

Married

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On Friday the 20th Inst. Mr. Julius Mott to Eliza, the 2^d daughter of Mr. S. Thompson of Plaistow, when they delivered the following protest into the hands of the minister.

"To Mr. — commonly called the Rector

The undersigned, being unitarian dissenters, present to you the following protest against the marriage ceremony to which it is supposed that according to the law of the land they are compelled to subscribe, they disclaim all intention of acting disrespectfully either to the legislature or to its civil officer before whom they stand, they lament that they are placed in a situation so unnatural, as that even forbearance to what they consider established error would be a formal recantation of opinions which they received on conviction of which they will only renounce on similar grounds; — Against the

marriage ceremony then they can but most solemnly protest, Because it makes marriage a religious instead of a civil act.

Because as christians & protestant dissenters it is impossible we can allow of the interference of any human institution in matters which concern our faith & conscience.

Because, as knowing nothing of a priesthood in christianity, the submission to a ceremony performed by a person "in holy orders, or pretended holy orders" is painful and humiliating to our feelings.

Because as servants of jesus, we worship the One Living & true God, his God, and our God: his father our father, and disbelieve of ^{no} absolute the doctrine of the Trinity in whose name the marriage ceremony is performed. (Signed) J. C. Mott.

Eliza Thompson

Members of the church of God, meeting at the Crescent, Jewin Street, and known by the name of "Free-thinking christians."

To the Editor of the M. Repository

Sir

In communicating to your readers a repetition of the fact of two persons, as unitarian dissenters, presenting a protest against the religious part of the marriage ceremony, and (a copy of which, for more general diffusion it appears highly desirable you should insert) allow me briefly to request of them such information as they may be enabled to give upon a subject so important & interesting. How far then let me ask are persons dissenting from the creed of the establishment compellable to join in the words of the ritual prescribed in the common prayer in order to render a marriage complete & valid? The evident object of the marriage act was, not to wound the consciences of dissenters by compelling them on so serious an occasion to avow doctrines & principles which they disbelieve & may perhaps abhor, but simply to compel publicity, and to guard against the formation of illicit & imprudent connections; this was clearly the sole object of the legislature if the question is when that object has been gained by the parties publicly presenting themselves as by law directed, and claiming to be acknowledged as man and wife, whether the priest is ^{legally} justified in refusing to register them as such ^{because that will not violate} ~~without~~ ^{their violating} their consciences by ^{repeating} saying words with their lips, which in their hearts they disavow; this last seems as useless as it is cruel; there is no end gained by it, and even every unitarian, and every member of the establishment if he suppose himself compelled when married to partake in the mass, and to acknowledge the doctrine of transubstantiation, would then see the absurd cruelty of the imposition. Professional opinions have already been taken on the subject, which tend to establish the point that it is not imperative on the parties to go thro' the

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The ritual, a great part of which indeed is always omitted at the discretion of the priest, but that on the contrary he cannot refuse to register though they should decline going through the ceremony; this appears now the more probable as the penal laws against the disbelievers in the Trinity are erased from the Statute book.

This, Sir, is a question interesting to every friend to the rights of conscience & of freedom of opinion in matters of religion, whatever his persuasion; but almost particularly ^{interesting} and may ^{indeed} be considered as personally affecting almost every professor of Unitarianism; allow me therefore through the medium of your Magazine, as an appropriate source of information, to request the ~~good~~ ^{opinion} advice of your legal or other readers on the subject, and ^{to say that} in return you may depend on the immediate communication of every step taken by my friends or myself in the business.

I am &c

J. C. Mott

Kingsland Road
London
Sept 27. 1810

Brokers

Married

On Friday the 20th Inst. (september), Mr, Julius Mott to Eliza the 2nd. daughter of Mr. S. Thompson of Plaistow, when they delivered the following protest into the hands of the minister

"To Mr _____, commonly called the Reverend.
The undersigned, being unitarian dissenters, present to you the following protest against the marriage ceremony to which it is supposed that according to the law of the land they are compelled to subscribe. They disclaim all intention of acting disrespectfully either to the legislature or to its civil officer before whom they stand. They lament that they are plac'd in a situation so unnatural as that even forbearance to what they consider as established error would be a formal recantation of opinions when they received on conviction and which they will only renounce on similar grounds; against the marriage ceremony then they can but most solemnly protest, Because it makes marriage a religious instead of a civil act. Because as Christian and protestant dissenters it is impossible we can allow of the interference of any human institution in matters which concern our faith and conscience. Because as knowing nothing of a priesthood in Christianity, the submission to a ceremony performed by a person in holy orders, or pretended holy orders is painful and humiliating to our feelings.

Because as servants of Jesus, we worship the One Living and true God, his God and our God; his father and our father, and disbelieve and abominate the doctrine of the Trinity in whose name the marriage ceremony is performed.

(Signed)

J. C. Mott

Eliza Thompson

Members of the church of God, meeting
at the Crescent, [] Street,
and known by the name of Free-Thinking
Christians

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Sir/

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and the question is when that object has been gained by the parties publically presenting themselves as by the law directed, and claiming to be acknowledged as man and wife, whether the priest is legally justified in refusing to register them as such because they will not violate their consciences by repeating words with their lips which in their hearts they disavow; this last seems as useless as it is cruel. There is no end gained by it, and even every trinitarian, and every member of the establishment if he suppose himself compelled when married to partake in the mass and to acknowledge the doctrine of transubstanciation would then see the absurd cruelty of the imposition. Professional opinions have already been taken on the subject, which tend to establish the point that it is not imperative on the parties to go thro' the ritual, a great part of which indeed is al910ways omitted at the discretion of the priest, but that on the contrary he cannot refuse to register though they should decline going through the ceremony. This appears now the more probable as the penal law against the disbelievers in the Trinity are erased from the Statute book.

This, Sir, is a question interesting to every friend to the rights of conscience and of freedom of opinion in matters of religion, whatever his persuasion, but is most particularly interesting, and may be considered as personally affecting almost every professor of Unitarianism. Allow me, therefore, through the medium of your Magazine, as an appropriate source of information to request the opinion and advice of your legal or other readers on the subject, and to say that, in return, you may depend on the immediate communication of every step taken by my friends or myself in the business--

I am Etc--

J. C. Mott

Kingsland Road
London
Sept. 27 1810-6