of *holiness*; though none more fully establishes the doctrines of free grace, none is more careful to enforce the duties which flow from them. None knew better than himself that God *accepts* our persons only with the view of *renewing* our natures,—that holiness, or our restoration to the image of God, is the end, of which our election, redemption, adoption, pardon, and justification, are the preliminary acts of grace; they are as the porch to the temple” (17). Paul “does not confound the grace of justification with the grace of sanctification...his deliverance from *condemnation* with his deliverance from *moral pollution*—*the work of Christ on the cross for him*, with the work of Christ by his Spirit *within* him. In a word, he does not mistake the sentence of the *Judge* acquitting him, and ‘accounting him righteous,’ for the process of the *Refiner* purging him from his dross and his tin, ‘as gold and silver is purged.’ —(Mal. iii. 3.) Surely these are two very different acts; our *title* to Heaven is one thing, and our *meetness* for Heaven is another; and St. Paul was too well taught by the Spirit to confound both together. He knew too well our proneness to look for something in ourselves wherewith to satisfy the law and justice of God, to throw such a temptation on our path. Had he lived in our day, he would have agreed with our own Hooker, when he says, that ‘they who teach justification by *inherent* grace do pervert the truth.’” But, though the Apostle is careful to distinguish between the two graces, he knows them to be inseparable in the believer, and that every *justified* person has a *sanctified* nature” (18). **Anglican**

### **French Revolution (as threat to religion)**

*A Ballad on the Death of Louis the Unfortunate* (Bristol: John Rose, 1793):

“Lamented Louis! free from stain  
Thy character appears;  
As gold from fire, thy fame from pain  
A brighter surface bears” (13).

Edward Bayly, *Sermon* (Dublin: W. Porter, 1793), Arklow rector, to Wicklow militia; contrasts “the secure enjoyment of liberty and every blessing of life, which our unrivalled constitution affords, and / the unlimited capricious tyranny, which has for some time past been exercised over France under pretence of reformation, by a base Oligarchy, composed of mean, artful, and flagitious men” (iii –iv); “the calamities of the present time will operate to the permanent advantage of mankind. The boundaries of licentiousness and oppression will in future be more accurately ascertained, and the true nature of civil liberty more clearly undersyood. The excellence of the British Constitution will then, like gold tried in the furnace, shine forth with superior lustre; mankind will forsake the barren regions of metaphysical speculations, for the / cultivated soil of experience” (iv-v). **Anglican**

Eliza Parsons, *Woman as She Should Be* (London: William Lane, 1793): the protagonist, Mrs Menville, receives a consoling letter from Mrs Colemore: "You are tried in the school of affliction, and like pure gold, will come forth without any alloy" (3: 231). I think the affliction involved Jacobins: see M. O. Grenby, *The Anti-Jacobin Novel: British Conservatism and the French Revolution*, 148 for context. **Catholic**

J. Shewell, *The Church and Constitution of England Triumphant* (Liverpool: H. Hodgson, 1793); Liverpool curate: "He only is free, who ... thinks rightly, acts/ wisely, and enjoys fully" (16-17); "the world itself was made, and is governed, for men like this... In order to secure the permanency of these invaluable blessings let us, who enjoy them, ... banish those animosities from our souls, which are our most dangerous adversaries, and being compacted with the divine cement of mutual love, this little spot of the globe shall triumph over all its foes, both foreign and domestic; and from all the ruin, come forth like gold from the furnace, which, from its fiery trial, receives more resplendent lustre and heightened excellence" (17). **Anglican**

Archibald Bruce, *A Serious View of the Remarkable Providences of the Times* (Glasgow: J. Ogle, 1795): French Revolution was a symptom of divine wrath vs "certain Romish ecclesiastics" (38); "while the Lord is manifestly disquieting the inhabitants of Babylon, it seems no less evident, that he is stirring up a scourge for the / secure and corrupt churches under the Protestant denomination" (38-39). "He is coming to his temple with a refiner's fire, and with the spirit of judgment, which, though it may prove a day grievous to many therein, yet must, upon the whole, be desirable. The gold has become very dim there, and much dross and tin may be found in it" (39). **Nonconformist**

*Catholicon* 1815 on the Abbess Clementine Mary Lynch, of the Irish Benedictine Dames in Ypres, and her "Sufferings during the Period of the French Revolution" (1: 57): "A patient suffering of tribulation being the touchstone of virtue, our blessed Saviour tried her as gold in the furnace, sending her a large share in his cross, by the incursion of the French troops in the Low Countries, and their horrible exertions against religion and all religious establishments. The 13th January, 1793, the weight of this scourge of heaven fell severely on Lady Lynch's Community. She had the grief to behold her sacred inclosure invaded by a band of forty or fifty armed soldiers and officers, who insolently insisted on admission. On her refusal till sufficiently authorized, they threatened to point their cannon against the house, and immediately broke down the grates and doors with the most furious barbarity" (62). **Catholic**

*Analytical Review* 1796, review of Randolph on French Revolution: "The story of the revolution has... horrors, both democratic and aristocratic, sufficient to freeze / the blood; but civil polity, laws, and religion too, still exist in France, and will, it may be hoped, rise from this struggle, 'like gold purified seven times'" (24: 362-3).

Arthur O'Leary, *Sermon* (London: H. Fitzpatrick, 1797; fast-day sermon): "the justice of God did not permit the first authors of these horrors to go unpunished; their hands reeking with blood, they turned their fury against each other—for even in this

life crimes do not always go unpunished" (24); "the same fire which refines the gold, burns the straw. And in this numerous congregation, should there be any disaffected person, misled by the notion that, in the even of an invasion, he would have a chance of enriching himself by rapine and murder, let me remind him, that... in such a juncture, the honest—the virtuous—the generous—the wise—would associate for their mutual defence against the attempts of the wicked" (25). **Catholic**

George Henry Glasse, *Sermons on Various Subjects* (London: John Nichols, 1798) on persecution of French clergy in French Rev: "Alas! were the faith/ful pastors, who have fallen under the daggers of assassination, sinners above all the servants of Christ? Far otherwise. As gold in the furnace have they been tried, and received as a burnt-offering. However we may differ from them on some important doctrinal points, we must be lost to a sense of all that is great and glorious, if we do not applaud their heroic constancy, their unconquerable zeal, and that hope, full of immortality, which surmounted the fear of dissolution" (20-21). **Anglican**

John King, *A Sermon, Preached at Winesham* (London: I. Jackson, 1798; sermon of thanksgiving "on account of our late Victories"): "while surrounding nations have been the victims of superstition and bigotry, or have run into the other extreme of infidelity, the Word of God has been studied among us with candour and liberality... Hence we have the pleasing hope that we are not yet a devoted nation, and that we shall, like gold that is purified in the fire, be rendered more acceptable unto God by the trial we are now struggling with" (11). **Anglican**

Peirson 1798: "even in this AGE OF REASON... we have lived to be satisfied that the novel notions of Liberty and Equality, are mere shadows without a substance;—that they have actually given rise to the very worst kind of Tyranny" (15). "We seem to be exposed at present to the rancorous hatred,—to the envious and ambitious views of a numerous Enemy. But let us not be borne down with fear or despondency... Gold has often been tried in the fire, and men of Virtue and Integrity in a state of adversity. Both have come out of the furnace, refined, and not debased. May the tender mercy of God grant, that this case may be more particularly our own!" (16). **Anglican**

Robert Southey, *Minor Poems* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1823; orig. 1815) on Peninsular War: "Many mournful scenes of bigotry and superstition have been exhibited in Zaragoza; but, in these fiery trials which Buonaparte's tyranny was preparing for the inhabitants, the dross and tinsel of their faith disappeared, and its pure gold remained" (1: 403). **Anglican**

## **SECULAR USES**

*Drama* 1825 quotes poem by John Taylor (ca 1630) on reopening of Bankside Globe Theatre after it burned down in 1613:

"As gold is better that's in fire tried,  
So is the Bankside Globe that late was burned,  
For where before it had a thatched hide

Now to a stately theatre is turned" (7: 61).

Also quoted in *Penny Magazine* 16 Feb 1833, *British Stage* 2 (1818): 2.

*Edinburgh Weekly Magazine* 1769, "Verses on the Glorious Decision of the Douglas Cause":

"O! train'd in sharp affliction's school,

Like furnace-gold refin'd,

Now know your foes, both rogue and fool,

Won't to your faults be blind" (4: 53); legal case involving inherited property

Charles Dibdin, *A Collection of Songs* (London: C. Dibdin, 1799), "In Valentine's Day":

"Come all jolly toppers, the toast as ye pass,

Who have sworn to keep Bacchus's laws,

The conditions repeat, lay your hands on the glass,

And vindicate wine and its cause.

So long as the power of generous wine

Shall the practice of honour inspire,

Our afflictions and passions to rule and refine,

As the gold issues pure from the fire" (5: 51).

William Sotheby, *The Cambrian Hero* (Egham: Wettons, 1800; set in time of Edward I); Llewelyn, Prince of North Wales, to Elinor de Montfort, his wife, who was imprisoned by Edward I:

"Thou'rt wedded to Llewelyn's fate, my Elinor,

Which in deep lines indents him Sorrow's child.

But though thou suffer'st much, hast much to bear;

Yet, if thou bear'st it well, thy virtues will,

Like gold essayed, rise purer from the fire.

ELINOR. I know it well; and though severe the stroke, I will sustain it: --

For from my mother's precepts am I taught

Perfect submission to the will of Heaven" (46).

Henry Kett, *Elements of General Knowledge* (London: Bye and Law, 1803): "Early fame is seldom the harbinger of future glory. While the public opinion is depressed too / low by the envy of rivals and detractors, or raised too high by the flattery of injudicious friends, no fair decision can be expected" (194-5). "A considerable period may indeed elapse before an equitable posterity will make amends for the injustice of their forefathers: but in the mean time this soothing consolation may cheer the drooping spirits of neglected genius—that a few years will put an end to the attacks of slander and envy; that, though his works may outlive the partiality of friends, they will triumph over the malignity of enemies; that they will pass like gold from the furnace pure and unhurt, through variations of taste and changes of manners; and that the longer they remain, the brighter will be their fame, and the more durable their honour" (195).

Joanna Baillie, *Collected Letters*, ed. Judith Bailey Slagle (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1999): Baillie to Walter Scott, 1813, on a fellow actress named

Sarah Smith, who had asked for an introduction: "I can have no objections to become acquainted with her, on the contrary it will give me pleasure. She is I know a very respectable woman, and a respectable woman in her situation is like well tried gold doubly precious" (1: 329).

Charles Caleb Colton, *Lacon: or Many Things in Few Words; addressed to Those Who Think* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1825; orig. 1820): "EMULATION has been termed a spur to virtue, and assumes to be a spur of gold. But it is a spur composed of baser materials, and if tried in the furnace, will be found to want *that fixedness* which is the characteristic of gold" (1: 111).

*Quarterly Musical Magazine* 1821: "has our national character, upon the whole, been most benefitted or injured by the importation of exotic music and musicians?... at a period when every British residence is as it were a musical instrument, the art is only unimportant and trivial to triflers; to the philosopher it is an affair of moment, and... I would have it subjected to the severest test of the soundest morality. It will stand the trial if pure, but not if corrupted; yet gold is gold, however it may be debased, and the intrinsic value of music is imperishable. A musical age... is honourable or base, manly or puerile, a sage or a simpleton, according to the moral character of the art, and this character, as it applies to us, undoubtedly derives its quality principally from aliens, who have ever been the prominent objects of our patrician patronage" (3: 421).

Practical Society, *Third Report of the Economical Committee* (n.p. 1822), est. to determine "the wisest course to pursue, in order to separate completely Truth from Falsehood," among other things; based on their conviction that "When difference in opinion continues to exist among intelligent individuals," it's because "the matter in dispute ... contain[s] a mixture of truth and falsehood" (2). "When gold is taken from the mine, we do not spend ages in disputing, whether the ore is gold, or dross; we merely dissolve the union which exists in the previous compound; and when each substance is shewn by itself, all ground of dispute is removed... the same unanimity will prevail in the moral world, when men shall acquire the art of separating Truth from Falsehood" (3). "As the fire separates the dross from the pure gold, so cross-examination separates Falsehood from Truth" (10).

John Brown, *Memoirs of George the Third, Late King of Great Britain; including Characters and Anecdotes of the British Court* (Liverpool: Caxton Press, 1820) on George III overcoming his initial aversion to Queen Charlotte: "This awful and painful intellectual struggle, which tortured his heart most intensely, like pure gold cast into the fiercest furnace, only served to shew the purity of his mind, and to display his *innate* sincerity and integrity" (410).

Jethro Tull, *The Horse Hoeing Husbandry* (London: John Cobbett, 1822 (preface by William Cobbett): "Truth is like gold, which the more it is tried the brighter it appears, being freed from dross. To be thus examined is the chief design of publishing this Essay on Tillage and Vegetation" (3).

William Thompson, *Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1825; defense of women's suffrage): since "the faculty of a sound judgement and the acquisition of all ascertained useful knowledge are the intellectual qualities most requisite, and, after moral aptitude, the most useful of all qualities, in legislators; it would ... appear that the minds of women were on that very account better fit for legislative operations than those of men" (138). "What is the wisdom developed by men which women could not acquire?" It doesn't matter that such wisdom would be "second-hand... Gold assayed produces the most confidence and is the most useful. Truth addressed to those whose inclination and interest, as well as duty, is to receive it, will not be long shut out: addressed to women as legislators it would be eminently their interest as well as duty to receive it" (139).

*Leeds Mercury* 19 August 1826: "One of the ancients said, 'gold is tried by fire, woman is tried by gold, and man is tried by woman.'"

*Mr. Sadler's Factory Bill* (Halifax: n.p., 1832; pro-factory bill, speech by George Buxton Browne at Halifax): "for the sake of truth, give all parties a fair and patient hearing. Truth can never suffer by debates. It is like gold, and comes out of the fire purer for the ordeal it has undergone—always the better and never the worse" (2).

Edward Lytton Bulwer, "The Works of Thomas Gray," *London and Westminster Review* 5 (1837): "Although Poetry be an art, it is not always, nor is it even often that the Poet is aware of the steps by which he has passed to eminence. Elements at once so numerous and so subtle are combined in the great Alchemy of the Beautiful that the workman himself can rarely remember or explain the process by which at last the gold is found in the crucible" (1).

Orville Dewey, *Moral Views of Commerce, Society, and Politics* (London: Charles Fox, 1838), advice on how (and how not) to be successful, in the chapter "On Social Ambition": don't give in to temptation to "chicanery in a profession, dishonesty in business, or insincerity and sycophancy in society." If you do this, success will be short-lived and unsatisfactory. "But if you will not make that compromise, if you will keep your integrity, then by your integrity your reward" (200). "I do not deny that it will cost you an effort, a trial. I look upon society as designed, through its very injustice, to put our truth, simplicity, and independence to severe proof. But let them stand the proof, and they shall come forth as gold purified from the furnace" (201).

John Engles, "How to Avoid Fighting a Duel," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 43 (1838): "there is no braver man than he who will bear the scoff of the world, and perhaps very great injury, from an offender, and will neither give nor accept a challenge; and for this reason, because he is expressly commanded by Him who made him, 'to do no murder.' Such a one will, however, have his cross to bear; and it is best for him it should be so, his courage is strengthened by it, as gold purified in the fire. And such a man will be the last to give offence" (384).

*Railway Times* 1839: letter to the editor defending the Thames Junction Railway from an attack by a Great Western spokesman: "There is no denying that the easy access thus obligingly afforded to the railway public through the medium of your columns, is productive of advantage. Every good, however, has its corresponding evil. Whilst on the one hand, I admit that by publicity truth is, generally speaking, ultimately triumphant, on the other, I am pained to observe the intermediate process of fiction and falsehood which too frequently delays that triumph. Truth may be compared to the gold, and error and misrepresentation to the dross which are mixed together in the crucible of public opinion. He who separates the one from the other is a skilful alchemist" (2: 835).

Henrietta Georgiana Chatterton, *Home Sketches and Foreign Recollections* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1841) recounts an ancient Irish tale about Morling, Princess of Ulster, which ends badly for Morling but well for Ireland. Chatterton: "What a very unsatisfactory ending... surely Morling ought to have been rewarded at last for all the sacrifices she had made." Man who told the tale responds: "And sure she was rewarded... is there not a reward up there [he added, looking towards the blue hea/vens] for every one who tries to do what is right?" (2: 188-189); "who ever yet saw the virtuous flourish in greater prosperity than others? Indeed we are told that in this world they shall have tribulation, in order that the gold may come brighter and purer out of the furnace: —but even while passing through it, they are happier than the wicked with their hollow mirths and they enjoy an inward peace and consolation which those who only see the outside of things cannot understand" (189).

*Monthly Magazine* 1841, review of James Sheridan Knowles's *Caius Gracchus*, on the character of Julia: "Self-knowledge is the fruit of suffering; can only be obtained by an endurance of the throes and convulsions of a heart anguished almost to breaking. *Julia*, at the commencement of the play, is discovered in a situation that had allowed her no scope for the display of her character; and hence, when occasion does minister opportunity, her ignorance of herself betrays her into a position that seems to be fraught with irremediable misery. But the process is a healthy one, and the misery medicinal; the fine gold emerges from the furnace purified of dross; and at length the reckless child of impulse knows her peace by finding out its bane" (6: 523-4).

William Sewall, *An Introduction to the Dialogues of Plato* (London: J. G. F. & J. Rivington, 1841): "Those only are to be enrolled in Plato's clergy who have 'iden/tified their own interest with that of the society'—who have stood afflictions, heavy afflictions, in its support—'who have borne pain,' ... have 'been tried even more than gold in the fire' (they are Plato's own words), and have in all ruled well themselves, shown themselves 'good guardians of others,' adhered to the teaching they have received" (277-278).

W.Cooke Taylor, *Notes of a Tour in the Manufacturing Districts of Lancashire* (London: Duncan and Malcolm, 1842); letter from Bolton, on "the influence of the

factory system on the working classes. It will perhaps be advisable... to keep existing distress out of sight as much as possible, and to regard this as a perturbing element, which... is likely to prevent our discovering the natural tendency of the factory system when left to pursue its own uninterrupted course. There is one circumstance, indeed, connected with the present suffering,—which ... must not be forgotten here, — the great moral strength with which the pressure of misery has been endured. Such endurance must have been based on knowledge and intelligence, or it must have yielded to the rude shocks which it has had to sustain. I may, perhaps, be permitted to hope that the worth of a people, whose value, like that of gold tested in the fire, has been subjected to the most severe and searching ordeal, will for the future be much more justly appreciated by / their countrymen than it has hitherto been; and that the men of Lancashire may yet have reason to say, ‘It was well for us that we were afflicted for a season’” (121-122).

*Musical World* 1843, after retracting a critical comment on a musician, following a clarification by the offended party: “Pure gold suffers not by the fire, and the metal of sterling character gains lustre and value by the ordeal of impartial discussion” (18: 92).

*Fisher’s Colonial Magazine* 1844, poem by J.S. Hardy, “Lines on the Pursuits of Genius and Learning”:

“The crucible that brings forth purest gold,  
Is yours, ye sons obscure, of genius mold” (n.s. 1: 302).

Frederick William Faber, *Sir Lancelot: a Legend of the Middle Ages* (London: Thomas Richardson and Son, 1857; orig. 1844):

“Sickness and death! Ye twin beneficent Powers!

I in the freshness of my youth am bold  
To hail you as benignant spirits ordained  
To lead my soul to Heaven! Ye do I hail  
Ere ye have come...” (180).

“... For manifold

And dire, Sickness! are the crucibles,  
Wherein thy torturing alchemy essays  
The spirit of man; and they who sought for gold  
In molten stones, vain mortals! reaped a field  
Hardly more profitless, great Power! than thine.  
Now there are sicknesses which in a day,  
And with our bodily strength all unimpaired  
And love of life unquenched, would have us greet  
Death, as we would an unexpected guest;  
These are too fierce. Then there are slow, slow fires  
Which burn the patience of a man, and dry  
His prayers, and give him no vicissitude  
Of suffering, wearing off that novelty  
Which made him feel disease a sacred thing;

These the Saints have" (181).

Mary Bristow Wood, *The Entomological Researcher; or, Dialogues between a Governess and Her Pupil* (London: William Edward Painter, 1845): "a lady and gentleman, who, when at home, were always quarrelling, were noticed in company for their great kindness to each other. I am afraid there are many members of society who are very different when seen in their domestic circles—quite the opposite to the Christian. To see him in his true and best character, you must visit him in his family. A superficial glance at the Christian will not display his native worth; his friendship, too, is like gold purified seven times; the more it is tried, the more pure it is found" (20). Apparently this has something to do with grasshoppers.

### *Novels*

Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa* (London: S. Richardson, 1748), letter from Lovelace (Clarissa's evil pursuer) to John Belford (his good friend: "Here have I been at work, dig, dig, dig, like a cunning miner, and spreading my snares... exulting in my contrivances to get this inimitable creature absolutely into my power" (3: 274). Defends himself against Belford's aspersions regarding his motives: "I love opposition. As gold is try'd by the fire, and virtue by temptation; so is sterling wit by opposition. Have I not, before thou settest out as an advocate for my fair one, often brought thee in, as making objections to my proceedings, for no other reason than to exalt myself by proving thee a man of straw?" (278). Later, Lovelace disputes Clarissa's refusal to marry him (after he rapes her): "this is passion! This is not reason... if she has come out pure gold from the assay; and has nothing to reproach herself with; why should it be an impeachment of her principles, to consent, that such an alliance should take place?" (6: 104).

Tobias Smollett, *Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, (Edinburgh: Silvester Doig and Andrew Stirling, 1811; orig. 1771); letter from Humphry's sweetheart (and his sister's maid), Winifred Jenkins, to Mary Jones regarding his unjust imprisonment: "O Mary! the whole family have been in such a constipation!—Mr Clinker has been in trouble, but the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against him. His virtue is like pour gold, seven times tried in the fire. He was tuck up for a robbery, and had before Gustass Bushard, who made his mittamouse; and the pore youth was sent to prison upon the fals oaf of a willian, that wanted to sware his life away for the looker of cain" (171).

Elizabeth Bonhote, *Olivia; or, Deserted Bride* (London: W. Lane, 1787), Miss Goldwyn to Miss Creswell: "Alas! I have done nothing but weep the unhappy death of Mr. Vane, who had, by his generosity and goodness, rendered himself inexpressibly dear to me. My friend! my sister! her sufferings have likewise called for my tears and attention. She lives; and, thank Heaven! begins once more to reassume the exercise of her long-tried virtues, by the renewal of that pious resignation which so often has been called upon for its exertion; but, like gold, she is the purer for every additional

trial” (3: 85). “I look / up to her... with a reverence of affection bordering upon idolatry” (85-86).

Mrs. Johnson, *Calista: A Novel* (London: W. Lane, 1789): Charles’s brother, who was the cause of his grief, writes him a letter: “Different situations call forth different virtues and vices.—When habituated to poverty... you were humble—contented with your destiny, and almost naturalized to penury! Now the case is altered—like purified gold, you shine the brighter for your trial! All is gaiety—grandeur—and happiness;—it is therefore extremely unlikely you can look upon the ostensible author of your troubles with the consideration that he had expunged the fault laid to his charge...” (2: 188).

Clara Reeve, *The School for Widows* (London: T. Hookham, 1791); letter to the wife of a bankrupt whose “creditors will not accept of any thing short of the full payment of all his debts... you will be urged again to give up your settlement, in order to set him free; and I fear you will not have courage enough to refuse it” (1: 195). “Bear up, take courage; Heaven will support and reward those virtues which it permits to be the most severely tried; I am convinced of your merit, and of your fortitude, and that you will come out like pure gold, that is tried and purified seven times in the fire” (196).

Mary Ann Hanway. *Andrew Stuart, or the Northern Wanderer. A Novel* (London: William Lane, 1800), final volume: “In following this chain of causes up to their effects, the sceptic will denominate it chance, a happy combination of matter and motion!... the optimist will strengthen his theoretical system, that all is for the best... while the philosophical Christian will trace the pervading power of that God he worships, the hand of that Providence who sustains the creature by the wise decrees of his Creator! Let us, therefore, from the story of our Northern Wanderer, learn to patiently abide the inevitable / misfortunes attendant on humanity; neither to murmur nor despond in our severest trials; for, like gold which has seven times passed the purifying flames, when divested of our dross, we shall become at last refined” (4: 137-38).

Frances Jacson, *Isabella: a Novel* (London: Henry Colburn, 1823): “That the reserve and propriety of behaviour which Sir Charles had so / long preserved should suddenly be broken up by a tone of gallantry so undisguised and so attentive to the purity and dignity of her character, she was persuaded could not be the inadvertence of an unguarded moment, for Sir Charles had no such moments” (3: 19-20); it “seemed to leave no doubt but that such a change of manner arose from some detestable purpose, that was to be accomplished by exciting at once her jealousy and her resentment. It was impossible that the straight-forward spirit of Isabella could pursue the windings of such a labyrinth; yet she saw enough to put her more than ever upon her guard” (20); “she resolved simply to keep the onward path of integrity and truth, and not to bewilder herself by

any attempt at counteraction by plot or stratagem. It may be the will of the Most High to try me in the furnace of adversity, thought she; but, with his help, I trust I shall come out as refined silver or the purest gold" (21).

Jacson 1823: novel concludes when Lady Rachel adopts Isabella and blesses her marriage with her nephew and heiress, Willoughby: "Surprise, joy, gratitude... threw Mr. Willoughby in speechless emotion at the feet of Lady Rachel, while the more chastened and unmixed feelings of Isabella, caused her to cling fondly to the arm of her benefactress, and gaze upon her with the ardent eye of grateful affection" (3: 357). Lady Rachel: "My Isabella, / you have thought my discipline severe; but the ingot is come forth from the fire pure gold. No fear for the future Deed now disturb your bliss. He who has been tried, and has stood the trial, as this poor culprit has done, is more to be depended upon than one who had never fallen" (357-358).

Miss Crumpe, *Isabel St. Albe: or, Vice and Virtue* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable and Co., 1823): title character receives advice from her father, with a "tone of persuasive eloquence" that he used "whenever he truly wished to convince, which seldom failed" (1: 287): "whatever may hereafter be your trials, place your dependance on Him who will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. My dearest Isabel, many are the anxieties I feel at parting; but my trust is in Providence, that you will come purified out of 'the fiery ordeal' of the world, like gold out of the furnace;—that you will not become enslaved by its pleasures, nor corrupted by its arts. For, Oh! Isabel, ever remember that this life is but a passage to another. It is but a land of shadows, unsubstantial and uncertain; and, even in the midst of its brightest illusions" (290). Isabel: "Oh yes! I feel, I know it... A secret something tells me, that I shall never find true happiness amidst its dissipated scenes. A pure stream/ cannot flow from a corrupted source" (290-291).

Anna Maria Hall, *The Buccaneer: A Tale* (London: Richard Bentley, 1840; orig. 1832): on the final page of the novel, the hero reminisces about his adventures "in the bosom of his true and beautiful family." His daughter Barbara's "tearful eyes rested upon the time-worn features of her father" and remarks: "My father has sometimes hours of bitterness, yet I bless God he is not as a brand consumed in the burning, but rather as gold purified and cleansed by that which devoureth our impurities, but maketh great that which deserveth greatness." She then starts in on her husband, Robin, who interrupts her: "Don't turn me into a fable, wife... I am, in my own proper person, an Aesop as it is. There has been enough of all this for to-night" (440).

Mary Anne Cursham, *Norman Abbey: A Tale of Sherwood Forest* (London: James Cochrane and Co., 1832): Lady Grace's husband is wrongly imprisoned. "For several days the Lady Grace thought it impossible she could ever sustain the weight of sorrow which oppressed her bosom, and paralysed every action; but time gradually smoothed away the poignancy of her regrets" (1: 170). In the next chapter the narrator leaves "the Lady Grace to the solitary indulgence of afflictions" (197). Then

later: "'The Lady Grace,' returned the curate, \*'doth greet your lordship with all loving reverence; but she cannot proffer her dutiful service in person. She hath sustained a fiery trial; and though doubtless she will come forth out of the furnace like gold seven times purified, yet doth she bear the heavy marks of this weighty infliction. She is ill, my lord, sick at heart and faint in body" (278).

*Metropolitan Magazine* 1835, "How to Write a Romance"; Arthur Ausard to a friend: "Nothing can soil, or defile, or destroy my heroine: suffering adds lustre to her beauty, as pure gold is tried by fire: nothing can kill her, because she is all mind" (14: 438).

Elizabeth Caroline Grey, *The Duke* (London: Richard Bentley, 1839): Captain Cecil "rose from his bed of sickness, an altered, and a better man. Although in his most prosperous days he had ever had a sense of religion, yet it had not been his support in affliction. The excitement of his mind had been such that he could not pray—deep despair had closed every avenue to his heart; but he was now softened and completely subdued" (1: 178). He "was no longer the despairing being he had been some time before; though dejected, he was resigned. 'Gold is tried in the fire, an acceptable man in the furnace of adversity.' Indeed, if we could bring our minds into a state of acquiescence under affliction, we should be happy; not only in spite of our worldly sorrows, but through them. The very idea that our trials are sent from above, and that we are under the immediate eye of God, would be deep and unflinching comfort under every tribulation. It is this conviction which would support us through all our sorrows, and throw even a heavenly radiance over 'the dark valley of the shadow of death'" (180).

Samuel Warren, *Ten Thousand A-Year* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1845; orig. 1839) re Earl of Dreddlington: "As the earl grew older, / [his] just, and rational, and Scriptural views, became clearer and his faith firmer" (2: 83-84). "Indeed, it might be said that he was in a manner ripening for immortality—for which his noble and lofty nature, he secretly felt, was fitter, and more likely to be in its element, than it could possibly be in this dull, degraded, and confused world. He knew that there his sufferings in this inferior stage of existence would be richly recompensed; for sufferings indeed he had, though secret, arising from the scanty means which had been allotted to him for the purpose of maintaining the exalted rank to which it had pleased God to call him. The long series of exquisite mortifications and pinching privations arising from this inadequacy of means, had, however, the earl doubted not, been designed by Providence as a trial of his constancy, and from which he would, in due time, issue like thrice-refined gold" (84).

Margaret Baron-Wilson, *Popularity; and the Destinies of Woman* (London: High Cunningham, 1842) on Ellen Sidney, the wife of the failed banker Matthew Sidney, living in "a small house in one of the outskirts of the metropolis, inhabited by a drudging clerk, who was not long since an affluent and respected banker" (2: 169).

“And how did Ellen—nurtured during childhood in comfort, supported as a bride in luxury—how did she bear these fearful reverses? In murmurs and unavailing repinings, to see herself stripped of all save the mere necessities of life—to know her boy a beggar—to hear her husband's name—if not branded with dishonour, at least coupled with disgrace? Did she shrink abashed beneath the scowl of those Levites of the world, who, seeing her altered fortunes, ‘passed by on the other side?’ No! adversity called forth the brighter affections of her mind, as fire purifies gold. She, who was wont to win the praises of the rich and noble, has now become a busy, frugal housewife, struggling, by means of privation and stinting economy, to master poverty—to woo content; and she thinks herself blessed that her parents are still spared to her... Her son is also a never-failing comforter. If her husband had been equally so, the content she coveted might have been hers; but it was fated otherwise” (170). “Misfortune / took, alas! an opposite effect upon Matthew... his spirits sunk under the load of so much suffering” (170-171). “Hence, instead of being a support to Ellen in her sufferings—of cherishing her hopes—of soothing her fears for the future, he occasionally indulged in little outbreaks of temper, which embittered her already unhappy lot” (171).

Charles Dickens, *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1844): Sarah Gamp, to a friend, recounting a description of herself: “you are gold as has passed through the furnace” (564). Ch 49

Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1854): “Coketown did not come out of its own furnaces, in all respects like gold that had stood the fire” (28). Book 1, Chapter 5.

### *War vs France*

*Thoughts on the Interference of Great Britain with the Political Concerns of the Continent* (London: J. Debrett, 1799) on Britain's assistance to foreign states in Europe vs France: expect “treachery” and ingratitude. “These disasters, however, so far from / countenancing despondency, should call forth our fortitude, as the fire purifies gold, and direct us to seek consolation in a recurrence to the rectitude of our conduct” (54-55).

### *Ireland*

Sylvester O'Halloran, *An Introduction to and an History of Ireland* (Dublin: H. Fitzpatrick, 1803): “in the days of Druidism, as in subsequent times, was Ireland the great school of Europe, and it will be found that our ancient history, like pure gold, the more severely it is analysed, the brighter it becomes” (1: xvii).

*Bell's Life* 21 Feb 1836, poem “Epistle from Dan O'Connell to Mr. Raphael”:  
Of combat I'm ready to bear the full blunt;  
To my country still staunch, and to principles true,  
In spite of long Frank, and of Raphael the Jew:  
And the rascally *Times*, so debased and impure

While called me 'the scum of the bog,' to be sure...  
The attempts to degrade me, at which you have toiled,  
Upon your contemptible self have recoiled;  
Yes, the world now has stamped you a thundering liar,  
While I, like pure gold, have come out of the fire."

*Penny Protestant Operative* 6 (1845), article on Maynooth, opposing the argument that "internal civil war" would be the result of not giving in to Catholic demands. "Should it be permitted, in the providence of God, that England should be plunged in foreign war, let her continue at peace with God, by loyalty to His will, and she will emerge from war like gold from the furnace. To escape war with man, we may not rush into war with God" (55).

*Irish Grievances, Real and Imaginative* (Dublin: James M'Glashan, 1849): "The regeneration of Ireland rests in the hands of her inhabitants. We must all, from the highest to the lowest, put our shoulders to the wheel, and by a strong pull, and long pull, and a pull together, we shall, by the blessing of the Almighty, be enabled to raise the cart out of the rut, and like a giant refreshed with sleep, we shall be improved by the exertion, and like gold out of the refining-pot, purified by the fire. We must remember that the Great God only assist those who exert themselves" (32).

### *Hastings Trial*

Joseph Price, *Third Letter to... Edmund Burke* (London: J. Price, 1782), letter on Hastings Trial: "every step which has been taken to prejudice the public against Governor General Hastings, hath operated quite differently to what his enemies intended—His character, like sterling gold committed to the crucible, comes out purer than when first submitted to the fire" (1).

*Retrospect of the Portraits lately delineated in the Short Review* (London: John Stockdale, 1787): "Mr. Hastings's virtues, which have already been more than seven times tried in the ordeal, will come forth, like gold from the crucible, pure and unalloyed" (73).

*The Debate at the East India House* (London: J. Debrett, 1801; Mr. Jones, defending Hastings at EIC court of directors). He had supported his impeachment, but "the moment he was acquitted, and come, as I may say, pure as gold out of the refiner's fire, I instantly seized the first opportunity which presented itself to me to gain a reward for him" (16).

### *Litigation*

*An Illustration of the Principles of the Bill... for Correcting the Abuses and Supplying the Defects of the Internal Government of the Royal Boroughs* (Edinburgh: Neill and Constant, 1787; on the need for reforming boroughs in Scotland): "The propriety of a Court of Appeal is not less obvious than that of a domestic jurisdiction of accounts.

Courts, like individuals, especially inferior courts, are naturally liable to error. Appeals to superior tribunals, like the trial of gold by fire, are calculated to expose errors, to bring injustice to light, and to redress it" (52).

Archibald Fletcher, *A Memoir concerning the Origin and Progress of the Reform Proposed in the Internal Government of the Royal Burghs of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Adam Black, 1819), supports "the propriety of a court of appeal ... Appeals to superior tribunals, like the trial of gold by fire, are calculated to expose errors, to bring injustice to light, and to redress it" (245).

*Eclectic Review* 1843 opposes "long, tedious, and intricate proceedings which keep the suit hanging like an evil spirit for months over the heads of the parties before it can be brought to a trial," which only serve "to fill the pockets of lawyers": "What is the pretended use of these voluminous proceedings? Why, to disclose the really disputed facts of the case: as if truth, like gold, requires to undergo a long purifying process before it is fit to be touched by judicial hands. Truly, a mountain in labour producing a mouse. An intelligent magistrate would, in an hour, arrive at a knowledge of the material points in difference between the litigants, better than any system of written special pleading" (n.s. 13: 345). (from "The Administration of English Law," 340-349).

### *Scientific inquiry*

Thomas Cussans, *Reflections on the Nature of Light and Fire* (London: n.p., 1783) on nature of light and fire, preface: "Systems even to the present times have changed, what was received as orthodox a thousand years ago, would in this age be ridiculed. Ptolemy and Copernicus have each triumphed... and a new age produced new lights. 'Tis upon the plea of the instability of science, the author wishes to apologize to the public for having advance / what may appear ridiculous, as being ew" (ix-x). "Truth scarce ever carried it by vote any where by its first appearance; new opinions were always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason, but because they are not already common: but truth, like gold, is not th eleast so by being newly brought out of the mine, it is trial and examination must give it price, and not any antique fashion" (x).

M.D. Palmé, *A Medical and Philosophical Dissertation on the Effects of a New Mode of Electricity* (Dublin: H. Whitestone, 1784); in preface, anticipates criticism of his new methods: "It is the fate of this *noble* science, *physic*, to have its *votaries* blindly and *superstitiously* attached to the opinions of some *particular* authors of *note*, until some ONE, more prying into the *Arcana* of nature, ventures to *think* for himself" (xv). "Vesalius had *his* critic's, among the espousers of Galen... but *he* rose superior to all these attacks, and like *gold* from the furnace, came out *more refined*"; also Harvey (xvi).

William Mavor, *The British Nepos; or, Youth's Mirror: being Select Lives of Illustrious Britons* (London: R. Phillips, 1798), biography of William Harvey: other physicians

“either attacked the truth of his hypothesis, or denied him the praise of originality... But Harvey, though he suffered from the storm, had the singular felicity to see its fury spent, and the world pressing forward to pay him the homage due to an original genius, and a benefactor to his kind. The more his system was crucified, the more its validity was established; and like gold which had been tried, it came brighter out of the furnace. By degrees the doctrine of the circulation of blood was generally received” (206).

Lawrence, *Facts Versus Fiction: An Essay on the Functions of the Brain* (London: J. Watson, 1842; arguing for physiological explanation for brain functions): “You must bring to this physiological question a sincere and earnest love of truth: dismissing from your minds all the prejudices and alarms which have been so industriously connected with it... We need not fear the result of investigation... Whenever it is thoroughly discussed, truth will not fail to come, like tried gold from the fire” (10).

#### *Literary/ artistic criticism*

*Imperial Magazine* 2<sup>nd</sup> ser. 2 (1832), review of William Butts’s *Spiritual Perfection Unfolded and Enforced*, orig. 1699, reprinted by the Religious Tract Society: it “resembles a piece of sterling gold, that has been handed down from the seventeenth century. It will bear the crucible and the fire, without yielding much alloy” (490).

Vicesimus Knox, *Winter Evenings: or, Lucubrations on Life and Letters* (London: Charles Dilly, 1788) on Samuel Johnson: “Few men could stand so fiery a trial as he has done. His gold has been put into the furnace, and really, considering the violence of the fire, and the frequent repetition of the process, the quantity of dross and alloy is inconsiderable... let those who are disgusted with him ask themselves, whether their own or the characters they most admire would not exhibit some deformity, if they were to be analysed with a minute and anxious curiosity” (1: 187).

Alexander Campbell, *An Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Andrew Foulis, 1798), defending Allan Ramsay against criticism from Pinkerton, who wrote: “Let us put [*The Gentle Shepherd*, a poem by Ramsay] in the furnace a little; for, if it be gold, it will come out the purer.” Campbell: “The furnace is accordingly prepared—but the fewel is damp,—and the stream of air that issues from his wasting lungs, but extinguishes the flame he fain would keep alive;—the precious metal he means to essay—retains, in spite of the unskilful artist, all its virgin purity, and intrinsic value” (191).

George L. Craik, *The Pictorial History of England: Being a History of the People as Well as a History of the Kingdom* (London: Charles Knight, 1839) on drama in days of Henry VII and VIII: “It appears also that a new play, in those early days, had to pass through the fiery furnace of public criticism just as it does in the present; and in condemning an unfortunate piece by caterwauling, and other hideous sounds, our

ancestors of the Elizabethan age were as clever, and perhaps as capricious, as their descendants" (2: 880).

"Psalmody," *Church of England Quarterly Review* 7 (1840) on James Montgomery "there is, probably, no modern poet, with the exception of Campbell, whose works are more certain of immortality. Not, indeed, in their collective form, for the furnace of future criticism will melt down their formidable bulk into a small compass; but something will survive, some fragments of unadulterated gold will be found in the crucible" (58).

#### *Bowdlerization*

Douglas Jerrold, *Men of Character* (London: Henry Colburn, 1838) on a publisher assembles a committee to Bowdlerize John Gay: "The ladies and gentlemen had assembled to read / 'The Beggar's Opera' for impurities: they were convoked to present to the moral world, a family edition of John Gay! The proprietor, wisely mistrusting his own unassisted powers of mutilation, had called about him the several severe and acute minds to be found in his company; and doubted not that, under the chastening fire of such an assembly, naughty John Gay would come out bright and pure as newly-minted gold" (1: 204-205).

#### *Conversation*

Edward Jerningham, *The Welch Heiress: A Comedy* (London: Richard White, 1795): Mr. Fashion tries to convince Lord Melcourt to marry the heiress, who is "handsome—very rich." Melcourt: "Did she possess all the barbaric gold of the city, it would not atone for her deficiencies in other respects." Fashion: "The little rusticities of her homebred education will disappear in time; she will catch the tone of the stage she is entering upon" (51). Later on, Melcourt meets her and tells Lady Bellair: "Was there ever such a Hottentot?" Sir Pepper (father of the heiress): "She has a few rusticities adhering to her, all which will drop from her, like dross from gold." Melcourt: "In the crucible of Lady Bellair's refining conversation." (58).

#### *Free trade*

Eliza Robertson, 'England's Hope—the League,' *North of England Magazine* 2 (1843):

"Should not Christian women see  
This holy cause with sympathy?  
All who have humanity  
Must approve the League...  
Slander vainly has been tried—  
By fire gold is purified,  
Now their Leaders are the pride  
And glory of the League" (395).

#### *Radicalism*

Henry Hunt, *The Radical Reformers, Male and Female* (London: T. Doldy, 1822): reformers in Bethnal Green send address to Henry Hunt in prison, hoping that “you will come out of prison like refined gold, a more sterling Radical than you went in” (33). Hunt praises a fellow prisoner, Mr. Wooler, who “will leave Warwick Gaol like pure gold, having gone through the fire without being tarnished. No man can charge him with ever having compromised his principles or his character” (14). Preston women, address to Hunt: “Sir, that day will be hailed with joy by every lover of liberty and truth ... when we shall see the martyr of fair freedom’s cause come forth triumphant over / his and his country’s enemies, amid the acclamations of surrounding myriads, ‘like gold tried in the fire, more and more refined’” (29-30).

*Republican* 1825, letter from Thomas Hood to Richard Carlile, congratulating him on his “liberation from a long and unjust imprisonment, and from the hands of those who wanted but little encouragement to have become your assassins. Such is Christianity and boasted British justice! An imprisonment from which you have come forth pure as refined gold from the crucible; with a character singularly honourable, just and unimprachable; gloriously established on the firm basis of fortitude, perseverance, and integrity” (12: 769).

*Lion* 1829. Letter from Clifton to Rev. Robert Taylor: “you are not an Infidel, you believe in the truth of those moral maxims, which are found in the bottom of the crucible after FREE DISCUSSION. Would it not be better to term the voluntary contributions to your fund ‘TRIBUTES to TRUTH’, to keep up the furnace of free discussion, and that you, and Mr. Carlile, be appointed the ASSAY MASTERS of this moral merit. The maxims of moral truth, which you find after repeatedly having fused them through the crucible of free discussion, give them to the world, adorned with all your *suasive* eloquence; and let Mr. Carlile diffuse them to the public through the sheets of the *Lion*. As the process of refining their moral truths cannot be produced without physical means, I send you my tribute, of five pieces of sterling gold, which if you should not like their appearance, throw them into the furnace, and the ingot will be worth five pounds five shillings, on any exchange in Europe” (510). Taylor was an editor, with Carlile, of *The Lion*, and was at the time serving a one-year prison sentence for “infidelity.”

Joseph Hume, *Remarks on the Suppression of the Late ‘Herald to the Trades’ Advocate’* (London: n.p., 1831): “Free discussion is the grand means for the development of truth—it is the fiery ordeal from which truth never fails to come forth, like tried gold from the furnace; and a Trades’ newspaper will form an arena for the discussion of all subjects of vital interest to society” (5); letter is in defense of the recently-suppressed *Herald to the Trades’ Advocate*.

*The Prompter* (London: R. Carlile, 1831; successor to the *Black Book*): “The Kings, the Priests, the Aristocracy, and their slaves, the People, as they have hitherto been, must be molten down in the crucible of reform, tried by the fire of reason, and out of the liquid mass make a people pure as refined gold, without titles, without partial privileges, without any other hereditary right than that which shall be common to all” (237).

W.J. Fox, *Lectures addressed chiefly to the Working Classes* (London: Charles Fox, 1845), contrasting Godwin with Paley: Godwin's *Political Justice* "is a work full of noble-mindedness, containing principles directly the reverse of Paley's pliability and equivocation—a book in which sincerity and truthfulness are ever consecrated, as the primary elements of human character, and, having been severely tried and tested, the gold is extracted from the dross. He looks at the world in a more manly way, regardless of its attractions and influence" (2: 340).

#### *Nationalism (Britain)*

Henry Rowe, *Poems* (London: T. Cadell, 1796), "Ode to the King's Recovery" (1789): "Thrice favour'd country, like the gold we're try'd, Only to prove how far we're purify'd" (1: 18).

#### *Nationalism (Scotland)*

*Thistle* 1836: "The estimable part of the Scottish character consist mainly in the Scotch being... a law unto themselves," which is most manifest in their "love of country"; this has strengthened their obedience to social laws. When "the light of the gospel dawned upon them in all its radiance and all its purity, no species of cruelty and oppression could turn their faces from the Zion of their God... [God] saw meet, in his good pleasure, and for reasons which we dare not question, because we cannot understand, to suffer them to be afflicted for a time; but a remnant was saved, and that remnant came forth out of the furnace of affliction, pure, shining, and imperishable as gold that has been seven times tried" (1: 356).

#### *Nationalism (Germany)*

*Tait's* 1832 on Germany's prospects, refers to the "black, red, and gold badge... selected by the young enthusiasts of Germany," viz: black for "mourning... the stain upon their country's honour; crimson—the blood to be shed to efface it; gold,—the pure metal issuing from the fiery furnace of trial" (1: 702).

#### *Time/history*

John Ayrton Paris, *The Life of Sir Humphrey Davy* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831): "No man ever soared, like an eagle, to the pinnacle of fame, without exciting the envy and perhaps the hatred of those who could only crawl up half-way; while, on the other hand, where no rivalry can exist, the splendour of such an ascent will captivate the bystander, and by exciting intemperate triumph and unqualified admiration, change without diminishing the sources of erroneous judgment, and substitute adulation for calumny. Under such circumstances, an allusion even to the common frailties of / genius becomes offensive; the biographer is called upon for the delineation of a perfect man; but the world is satisfied with nothing short of 'a faultless monster;' and yet... they little imagine how completely they obscure the features of their idol, by the haze of incense in which they continually envelope it. These are evils against which a future historian will not have to contend; for time tries the characters of men, as the furnace assays the quality of

metals, by disengaging the impurities, dissipating the superficial iridescence, and leaving the sterling gold bright and pure" (1: vi-vii).

*Truth Seeker* 1848 (article by January Searle, "Biography, History, and the Spirit of the Age": "the development of man's nature and his doings upon earth, are for the most part unconscious; other and / remote natures are necessary to show how that nature, and those doings, harmonized with the epical character of his age" (42-43). "No one mind, therefore, can burn up the dross of his time, in so satisfactory a manner that the gold alone shall remain. For the very dross that exists, whether in the shape of institutions, false men, or false theories, has a golden work to do. The absolute prerogative of Charles the First, his Star Chamber, and foolish Episcopal Church notions, were dross enough; and yet, when they were purified, what gold came out of them! It would be altogether unwise, even were it possible, to precipitate the dross of *this* age in any sudden or hasty manner. Let us be sure that it will finally precipitate itself. The crucible of Time is for ever simmering over the fire of Eternity; the scum is cast out, and goeth no man knows whither; the solid metal alone remains... God takes care of the world in the long run" (43).

Goodcock 1849 (note to his one-page list of "England and her Possessions in 1849"): "From the time of Alfred, whose flag waved over England alone, to the reign of Victoria, whose scepter touches the most remote quarters of the globe, England has gone on progressing in power, knowledge, and strength. From the storms of adversity she has come forth as gold from the furnace; and from the misfortunes of her neighbours she has gathered wisdom."

### *Politics*

Addison, *Cato*, Act 4, Scene 2 (1712); Cato to Juba the Numidian, reassuring him that all even Rome has its traitors, and urging him to stay strong:

"Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,  
Like purest gold, that, tortured in the furnace,  
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight."

This is quoted (attributed to Shakespeare) by *Review* 1789, re "Pitt and his associates" who "have with much industry, and the strictest severity, canvassed his Royal / Highness's conduct, but have not been able to discover the least blemish" (63-64). Cited in quotes, unattributed, by Althorp in Commons debate on Irish tithes, 17 Aug 1833 (in *Hansards*).

Horne 1793: Charles I "was libeled before he was crowned... the first parliament he called refused him the supplies requisite for the carrying on a war entered into by his father at their importunate solicitation, and thereby distressed him to the utmost" (23); "had this prince lived in better times, and reigned over a people uninfected with the insinuating, inflating, and souring leaven of *fanaticism*, he had been the delight of mankind, and his kingdom the joy of the whole earth. But... it pleased the Almighty to cast this choice and most precious piece of solid gold into the burning fiery furnace of adversity, where he is universally allowed to have shone to the last with unrivalled and undiminished luster" (27).

### *Scandal*

*Farmer's Magazine* 5 (1836); "Turf Intelligence" on a recent charge of embezzlement re Baron de Teisseir, member of the Committee for the Management of Epsom Races. Teissier "is altogether actuated by the most genuine impulses of human nature and the principles of honour; and therefore, although the Epsom Committee may have been guilty of swerving, we feel well assured this well descended member of society will emerge from the charge, like virgin gold from the crucible of the alchemist, brighter from having been subjected to the ordeal of investigation" (75).

*Satirist* 8 June 1845, on two-year suspension of a Cradley (Warwickshire) curate names Mr. Jones, for having sex with a Birmingham prostitute. Sir Herbert Jenner Fust, who imposed the suspension, "evidently expects to see Mr. Jones, some two years from the present period, come forth like gold purified, all the brighter for being tried in the furnace, and possessing capabilities of becoming a brighter ornament to the Church than ever. Such, we say, seems the anticipation of the Judge in passing a two-years' sentence of suspension. Let Mr. Jones take care his pious hopes are not disappointed!"

### *Libel*

Cavendish 1783, his lawyer's speech in his libel trial: libel should never be charged when the subject is "the government of the nation," which (should, at least) transact all its business in public: "Even supposing the worst that can happen, should the accusations be false, scandalous, or malicious, they can work no material injury.— The shouts of public applause, which ever attend the praiseworthy actions of those who act in a public capacity... will effectually drown the feeble voice of a malevolent libeller... Such accusations are the refining furnace of the Public; they purge away the dregs and dross of base metal, but touch not pure gold" (27).

### *Adversity*

See also affliction in other file

Manners 1794, "To Adversity":  
"Hail, pallid nymph, with downcast eye,  
With sable garb, and head reclin'd,  
Severely kind Adversity,  
Preceptress of the thoughtless mind!...  
Though venal Flattery and Deceit  
Ne'er offer incense at thy shrine,  
Pity still seeks thy lone retreat,  
And real Friendship still is thine.  
For, as pure gold by fire we prove,  
Adversity's the test of love" (141).

Parsons 1795, concluding page of *The Voluntary Exile*, a novel: “from the several characters in the story, our readers will observe, a deviation from rectitude seldom or never goes unpunished... [w]hilst virtue, tried like pure gold, by adversity, struggles through the various misfortunes that obscure it, and at length, by the dispensations of Providence, overcomes the difficulties that impeded happiness, and is rewarded for its perseverance” (5: 292).

Jones 1800: “Sir Charles, blessed with an amiable wife and a fine boy, thought himself arrived at the summit of bliss, where no misfortune could approach to hurt him; but sad experience is commissioned to teach man that happiness, unmixed, is not the lot ordained by Providence for him in this probationary state; for then he would be exposed to no temptations which might try his fortitude and strength in virtue.” Adversity, “though generally looked upon as a troublesome companion,” (1: 58), is actually man’s “best friend... for she never fails to lead her votaries through a long train of afflictions, by that means weaning their attachment from this world, and directing them to a better, as a recompence for their perseverance in integrity;—for as gold undergoes many preparations, and must be desecated ere it arrives at a state of perfection,—so must the heart of man be purified from those gross particles, which are naturally attached to it in this life, by Adversity, ere it can arrive at that state of supreme excellence, which fits it for the mansions of eternity” (59)

Landseer 1834 on Niccolo Poussin’s “Bacchanalian Dance” (Poussin, 1594-1665, who painted in Paris and Rome): “Poussin’s own trials during the earlier part of his professional career, were somewhat severe: his intellectual gold was kept rather of the longest in the crucible of adversity” (318).

Irvine 1843 on Herder, Schiller, and Jean Paul: “Humble in birth, poor and dependent, they had to struggle long against want, hardships, and discouragement; yet, with a self-reliance and fortitude which bespeak souls of a noble and heroic cast, and must ever command the admira/tion of men” (506-7). “Tried in the furnace of affliction, they came out of it like gold purified... they kept their manliness and honour unstained” (507).

### *Marriage*

*Maids, Wives, and Widows' Penny Magazine* 1832, article on wedding rings (see misc for the rest; all is about gold): “As gold, by the action of the most intense heat, even in a crucible, *cannot lose* any particle of its original weight and worth, but comes out of the crucible as heavy and valuable as when it was put in; *losing nothing* in consequence of the fiery ordeal, except whatever portion of dross and alloy may have been incorporated with the pure metal; so the most severe afflictions, intense troubles, and fiery persecutions, which may be the portion of the marriage partners, during some of the changes and chances of this mortal life, should never be able to deteriorate or take from the marriage union any part of its intrinsic worth or beauty, but the parties should rise from the furnace of affliction and dishonours of the grave,

without having *lost* anything, except the grosser particles of earth and sin, which may have unhappily attached themselves to the mystic union, that was intended to secure their felicity" (1: 52).

### *Bankruptcy/ Commercial crisis*

Chalmers 1794 on financial crisis of 1793: "Happy is it for mankind, that every evil brings its own remedy, unless imprudence step in, to aggravate misfortune, by its reformations. We have already derived commercial benefits from our commercial derangements. Speculators now see, that there are limits, beyond which, they cannot safely pass. Bankers at length perceive... that by issuing too much paper, they may lose all. Merchants of real capital, and true knowledge, will do more business to more profitable purpose, since traders of no capital, and little moderation, have been forced to give way. Manufacturers have learned, from recent misery, that there are bounds, both to giving and receiving, wages. Distrust / will be banished from our island, as those, who stood the test of the late trials, must, like gold in the furnace, be deemed more worthy of confidence" (lxxviii-lxxix).

*London Medical and Surgical Journal* 1836, edited by Michael Ryan, whose bankruptcy that year put an end to the journal and also forced him out of his position as a lecturer in the Hunterian School of Medicine. He reprints a report from the *Times* of his students' support for him; speech by J.F. Clarke, "the senior pupil of the school" (10: 335): "they could not but feel that the attempts which had been made to destroy his character and professional prospects had only served to raise him still higher in their estimation, and that he came from his trial like gold purified. (Loud cheering.)" (336).

### *Prosperity*

*Lady's Monthly Museum* 1 July 1813, "Reflexions on Life and Manners, by Count Oxenstiern": "What meanness, to neglect old friends, for the trifling brilliancy of a new fortune!... Gold is tried by fire, and man by prosperity: if the former stands the test, and the latter retains his senses amidst honours, they both approach to perfection" (41).

*Lessons of Thrift* 1820: "Riches and power often pervert the faculties, and totally change the train of thinking." Rich people often promise to help friends in need, then break their promise. "But fire tries gold, and gold tries a friend; so that if a friend gets rich, it is then time to try him, but not by the Tower assay; it is enough that he answer on the common touchstone" (75)

### *Competitive examination*

Ring 1798: "We are assured... that the merits of the Colleges of Edinburgh, and Dublin, cannot be greater than those of the Governors of the Corporation of Surgeons of London. If so, they will bear the touchstone of examination; and emerge

more bright from every trying ordeal, like gold from the refining fire” (190). On Surgeon’s Bill: qv for context

*Lancet* 9 September 1848, article on the French doctor Alfred Velpeau (1795-1867) includes praise for the *concours*: “In our country where favouritism, nepotism, and jobbing are too often the order of the day, few can understand the beneficial influence of an institution where all is open to competition, and where no office, from the humble one of dresser to the most important in the profession, can be obtained without passing through numerous and severe ordeals, such as public examinations, lectures to be given on a subject after a very short interval of preparation, theses to be publicly defended, &c. Those who are chosen after having passed through such ordeals may fairly be considered as gold tried in the fire. As a necessary result, medical talent does not long remain hidden under a bushel; and amongst the 150 candidates who every year compete for the place of house-surgeon, it is easy to see who will in ten years be the rising men, and who will, in twenty, be the most distinguished members of the profession.”

### *Bad parenting*

Mudie 1841: “the revolting conduct of the parent does, in a few instances, inspire the child with horror of similar conduct. The house of brawling and strife is certainly not the school in which to look for a human being of well-regulated mind; but there are some such to be found even there; and when they do occur they are choice spirits—for they are gold tried in the furnace. They are rare, however, and we must beware that we do not mistake a temporary calm for settled tranquillity” (118).

### *Feminine virtue*

See also *Clarissa* above (weird example).

Fielding 1735, *The Universal Gallant: or, The Different Husbands* (play; no new eds. in ECCO): Sir Simon Raffler is worried that Mr Gaylove has his eyes on Lady Raffler; Mr Mondish assures him that “she surpassed the rest of Womankind as much in Virtue as Beauty.” Raffler responds: “tho’ my Wife be, as you say, a virtuous Woman, and I know she is; and was never jealous of her in my Life: yet I take Virtue to be that sort of Gold in a Wife, which the less it is try’d, the brighter it shines; besides, you know, there is a Trouble in resisting Temptation, and I am will to spare my Wife all the Trouble I can” (7).

*Hibernian Magazine* 1774: “The Unexpected Meeting” opens with “the last words of Sir William Thompson to his daughter,” whose “uncommon virtue” endeared him to many (572): “Virtue, my child, is a trasure, the value of which cannot be estimated; like gold, it stands the fire, / and is thereby purified. It is a gem that will sparkle in the darkest night, the brilliancy of which will so dazzle the eye, as to render invisible a thousand little foibles, which, without this invaluable quality, would attract the attention of the most unobservant” (571-2). Also in *Westminster Magazine*, same year; *Britannic Magazine* 1803 (11: 5).

*Illusions* 1788 (epistolary novel, letter from Sir Francis Lenox to Augustus of Montmorency): "Sir, Your charming Daughter is innocent; and though obscured by slander and assailed by envy, she will rise superior to the test of adversity, and like gold purified by the assay, beam forth in all the majesty of triumphant virtue" (154).

Gunning 1794, *Lord Fitzhenry* (novel): Lord Uxington is confident that his sister will turn out fine despite "the avidity with which she was whirled from one scene of pleasure to another" (162), since she was "protected under his own roof and under his own eye, possessed of prudence, modesty, sense, gentleness and wit, a virtue and a talent seldom born twins." This, plus her education "by the instruction of Doctor Burnett, gave Lord Uxington confidence that Lady isabella's principles, like gold seven times tried in the fire, would at every essay come out from the / furnace of dissipation more pure and of more value" (163-164). "Dissipation" here means conversion to Catholicism: Burnett is Protestant; Isabella married a Catholic, Lord Hillford, when young, and has been resisting conversion ever since.

*Memoirs* 1797, on Elizabeth Farren (an actress), just after she married Ear of Derby: "I have had access to rehearsals and to Green-rooms, yet I never saw cause for censuring that lady's behaviour, or ever heard the slightest hint, to the prejudice of her private character" (3). "If any blemish had been / discovered, most certainly, it would have been recorded in some Green-room witticism... and had been the topic at all theatrical clubs" (3-4). "A character passing through the Green room ordeal untinged, is stamped with sterling purity, and like virgin gold, loses not a grain of its weight by passing through the hands of the refiner, ought to be revered" (4).

Emily Clark, *Ermina Montrose; or, the Cottage of the Vale* (London: James Wallis, 1800): "her exhausted mind found relief in a gentle slumber into which she soon sunk, enjoying a temporary oblivion of her cares, and sufferings; for neither her goodness or innocence could shield her from calamity, and she little deserved the misfortunes she had encountered. But, it is the lot of virtue to become more resplendent from the trials it endures; and, like gold, it comes purified from the fire" (2: 76).

Newman 1803 on Countess Johanna Baptista Verüe, daughter of Duke de Luynes, wife of Count de Verüe, who introduced her to Victor Amadeus, King of Sardinia; Amadeus soon fell in love with her, and she bore him a child (3: 325); Victor held a dinner to celebrate this (to which his queen was invited; queen leaves in disgrace; the count likewise left Turin in disgrace. The countess decided to leave Victor three years later (326), leaving her jewels behind (327). Tried to reconcile with count at a masquerade (327-8), but he rebuffed her despite still pining for her; miserable, he joined the army and soon died in battle. "This is another of the numerous instances daily occurring, in which a little prudence, and a little common sense, would have prevented irretrievable calamity. The Count de Verüe had too high an opinion of his wife's chastity, and thought she would, like gold, be more pure for passing through the fire; I repeat on this occasion, what I have so often said; poor human nature is not made of materials for such trials; Lead Us Not Into Temptation, is a safe axiom, laid down by one who well knew, because he made us what we are" (329).

*Literary Panorama* 1 (1814), review of Taylor, *Practical Hints to Young Females* (not clear if this is an excerpt or not): the “many thousands” of virtuous women in England “are a combination in which a happy disposition may claim its share, and a happy education a greater... They result in some degree from circumstances; but more eminently from principles: for principles may triumph over circumstances; as the pure gold triumphs over the penetrating heat of the refiner's furnace: it may be melted, but it is neither debased nor consumed. Very seldom, however, are such severe difficulties experienced, in proportion to the numbers called to discharge the duties of this station; but, when, unhappily, circumstances triumph over principles, the parties become public, all the world listens, all the world estimates and the tale gathers interest in proportion to its horror” (510).

#### *Military virtue*

Pratt 1803 (orig. 1797; see *Letter* on file), on allegation of treachery in British navy: “The majority of the navy were found faithful—and the British army deserved our confidence. It was firm in the hour of temptations, and persevered to march in the fore right road of honour and virtue, when the seducer had beset it with snares. The dark assassins who have tampered with your integrity, have only excited your manly indignation... Like pure gold tried in the fire, your virtue has come forth without alloy:—you have proved to the surrounding world there is no base metal, no dross, in the heart of a British soldier” (2: 199).

#### *Photosynthesis*

Hamilton 1787 on “the study of the vegetable kingdom,” which “enlarges our ideas with regard to the operations of nature, and conducts us forwards in the scale of science” (2: 276). Among other things, vegetation “seems to be the chief restorer of the salutary quality of the air. After it has been rendered noxious by various phlogistic processes, it dephlogisticates, and renders it once more fit for respiration; it drinks up, and is even nourished by what would destroy man, and returns it to him again, like gold, as it were, from the refiner's furnace, new combined, and new modified. Here we find putridity has its use, and through the medium of the vegetable kingdom, becomes the foundation 'of that which is pure'” (277).

#### *Commercial crisis*

Chalmers 1810 (George, not Thomas) on 1793 crash: “Happy is it for mankind, that every evil brings its own remedy, unless imprudence step in, to aggravate misfortune, by its reformatations. We have already derived commercial benefits from our commercial derangements. Speculators now see, that there are limits, beyond which, they cannot safely pass. Bankers at length perceive, ... that by issuing too much paper, they may lose all” (303). “Distrust will be banished / from our island, as those, who stood the test of the late trials, must, like gold in the furnace, be deemed more worthy of confidence” (303-4).

