

## **MS Charles James Fox 1784<sup>1</sup>**

This verse was written by Charles Wesley in 1784, in the context of an ongoing challenge of Charles James Fox (1749–1806) to the powers of the monarchy. The immediate stimulus for this verse was the passage on March 1, 1784 by the House of Commons of a Fox address claiming right to advise on any exercise of royal prerogative. See the related verse in MS Hymn for the King 1784, and in the letter that Wesley sent to John Langshaw in March 1784.

The manuscript in the collection at the Methodist Archive and Research Centre, accession number DDCW 6/92e, is in a later hand. Even so, it is included here as the only copy extant. The transcription below is provided with permission of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

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<sup>1</sup>This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: August 1, 2010.

**Written March 4, 1784.<sup>2</sup>**

- [1.] Why boastest Thou thy baleful power,  
Agent of Satan for an hour?  
As Senates must thy Nod obey,  
And Kings be subject to thy sway;
- [2.] As all the high-born slaves of vice  
Were sworn with Thee to fall or rise,  
As all the nation's Scum were join'd,  
T' exalt the Vilest of mankind.
- [3.] Use them a while thy hopes to crown,  
And turn thy Country upside down,  
Rais'd up in these flagitious times  
To scourge us by thy bolder crimes.
- [4.] Eat drink and play, and take thine ease,  
The wealth of Asian Plunderers seize,  
Seize as thy own the Public Store  
And waste it all, and grasp for more.

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<sup>2</sup>Published posthumously in *Representative Verse*, 363–65; and *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:87–88.

- [5.] Supporter of rebellion's cause,  
Go, trample on our rights and laws,  
Our King degrade, our Prince pervert,  
And mould him after thy own heart.
- [6.] Prosperous in ill, at nothing stop,  
Make haste to fill thy measure up,  
Thy powers exert, thy talents show,  
As far as human guilt can go.
- [7.] Thy Ethiop-Soul, as black as night,  
May reach ambition's utmost height,  
Defy thy foes to pluck thee thence,  
And laugh at sleeping Providence.
- [8.] Yet shall thy jaws the Bridle feel,  
Thy nose the Hook invisible,  
Yet are thy fatal limits set,  
And Vengeance holds thee in its Net.
- [9.] Thy deed shall soon in judgments rise  
Thy treasons and conspiracies,  
And sad America, o'erflow'd,  
With torrents of fraternal blood.

[10.] Thy deeds can never be forgot,  
Thy sure destruction slumbers not;  
*The day* shall suddenly reveal,  
Thy League with Death—and France and Hell.

[11.] Hell from beneath is moved to meet  
Thy soul in wickedness compleat,  
Thy sinful Excellence to own,  
Most worthy of a burning throne.

[12.] Thy guilt and merits infinite  
Lay claim to the Sulphureous pit  
Keep up the flame with fresh supplies,  
And feed the worm that never dies.