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THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR

AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE
REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

FOR THE YEAR MDCCCL.



LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN MASON, 14, CITY-ROAD;
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No. I.

PRICE 1*d.*

THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
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EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
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JANUARY, 1850.

THE CASE STATED.

THE object of the present publication, and the cause of its being issued, will be evident to readers from its title, as well as from the contents of our prospectus. Wesleyan Methodism has been assailed, both in its constitutional principles and in its administration: our object is to defend it from assailants, and to preserve the unsuspecting from being misled by them.

Reflecting men cannot be surprised that Methodism should thus be assailed: this has been the common lot of good systems, as well as of good men, in all times; it has been the case with Methodism and its promoters from the beginning. Like the genius of our British civilization, Methodism was cradled in the storm; and from the hardihood of its training, a more robust strength and enduring vitality have been the results. The profane and the worldly treated the Wesleys with persecuting scorn and derision; and, with the exception of a few men of superior Christian enlightenment, the Clergy of the Establishment strengthened the hands of the persecutors. Nor was danger to the new evangelic enterprise experienced merely from those without: perhaps it was greater from jealousy within. There were some, thus early, in our own Israel, who said of the Wesleys what Korah and his dissatisfied coadjutors said of Moses and Aaron: "Ye take too much upon you: wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" John Wesley's reply was, that he had not sought the power and authority he possessed; others had voluntarily given it him, and, believing it to be a trust under God, he could not surrender it. But, perceiving that evil had already begun to work, and that there were indications of strifes and divisions among his assistants in

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preaching the Gospel, he was careful to bind them in a solemn written obligation to carry on Methodism, after his death, according to the principles on which he had founded it. And to insure this, as far as possible, he formally declared in writing those principles, and enrolled the "Deed of Declaration" in the High Court of Chancery.

What Mr. Wesley had feared, was realized soon after his death. It had been ever his earnest desire that his followers should not separate themselves from the Church of England. But the Societies had grown and multiplied; houses of worship had been erected; and the people desired and sought from the Conference the administration of the Sacraments in the chapels of the Connexion. To this the majority of the Trustees of chapels were opposed. But the Preachers hearkened to the voice of the people, and joined them in a struggle against the prejudices of the Trustees: they succeeded in giving the people the Sacraments. In this they did nothing but follow out the principles of their venerated Founder; Mr. Wesley having, at the close of his life, ordained several of his Preachers to administer the Sacraments, as well as to proclaim the word of mercy from the pulpit.

The danger to Methodism arose, in this early instance, from the attack of the Trustees upon the constitutional privileges of the Preachers, and their resistance to the Christian liberty of the people. Since then, the attacks made on Conference and on Methodism have arisen mainly from dissatisfied individuals,—pleading no infringement of their settled official privileges,—but professing to defend the abused rights and liberties of the members of our Societies. Presumptive proof of the right conduct of the Conference may be drawn from the fact, that it has thus ever placed itself between extremes: it withstood the Trustees; it withstands the *professed* champions of invaded rights and liberties. And why? Because it is not ignorant that persons, seeking their own ends, are ever ready to raise these cries of "Liberty," and, "The rights of the people." It remembers that such was the cry of Mr. Kilham, of the Leeds agitators, of Dr. Warren, and of the associates of each and all of them. They were *all* for "infusing more of the liberal element," as they phrased it, "into the constitution of Methodism." Not being able to accomplish their object, they separated; and it may be seen in the working of their improved (?) systems, whether their counsel was wise.

A spirit kindred to theirs has arisen in the present times; nay, if possible, a spirit more violent and reckless in its aspect towards our beloved Methodism. It has its origin, evidently, in disappointed ambition, and in envy of those who are superior in gifts and honour; for it first showed itself in mean and clandestine attacks on the characters and conduct of those who are thus distinguished among us. The new agitators, like their forerunners, assumed the guise of "detectors and reformers of abuses." To accomplish their object, however, they resorted to more nefarious tactics: they printed and circulated falsehoods and slanders among the Ministers without so much as the

printer's or publisher's name being attached ; and this in direct violation of the English law. This un-Christian and un-English strategy having failed of its evil object,—namely, to divide the affections of the Ministers, and to undermine their fraternal confidence in each other,—the bad spirit broke forth into open hostility. Attacks on the Conference, and on its most influential and beloved members, were made in garbled Reports of its proceedings, and given in professedly “Wesleyan” newspapers. The “Banner” of the disaffected was openly unfurled, and means were organized to agitate and divide the Methodist Societies on questions previously discussed and formally settled in the Conference. “The rights and claims of the minority” were set forth, and made the subjects of controversial strife among the people.

This called for the exercise of discipline ; and three Ministers, leaders in these agitating and divisive proceedings, were, on their declaration that they would not submit themselves to the laws and authority of Methodism, put away from it. By way of retaliation, the expelled have, since the last meeting of the Conference, traversed the kingdom to proclaim what they consider to be their wrongs, to excite the sympathy, and to ask the pecuniary help, of the people. Instead of fairly stating the case, they have usually indulged in invectives against the more prominent members of the Conference. Opprobrious names, selected from the vocabulary of abuse, have been employed for their purpose. The Conference has been likened to a conclave of Cardinals, the President to a Pope, and to Judge Jeffreys, the Secretary to an Inquisitor-General, and one of its members described with Satanic attributes as “the Accuser of the Brethren.” Meanwhile, they have represented themselves as “martyrs suffering for the truth.” Strange martyrs ! so unwilling to sacrifice anything ! They have visited town after town in almost every part of the kingdom, hawked their speeches, repeated *verbatim* their falsehoods and illustrations ; and endeavoured, by every possible means, to promote jealousy and divisions in our societies. They have appealed to the very worst passions of human nature, and have tried to set the people against the Conference, the members against the Leaders, the Local Preachers against the Travelling Preachers, and the younger Ministers against the elder ; and all this evil activity has been aided by an ungodly press, which, as might be expected, denounced in no measured terms the proceedings of the late Conference.

These un-Christian efforts have, in some instances, been met by the true friends and supporters of Methodism ; chiefly by the issue of separate pamphlets on the general question of the expulsion of the three Ministers. Such defences have been useful, and have, doubtless, rendered good service ; but to meet increased hostility, a mode of defence more vigilant and sustained seems necessary. Failing to command effective support and sympathy by the single plea of personal wrong,—the object now announced by these strenuous advocates and *martyrs for John Wesley's Methodism* is, to obtain through the

demand of the people a change in the very basis of the system arranged and declared by that wise and good man. This is their avowed purpose at present ; and, loving Methodism as an instrument owned and honoured of God, we feel bound to defend it against the aggressors.

We do not mean that we shall follow them in every wayward track. They may shift their ground as frequently as heretofore. We shall not track them into the bogs and quagmires of dispute. Our great objects will be to correct the errors of some sincere persons who have been misled, and to preserve from misdirection those who are desirous of knowing and holding fast the truth. And as we do not intend unnecessarily to discuss questions which have already been discussed and settled in the judgments of enlightened and candid persons, it may serve our cause, if, at the commencement of our Periodical, we recapitulate the parts of the controversy which we consider fairly settled by facts and arguments that have been adduced. This will serve to show our real position, and prepare us for entrance on the course we intend to pursue.

1. It has been shown that the clandestine attacks made upon the system and leaders of Methodism, through the "Fly-Sheets" and other anonymous writings of dissatisfied and disappointed individuals, are un-Christian and unjust. The Conference of 1847, by formal and all but unanimous vote, declared them to be "wicked and slanderous." The public at large condemn them as unlawful and cowardly. The expelled Ministers have not dared to identify themselves with them, or to speak openly in their favour. All they dared to do, they have done,—offered an excuse and apology for them. The press which espoused the cause of the expelled, has denounced the "Fly-Sheets." And even Chairmen, chosen to preside at their "monster meetings," have, like Mr. Martin in the Free-Trade Hall at Manchester, declared them to be dishonourable publications.

2. It is generally admitted that almost universal and reasonable suspicion was entertained in the Methodist body, that one of the expelled Ministers was the author or chief compiler of the wicked and slanderous "Fly-Sheets." The common conversation on this subject, from the time of the first appearance of these papers, tended to this conclusion. Many of his friends, acquainted with his spirit and views, and with the style of his writing, had no doubt of his being the author, and say so plainly. He himself, though thus generally suspected for years past, has not denied it. On the other hand, it is *known*, and has been declared, since the Conference, by a Minister who gives his name to his declaration, and who challenges investigation into the proof of the truth of his declaration, that Mr. Everett has expressed his approbation of the "Fly-Sheets ;" has endeavoured to prove by lengthened argument that there is nothing dishonourable in their anonymous character ; has borne, in whole or in part, the cost of their publication ; has complained that a certain Gentleman in the West of England has not rendered for them

that amount of pecuniary assistance expected ; and has urged upon one or more individuals the publication of a book announced in the "Fly-Sheets" under the title of the "Buntingian Dynasty," promising to render considerable assistance towards it himself. These facts the Rev. J. T. Milner declares he is ready to prove, from what *he has seen in Mr. Everett's own hand-writing*, if proof is demanded.

3. It is acknowledged that, by anonymous and slanderous writings, effects were produced which *required* the interference of the Conference. Ministers were disturbed by false reports concerning their "disunion" and "disaffection." The minds of the people were troubled by what they heard and read ; and a *demand was made* by some of the best friends of Methodism, that Conference should exercise its authority,—by inquiry into the origin of such evils, and the identity of their instruments,—and then, by the exercise of suitable discipline upon them.

4. It is undeniable that the law of personal examination has existed in Methodism from the beginning ; that Mr. Wesley himself included it among the principles of the Methodist Constitution ; and that it has been acted upon, as far as called for, from his day to the present. This has been demonstrated in the able pamphlet lately published by the President. It was *declared* by the Conference of 1835. Messrs. Everett and Dunn continued in the Methodist ministry on the express condition that they submitted to the law of personal examination by their brethren. Mr. Griffith was admitted on his formal and expressed approval of the law. Mr. Everett exercised it himself on one of his brethren, at Newcastle, in the year 1837. Lastly, the use of this law by the late Conference was the most ready and practicable mode of searching out the evils complained of ; and, being truly Wesleyan, it was enforced towards the men suspected and of evil report in Methodism.

5. It is apparent to every reflecting mind that the conduct of the three suspected Ministers, while under personal examination by the Conference, was such as to require their expulsion. Open defiance of the Conference, and public denouncement of its laws, could not be allowed. Conference having striven in vain to bring the contumacious members to submission and obedience, they were, of necessity, put away.

6. It is evident that "wrath and bitterness" move the expelled Ministers to agitative and divisive proceedings ; that they have set themselves to annoy, disturb, and rend asunder the Methodist societies throughout the kingdom, as fully as they can ; and that they will not spare any part of the Wesleyan Constitution, nor the character of any of its supporters, in their attempt to attain their objects ;—to accomplish which ends, they ally themselves with the known enemies of Methodism, and parade the numbers attending their public meetings as Wesleyan Methodists, when these meetings are not unfrequently composed, to a considerable extent, of Dissenters, Associationists, and violent politicians, gathered at the cry of "Methodist Reform."

7. It is seen that, though some sincere Methodists have been misled by their evil efforts, yet they have, comparatively, failed in their objects. By gross personalities, un-Christian vindictiveness, and repeated exhibitions of unrighteousness, they have often shocked the religious feelings of the Wesleyan Methodists who attended their meetings to listen to their statements ; and, finding this to be the case, they are endeavouring to strengthen a weak, and protect a bad, cause, by raising the cry for "Methodist Reform ;" and profess to be organizing an attack, through the people, upon Constitutional Methodism.

It is with these facts before us that we commence the present publication : it is for the defence of the constitution and general administration of Methodism. Taking these facts as the basis of our case, we purpose to present periodically to Wesleyan inquirers—so long as it may appear necessary—articles, on questions relating to the cause they have espoused, such as may be likely to aid and direct them. We shall not, if it can be avoided, enter into personal controversies, but state the case of Wesleyan Methodism in its principles and administrative acts ; and, at the same time, expose the sinfulness and folly of those persons who, for the restoration of unsuitable men into the Wesleyan Ministry, would undermine and disorganize its wisely-arranged and effectually-working constitution.

DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES OF UNNECESSARY AGITATION IN CHURCHES.

THE lessons which the Scriptures of the New Testament teach concerning the mutual charity of our Lord's disciples, and the admonitions which they employ to guard against all that is adverse to it, are so many and so weighty,—they occupy so conspicuous a place in the great system of evangelical truth, and urge their requirements by motives so powerful and persuasive,—that one might expect to find professed Christians particularly alive to this duty, and solicitous, in no ordinary degree, to protect the unity and peace of their own happy fraternity from every unnecessary agitation. Yet, even from the days of the Apostles, "offences" have "come." What church has been exempted from them ? Feelings of personal ambition or disappointment have supplied occasion for disturbances perfectly needless, and sometimes injurious beyond all estimate.

No one, indeed, arrives suddenly at the height of un-Christian agitation. Its beginnings are often small and almost imperceptible. But from these, cherished or not checked in the heart, how easy is it for a person to proceed, by insensible degrees, until he has reached a point from which he would himself at one time have recoiled ! When evil is in progress, dangers are concealed, premonitions are disregarded. The "net" is "spread," but not "in sight." An apprehension of this,

of the jeopardy to which not a few are exposed by the silent and unsuspected agency of a dissatisfied and divisive spirit, cannot but justify the voice of friendly warning. To trace the disastrous consequences which spring from unnecessary agitation, when a tendency to such agitation is once indulged, may operate as a restraint upon its earlier rise, and may thus be the means of preserving some, at least, who might otherwise be tempted to stray from the path of truth and charity.

Agitators of churches cannot hope to be themselves exempted from a large share in the calamitous effects of their own movements. Are they admitting tempers opposed to the kindly amities of Christianity?—are they roused to an active and incessant vigilance, not to discover what is good, but what is evil, in others?—are they secretly desirous of detecting flaws in men eminent for talent and virtue?—are they habitually inclined to magnify trifles, to pervert and misapply facts, to press accusations drawn from unexamined rumours, or the workings of mere suspicion?—and are they, by “repeating a matter,” seeking to “separate very friends?” How can they spiritually prosper? how can they but suffer grievous loss and detriment? If they would listen to affectionate entreaty,—if they could be prevailed upon, in the calm of retirement and meditation, to review their course,—if they would impartially try their tempers and conduct by the standard of the New Testament, by the beatitudes, for example, of our Lord, by St. Paul’s beautiful portraiture of charity, or by St. James’s description of the wisdom from above, could they fail to see that they are departing from the “more excellent way,” and sustaining an injury which may in the end prove irreparable? Diotrephes appears to have been a person of distinction, perhaps of high official distinction, in the church to which he belonged; but to what an issue did he come! He stands on record as a monitory beacon to all who “love to have the pre-eminence,” and who “prate” against others “with malicious words.”

Christian churches or societies with which such agitators may, directly or indirectly, have intercourse, are also in imminent peril. The pernicious results of agitation can scarcely fail to affect them. When parties of them meet in seasons of social fellowship, instead of engaging in peaceful and instructive conversation on the holy Scripture, its facts, its doctrines, its precepts, its promises,—on the gifts and attainments of Christian experience, on plans and efforts of useful labour, on pleasing intelligence which may have been received concerning the spread of Divine truth and mercy in the world,—is there not a danger lest the time should be engrossed by criminations and defences, by the recital or refutation of idle tales, or by other things equally unprofitable? And what follows? The mind is perturbed, if not inflamed; edification is precluded; the spirit of a pure and charitable Christianity is seriously impaired. The evil is but too apt to diffuse itself yet further, until the tone of religious principle and feeling is extensively lowered, and permanent loss entailed on the church

or society where such agitation is allowed to prevail. It is consolatory, indeed, to be assured that watchful churches will be kept, and will enjoy prosperity, amidst the unpropitious circumstances which may for awhile surround them. But the effect of strife and dissension, when not opposed, or not opposed with sufficient care and fidelity, is too prominent in the history of the church, and of what has befallen it both in ancient and modern times, to be doubted or denied.

More particularly, the consequences of unnecessary agitation will disclose themselves in individual cases, or in the cases of individual persons, whatever station they may hold in the church, who resign themselves to that agitation, and contribute to its increase. What melancholy facts might be related on this subject! facts which would tell of a departure from the life and power of Christianity,—of a discontinuation of attendance on the more spiritual means of grace, or an attendance on them in a way that is not spiritual,—of lapses more and more frequent into sin,—and of an open return to the pleasures and vanities of the world which were once forsaken. How often, in such cases, has the gradation of evil which the holy Psalmist's language suggests been made affectingly plain! They who at first "walked in the counsel of the ungodly," have afterwards "stood in the way of sinners," and have at length "sat down" even "in the seat of the scornful." Are not many now in the ranks of infidelity itself,—darkened in their understandings, and callous in their hearts,—who, in former times, rejoiced in communion with the Christian church, but who were "scattered," as sheep from the fold and pasture, in the "cloudy and dark day" of strife and agitation? They are "driven away;" they "wander through all the mountains, and upon every high hill;" they are "broken" and "sick:"—who shall "bring" them "back?" who shall "bind" them "up," and "strengthen" them?

What impression is likely to be made by these gratuitous disturbances on the minds of the young? For their safety and welfare all churches ought assiduously to care; and to their Christian training attention is now extensively and diligently directed, with prospects of large success. They are made familiar with the histories and discourses of the four Gospels, and with other parts of the New Testament; they are plentifully furnished with scriptural hymns, lessons, prayers; their thoughts are pointed to the inexhaustible treasures of God's own truth; and they are led, by all these means, to the contemplation of Christianity in its own native lustre,—in its holy, gentle, loving spirit. But when they turn from these to the examples of unnecessary agitation which they may unhappily see in the circle of their acquaintance; when they mark the wide discrepancy between what they have learned and what they are constrained to behold; and when they find this discrepancy in some whom they have been accustomed to regard as patterns and guides in the Christian life;—what may be expected to ensue? Stumbling-blocks are thrown into their youthful path, over which, but for the mercy of God, they may fall.

They are encompassed with temptations ; they are exposed, by their early age and inexperience, to manifold dangers ; and when they seek for helps, shall they find hinderances,—hinderances from Christian disciples, Christian instructors, perhaps Christian parents ?

Can we overlook the effects which un-Christian agitations too generally produce as impediments to the progress of Christianity through the world ? Unity—the unity of truth and love—is strength ; discord, weakness. “By love” Christians “serve one another,” and their great Master’s cause. “But if ye bite and devour one another,” says St. Paul, “take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” Love to each other is the badge by which our Lord’s followers are to be universally known ; and it is that which, by the accompanying grace and aid of the Spirit of all love, shall give wisdom to their plans, vigour to their joint exertions, and success to their most difficult enterprises. When a church “is builded as a city that is compact together,” it prospers in the enjoyment of a harmony which so knits and binds all into one ; and when that uniting harmony shall combine the whole body of Christ’s disciples into a blessed fellowship of peace, we are encouraged to hope that the world, in its several nations and families, will “believe” that the Father hath “sent” His Son to be its Redeemer and Restorer. But for dissensions among professed Christians, and the fruits which such dissensions yield, what a prevalency, as far as man can judge, would Christianity by this time have gained in the earth ! Its truths and mercies are now making an unwonted aggression on the darkness and misery of man ; new victories are achieved, new trophies are won. And shall the spirit of agitation interfere with this work, or abate the zeal with which it is maintained ?

“The beginning of strife,” says Solomon, “is as when one letteth out water : therefore leave off contention,” he adds, “before it be meddled with.” “He loveth transgression that loveth strife.” All are concerned in these inspired maxims. No one is so obscure or insignificant as not to possess some influence. Let that influence be employed for good. “Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes,” let us “desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby.” Shall we not forgive, as we pray to be forgiven ? Shall we not examine our own hearts ; and, if we discover any latent enmity there against our brother, seek to put it away ? Shall not each strive, in his own sphere of life and action, to cultivate the spirit of unity and peace ? And shall not all join in the prayer that “the Lord of peace” may “Himself give peace always by all means ?” The unfeigned love of peace as associated with truth and fidelity, and prayer for its attainment, will prove an excellent preservative against unnecessary agitation. Happy they who make it their daily study to “follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another !” They “eschew evil, and do good ;” they “seek peace, and ensue it ;” and they prove that “the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

“ WESLEYAN REFORM.”

SUCH is the designation given to the object proposed to be accomplished by the present agitators of the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion ;—the reform in question being declared to be, the introduction of Lay-Delegates into the Conference ; the abrogation of the Declaratory Law of 1835, so far as it relates to Circuit-Meetings for memorials to the Conference ; and the exclusion of Ministers from all offices connected with the keeping of accounts.

That this *should* be their object, it has cost them some considerable time, and no small amount of shifting, to determine. In the first instance, as stated in the publications issued from Fleet-street, Nottingham, and elsewhere, their proposal was, simply to abate some abuses which were alleged to exist in the pecuniary department of the Mission-House ; and to secure certain changes in the proceedings of the Conference, as to the modes of voting on disputed questions, and of appointing Connexional Committees ; and that, in all cases not affecting ministerial character, the doors of the Conference should be open, at least to a selection from the laity of the Connexion. But, as in former instances of agitation, the object thus proposed in the first instance, as being likely to attract the greatest number of supporters, having served their purpose for a time, as a disguise of their true meaning, and a trap for the unwary, was then enlarged, so as to comprehend some other objects, which the circumstances of a later period suggested as being auxiliary to their real purpose, and which, though they had no connexion whatsoever with the object first pretended, were, nevertheless, incorporated with it. In particular, it was made to include the protection and defence of any Minister or Ministers (being in the circle of their friends and correspondents) on whom the Conference or a District-Meeting might inflict a censure or a penalty ; such interference on their part being, in their judgment, amply justified by the gratuitous assumption, that all such penalties and censures were *ipso facto*, and by a sort of natural necessity, so many acts of tyranny. Hence their proceedings *antecedently*, as well as subsequently, to the decision of the cases specified in certain recent acts of Conference-discipline ; which, whether we regard their form or their substance, had just as much to do with Mission-House affairs, and vote by ballot, and open Conferences, and the appointment of Connexional Committees and their officers, as with the last Railway Bill that was enacted by the British Parliament ; and with which lay-delegation itself, under the plausible limitation with which it is demanded, would, if granted, give these meddling and inconsistent advocates no right to interfere. This *appendix* to the object first set forth has been so much to their taste, and so productive of the morbid sympathy on which they mainly rely for their success, that, in the eagerness of their pursuit of it, the original object has been in many cases wholly forgotten. We do not

intend the reflection to apply to all kinds of agitation ; but, by what would appear to be an *idiosyncrasy* of (what are called) *Wesleyan* agitations, the agitation now in question, like all preceding agitations in our Body by disaffected parties, has been characterized by an uncertainty of meaning, and a fickleness of purpose, of which honest men would be ashamed ; but which, in persons who are “double-minded,” and whose main principle is that of being “given to change,” might naturally be expected. Their object has therefore once more been transmuted, and is now proclaimed to be that which is stated at the commencement of this article.

Only, in justice to them, we should make it distinctly understood, that, with respect to the Declaratory “Law of 1835,” they now profess to aim at *nothing more* than the abrogation of that portion of the law which has relation to Circuit-Meetings for memorials to the Conference. The other portion of that law, touching the dealings of the Ministers with one another, is, according to their statement,—with an amusing affectation of regard for an obvious propriety,—excepted from their object, and left to take its chance. “This” (part of the) “law,” say they, “affects the Preachers ; in their hands we leave it : let those who feel themselves aggrieved fight their own battles.”*

It is something that they should have been shamed, if so it be, to this most emphatic and significant acknowledgment,—that *this* portion of the law, at least, is no concern of theirs. So all, but themselves and their dupes, have thought from the beginning. And yet, with this express concession on their lips,—involving as it does a clear renunciation of all right to interfere in any case on which this portion of the law may have its operation, and, farther, connected as it is with a distinct assurance of their resolution to leave “such as feel aggrieved” thereby to “fight their own battles,”—we find them intermeddling with the law and with those whom, on their own showing, it alone concerns, with as much blustering and impertinence as ever. Such is their practical illustration of what they mean by “leaving” this *item* of the quarrel “in the hands of the Preachers.” And the hollow inconsistency of their profession on this point, as being a specimen of their *own furnishing*, may fairly be considered the legitimate exponent of the true value of all other professions which they make, whether of their zeal for the Wesleyan Missionary Society, their regard for “our beloved Methodism,” or their “loyal and affectionate” estimation of the character and labours of their Ministers. In all these instances, as well as in regard to their *continued* proceedings in the case of the recently expelled and censured Ministers, their conduct,—by a law which almost invariably decides the course of those who, like themselves, are accustomed to confound *principle* with *feeling*,—their

* See a Paper, extensively circulated, entitled, “Examination of the Law of 1835,” &c. ; and, “Thoughts on Lay-Delegation.” Published by J. Kaye, Fleetstreet, London.

conduct, we say, in the face of all the world, gives the lie to their profession.

Their professions on one hand, and their practice on the other, are to our notion utterly incapable of reconciliation ; and with this element of contradiction in the case, their *real* meaning is to us inexplicable. But admitting, for the sake of argument, that, notwithstanding the mystery which is thrown on their profession (on the particular point in question) by practices totally at variance with it, they do still, in some sense which none but themselves can understand, mean what they say, in reference to that point ; and leaving them to follow their own way in the pursuit of that portion of their object, what shall we say of that which, after all, must be regarded as their leading and most important object, namely, the introduction of Lay-Delegates into the Conference ? Will they persist in the attempt to befool their disciples into the persuasion, that this, their ultimate and favourite object, is *Wesleyan* ? Their present bearing would appear to say they will ; and, after what they have already done, there is no absurdity, on the subject of reform in Methodism, of which, with such principles as theirs, they can be supposed to be incapable. With a zeal and perseverance which have been abstracted from more worthy objects, they have laboured to beguile us into the belief, that the best proof that can be given of "love to Methodism," is to sow discord and strife amongst its members ; that an "affectionate and loyal" feeling towards their Ministers has its legitimate expression in the defamation of their character ; and that good wishes to the cause of Missions are the most happily exemplified by a check on the supplies by which they are supported. And with these specimens before us of *their* method of illustrating the principles of which they make their boast, we are not, as otherwise we might have been, taken by surprise, that they should now ask us to believe *that* to be *Wesleyan*, which goes to uproot one of the main principles on which the system designated by that name has been established. We are not called to discuss the general question, whether a mixed Conference of Ministers and Laymen, or a Conference composed of Ministers exclusively, be, on the whole, the best adapted to the general interests of any Christian community. With us, just now, the simple question is, Could the *essential constitution* of the Conference be changed so as to satisfy the demands of our "reformers," and yet remain *Wesleyan* ? The Utopia which Mr. Martin * and his friends imagine, as the probable, nay, even certain, result of such a change—with all the charms thrown round it by the assumption, upon which their calculations rest, of the *harmony* that would prevail, from the preponderating and almost omnific virtue of such Lay-Delegates as *they* would introduce—is not, to us, sufficiently attractive, either in the theory which they propose, or in any illustrations which that theory may elsewhere have received in practice, to induce us to a moment's

* See his Speech, delivered at Manchester, on "Wesleyan Reform."

serious consideration of it. And even were it otherwise, still we have only to say, that whatever be the abstract merits of the theory itself, or the character of its results in practice, it is, at any rate, anything but a *Wesleyan* theory; and that, consequently, *as Wesleyans*, we neither *have*, nor *can* have, anything to do with it.

We must also be allowed to demur to the application of the epithet *Wesleyan* to the heterogeneous assemblies which have recently been held in various places, whether for the purpose of expressing sympathy with the expelled Ministers, or for the more comprehensive object of promoting what is called a “Reform in Methodism.” To be entitled to that designation, and to the consideration claimed for the conclusions therein adopted, those meetings ought, of course, to have been constituted of Wesleyans only. And if the agitators had been willing to exhibit fairly their real strength in point of numbers, they would in all cases have qualified their gatherings by this condition. Instead of opening their doors with a broad welcome to all comers,—especially in those instances in which the question of a “reform in Methodism” was to be “the order of the day,”—they would have limited the right of admission to such persons only as were *bonâ fide* members of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society. This limitation, reasonable as it was, and necessary for the purpose of giving to the proceedings of their meetings a properly Wesleyan character, has not (except, perhaps, in a few instances, of which we have no knowledge) been judged to be expedient; and for a very obvious reason. To the extent to which strangers were actually present at these meetings, the “demonstration” aimed at would, on the supposition of their having been excluded, have proved a failure; and the comparative nakedness of the entire cause which such demonstration was designed to serve, would have been, in the majority of cases, humbly apparent; and with this risk before them, as to the sort of impression and effect designed to be produced upon the public mind, they were not in circumstances to afford the loss, or absence, of that multitudinous but very questionable aggregation of *outside* supporters, which the more liberal and wholesale method of admittance brought to their assistance. Considering the constitution of those meetings, and the very large proportion in which strangers from all parties were generally present, we are neither to be coaxed nor terrified to the admission of their having any claim to be regarded as *Wesleyan* meetings; and we must needs consider all resolutions passed at meetings thus heterogeneously constituted, as altogether wanting the conditions indispensable to their being treated as legitimate expressions of Wesleyan feeling and opinion, and as deserving only such attention from the Conference and the *Wesleyan* public, as might be expected to be given by the Government and the public of the country to resolutions or memorials, on subjects touching the British Constitution, from meetings composed of persons of all nations.

And, as we decline the application of the epithet *Wesleyan*, either

to the *main object* proposed to be accomplished by the pending agitation, or to the *proceedings* by which it is attempted to be carried ; so, both ourselves and all others, except those who are "blind leaders of the blind," must needs decline the acceptance of the term "Reform," as a description of that object, whatever be the means employed for its accomplishment. The analogy attempted to be drawn, between Parliamentary Reform and such a change in the constitution of the Conference as that which is contemplated, is nothing better than a pure absurdity. The change effected by the Reform Bill infringed no principle of the British Constitution, and introduced no new element of power into the House of Commons. The project of our present agitationists, on the contrary, strikes at a *fundamental principle*,—a principle, we take leave to say, *essential* to the constitution of the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion ; and would introduce a new element into the Conference, of which the immediate effect would be, *first*, to *dis-Wesleyanize* the Conference itself, and so to withdraw all its proceedings from the security which they enjoy in the *legal* recognition of the Deed by which the Conference, in its present form, is constituted ; and, *secondly*, to dis-Wesleyanize, and so to nullify, all property now settled upon regular Wesleyan trusts, throughout the whole of the Connexion. This project our "affectionate and loyal" agitators call "Reform." We call it *Revolution*, and such a revolution, as nothing but the strangest ignorance or wildest passion would ever dream of, except as part of a project for the overthrow of the whole system. They profess to be fond of calling things by their right names ; and so do we. And it is precisely on this principle that, having seen from the beginning through the thin disguise thrown over their proceedings, in the first instance, by the plausibility of their original professions, we have not hesitated, from the first, to denounce their *ultimate* design as being *revolutionary*.

The demand for the exclusion of Ministers from all offices connected with the keeping of accounts, under the pretext of the injurious interference of such offices with their *spiritual* character, is evidently nothing more than a garnish, *ad captandum*, to their main proposal. It serves to *spice* their scheme ; but it is not an *essential* in the feast of good things, to which that scheme solicits our attention. And it would never have been introduced at all, but for the hope that it might serve to give a colour and a relish to that which might otherwise have been, to many persons, either stupidly insipid, or intolerably nauseating. If *separately* pleaded for, it might have claimed a little farther notice ; but, in the connexion into which it has been forced with other matters, and in the *canting* spirit in which it is obtruded, it is altogether unworthy of attention.

The parties with whom we are now dealing are partial to analogies and we will give them one. We have had the opportunity of closely watching the origin and progress of the agitations, which have successively existed in our Body during the last thirty years. And we have

noticed that, like certain contagious and malignant *epidemics*, agitations such as those in question, (whether regarded in their operation on large bodies collectively, or on individuals in particular,) have their commencement, their crisis, and their termination. The commencement of this disease is often very gentle, so much so, as hardly to excite any suspicion or alarm. But, if not promptly arrested and cured, it then runs through a regular succession of stages, generally connected with a high degree of fever, and with occasional delirium, until it reaches a decisive crisis, and soon after terminates in results which vary according to the various constitutions and circumstances of the sufferers. To many of the patients it proves mortal, as to their *Wesleyan* existence; others, to whom it does not thus prove fatal, it leaves "weak and sickly," as to their Wesleyan, and even spiritual, character; whilst a few, and a few only, in comparison with the whole number, are, by a free use of *tonics* and *correctives*, and especially by a *spiritual* renovation of their character and principles, recovered to a state of health and soundness. The *diagnostics* of the present case are sufficiently distinct to enable us to ascertain its similarity to cases which have occurred in former years, and to indicate, at the same time, the progress which the distemper has already made towards its crisis and concluding results; and we await that crisis and its results, with the confidence which the circumstances of the case itself, in connexion with the experience of former years, are calculated to inspire.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS AND PUBLICATIONS.

THE *Public Meetings* lately held have been most humiliating in their character, and most dishonourable to the chief parties concerned. It appears, from the reports given in the newspapers, that, when Mr. Everett is absent from such Meetings, they are comparatively dull, and devoid of interest. He is evidently the "merriman" of the company, who "makes game" for the assemblies. As an example of his style of address, we may give the following extract from a newspaper report of what he said in a Meeting at BOSTON, in Lincolnshire. At that Meeting Mr. Dunn had falsely declared that, in the last Conference, *three hundred* voices were raised, shouting, "Turn him out! Turn him out!" And when Mr. Everett spoke of the proceedings of that Conference, he said, "My judges were like men who, instead of coming in at the door, jumped on to the house-top, and went down the chimney, and now stand covered with soot; and it will take a long time to wash the blackmoors white! (Laughter.)" At the LIVERPOOL Meeting Mr. Griffith, as usual, indulged in the most rude and vulgar personalities; and to such an extent, that the Editor of the "Liverpool Mail," in giving the report, says, concerning one part of his speech, "Whether the charge be true or false, it must be obvious we cannot give the name." In the BATH Meeting, concerning which Mr. Bromley has written a letter so remarkable, after his professions and promises at the last Conference, the proceedings were such as fully to convince many, that the complaining parties were wholly unfit for the office of the Christian ministry, and to induce the Chairman to declare, in a printed letter to the Editor of the "Bath and Cheltenham Gazette," that he "deeply deplored the spirit there manifested, and many of the expressions there used." The BOLTON Meeting, described in the organ of the agitators, as being of the "most enthusiastic" character, is well known to have been an entire failure as to the Wesleyan Methodists of that town. The complainants had to seek lodgings there out of Methodism. The errors and inconsistencies of Mr. Webb's speech in the HUDDERSFIELD Meeting have been sufficiently shown in Mr. Macdonald's

excellent letter. The BIRMINGHAM, LEEDS, and BRISTOL Meetings are surprisingly poor with respect to the names of influential Wesleyans. And YORK—so long the residence of Mr. Everett—is almost equally so. Indeed, this feature of the Meetings held has been so apparent, that Mr. Dunn felt it necessary at one of them to state, that the wealthy men of Methodism dare not join them, being “afraid of the pew-rents.” We make no comments on such proceedings. We are humbled by the recital of them.

Of the *Pamphlets* lately published by Constitutional Methodists on “Wesleyan Matters” we earnestly recommend the following:—

1. *The Wesleyan Ministers and their Slanderers*, by George Smith, F.S.A.—This pamphlet contains a Christian and manly view of the whole case by a Wesleyan Local Preacher, a gentleman whose literary character, and whose position and influence in society, will command attention. At the end there is a letter by the Rev. John H. James, respecting the “Fly-Sheet” statements on Mission-House expenditure, which must convince every unprejudiced mind of the wicked and slanderous character of that publication. This pamphlet, consisting of fifty-two pages, may be had of Mr. Mason.

2. *Misrepresentations and Falsehoods of the “Fly-Sheets” exposed*, by Joseph Hargreaves, Wesleyan Minister. Mason. Pp. 63.—This pamphlet fully answers the title given to it; and while truly Christian in its spirit, boldly makes manifest the deeds of darkness committed by the midnight assassins on human character. It shows how, to serve their evil purposes, they have perverted public documents; made false statements on public matters, and wantonly employed personal calumnies to wound, and, if possible, to destroy, the reputation of men justly beloved in Methodism. Mr. Hargreaves has shown that both of the editions set forth as “*verbatim* reprints” of the “Fly-Sheets” are very defective, and omit passages of considerable length. The writer of this pamphlet has done good and timely service to Methodism.

3. *Methodism and Liberty: or, Friendly Hints, addressed to those Members of the Wesleyan-Methodist Church who demand certain Alterations in its Polity and Laws*. By the Rev. William Horton. Mason. Pp. 16.—This well-written pamphlet contains more than its modest title would indicate. It is pastoral in its style of address, and shows to an inquiring Wesleyan Methodist that he enjoys true liberty in the church to which he belongs; and that in it the principle of lay co-operation is recognised and carried out into practical working more than in any other church whatever.

4. *Conference Expulsions and the “Fly-Sheets” considered*. By the Rev. I. Harding. London: Partridge and Oakey; John Mason; and all Booksellers. Pp. 24.—This pamphlet is valuable in showing from the holy Scriptures, as interpreted by Calmet, Patrick, and Clarke, and from the laws of Great Britain, that it is “scriptural and right to require persons suspected of partisanship or cognizance in offences, to answer interrogatories upon their own guilt or innocence, when required to do so by authority.” It is creditable to the writer, and well worthy of a careful perusal by every Wesleyan Methodist.

Other publications on the same subject we must, for want of room, leave at present unnamed. We would recommend for cheap and general circulation in disturbed parts of the Connexion, *A Dialogue between two Wesleyan Methodists on the Agitations by Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith*,—which, in a familiar form, places before the reader most of the principal questions relating to the proceedings of the last Conference and the expelled; and the Hand-Bill Tracts, by a Local Preacher at Hastings, entitled, *A Few Facts on the Expulsions*; and, *A Word to Methodist Churches on the “Fly-Sheet” Agitations*. Sold by Mr. Mason.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

WE are greatly obliged by the valuable communications we have received from our Friends and Supporters in this undertaking. We shall be glad if they will exert themselves in their several localities for the circulation of our Periodical. Articles to be inserted in a forthcoming Number must be delivered in London by the middle of the month, at the latest. All communications must have the names of the writers confidentially given,—to be addressed, “To the Editors of ‘the Wesleyan Vindicator and Constitutional Methodist,’ 14, City-Road, London.”

The excellent Paper on Mission-House management is, for want of space, deferred to the next Number.

No. II.

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THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

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THE CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.
PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

I. *Wesleyan Methodism has a constitution.*

This is a consideration which has been very little regarded in recent movements. We might infer, from the way in which some persons speak and write, that we were a motley group of persons, who had just accidentally met together, and set to work to frame a few laws to keep themselves together, with nothing settled beforehand. Now the fact is, that a great deal had been settled for us, in this matter, before we were born, and so settled, that we cannot very easily alter it. It is one part of our object to let the Methodists know that they have a constitution, and what that constitution is, and where they may find it, and how far, and in what respects, it binds them.

It is no disparagement to this constitution, that it is not formally defined in any specific code, with its abstract principles and complete church-system drawn up by some ecclesiastical theorist, and imposed by some external authority. It is the glory of it, that, like the British Constitution, it has been gradually formed by the application of a few general principles to circumstances and emergencies which have successively arisen; that it has resulted from a mutual adjustment of the respective rights, duties, and privileges of the parties concerned; and that it has been consolidated by a long period of practical and successful operation. Such a constitution cannot be reduced to a nullity, or its existence put out of consideration, in the discussion of the questions now at issue.

That there may be no mistake as to the authorities to which we shall appeal in defining and defending it, we refer at once to Mr. Wes-

ley's Poll Deed for its *fundamental principles*, to the Minutes of the Conference for its *legislative enactments*, and to the History of Methodism for illustrations of its *practical administration*.

II. *The constitution of Wesleyan Methodism includes certain fundamental principles not to be meddled with.*

That Methodists are not at liberty to discuss the soundness, fitness, and scriptural propriety of those principles, either among themselves in friendly intercourse, or with members of other churches who may invite a comparison of their own systems of church-order, we by no means affirm. But we do deny the right of any Methodist, whether member, officer, or Minister, seriously to propose, and actively to compass and contrive, any scheme which would be subversive of the fundamental principles of the constitution. And we are prepared to maintain, that the Conference cannot consistently entertain any such proposals. The Methodist constitution, in its essential principles, existed before the Conference itself had any legal existence; and was committed to that corporate body as a solemn trust, to be faithfully fulfilled and transmitted, unimpaired, through succeeding ages, to the remotest posterity. On the faith that it would exercise this trust with strict fidelity, a large amount of property, in chapels and schools, has been placed under its control and management; various institutions have been founded and endowed; and thousands of men have placed their talents, character, property, and prospects in life at its disposal.

To unsettle the foundations on which all this superstructure has been raised, would be an *unrighteous* act, against which not only the Methodists of this age might reclaim, but the sainted dead of a hundred years. And as it would be unrighteous, so also would it be *impolitic* and *inexpedient*. As in any literary or charitable foundation it is held to be unwise to be often reviewing and revising its original statutes, and altering the terms of the compact with its members; so eminently in a religious society such innovations are to be deprecated. It would be difficult to enumerate any advantages to be gained by such changes, which could be considered equivalent to the certain evils attendant upon the agitation and excitement necessary to effect them. There is nothing in the affairs connected with religion which the human mind seeks, so much as stability and repose; nothing that is so detrimental to religious prosperity, as an unsettled mind, whether as to faith, morals, or rituals. All churches alike recognise this *vis inertiae*, in respect of their ecclesiastical regimen. The Scottish Presbyterian would be horrified at hearing his venerated Westminster Confession brought into question in some Presbytery or Synod, or the introduction of Prelacy gravely mooted in some overture to the General Assembly. The strict Baptist would start at the mention of infant-membership in the Christian church, by baptismal initiation, or of sprinkled water, or mixed communion, just as if these things had not all been settled long since, and accepted by him as the basis of his membership. And even the modern Independent, though in nowise strict concerning personal

opinions on ecclesiastical matters, and professedly open to passing popular impulses, would cry "Treason," if the question were raised within his own church, as to the divine right of Independency, or the scriptural completeness of a Congregational church, or the propriety of seeking State support for his Minister.*

The Constitutional Methodist, then, may well claim for his distinctive peculiarities, the same prescriptive immunity from discussion, with a view to abrogate or change. To us, then, the following points, among others, seem to be removed from the category of things debatable:—

1. That the Wesleyan Societies shall constitute one Connexion, and not a congeries of independent churches.

2. That the Conference shall be the supreme legislative and governing body, and the ultimate court of appeal for the Connexion.

3. That the Conference shall have the sole right of control over its own members, and the power to enact what regulations it deems necessary for their mutual observance.

III. *The constitution of Wesleyan Methodism excludes certain parties from the privilege of meddling with it.*

It certainly makes no provision for an appeal to men of the world, otherwise than to testify against their sins, and to seek their conversion. Neither does it allow the interference of other Christian churches in the regulation of its doctrines, worship, or internal discipline. In this respect it claims to be independent, and is as sensitive on the point of such officious intrusion, when attempted, as Independent churches are of the legislation of Congregational Boards, or of being dictated to by their sister congregations. Neither does Constitutional Methodism give to all its members, indiscriminately, leave to interfere in its government. It does not, any more than the British Constitution, recognise the inherent right of any and of every subject to settle the laws by which he will be governed, or to decide by show of hands, or number of heads, what is best for the public interest. And it will be time enough when the modern theories of universal suffrage shall have been recognised, tried, and approved by the body politic, to discuss the wisdom of introducing them into the body ecclesiastic. At any rate, Methodism knows nothing of such speculative theories. It seeks to concentrate men's thoughts on themselves, warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and helping them to obtain pardon of sin,

* The Editor of the "British Banner" most sapiently announces a *modern remedy for an ancient evil*. After referring to the "confused controversy" now raging amongst the Wesleyans, he proceeds to observe, that, from such evils, "the simple constitution of our Nonconformist churches, of the congregational order, has now, as ever, kept them happily free. Where no authority is asserted, no rebellion can take place."

To deny the truth of this axiom is to contradict all Scripture, and all experience. "Because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is there is no transgression." "In those days there was no King in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Were the government of this country simply abolished, there would be an end of all Chartism.

and a new nature : it directs their attention to the work that is to be done *in* them, in order that the evils of their own hearts may be cured, and to the work that is to be done *by* them, with a view to save the souls of other men, alike exposed to wrath and hell. But it does not encourage or allow them, in the moment that they join its communion, to work at patching its constitution. In John Wesley's own language, it bids them keep the rules rather than try to mend them. And in this it is perfectly consistent ; for as it confers no powers, it exacts no guarantees. It offers simply to help any who desire to flee from the wrath to come ; and all that it exacts, therefore, either as a test of admission, or a condition of continued membership, is proof of the sincerity of this desire. It employs agencies so varied and numerous, that no one can have any excuse for idleness ; but it defines every man's work, and assigns every man his place. The youth who may be very useful in teaching children to read the Scriptures in a Sunday-school, is not on that account held competent to teach his Minister how to expound them in the pulpit. The pious Leader, who may be very useful in guiding some of his Christian brethren in the way to heaven, is not necessarily judged capable of steering the vessel of the church through the shallows, storms, and dangers of tempestuous seas. Nor is it taken for granted, that every Exhorter or Local Preacher, who may occasionally edify a smaller congregation by a plain exposition of some text of Scripture, or may be competent to conduct a religious service, will be necessarily qualified to legislate for a body whose movements are felt to the ends of the earth. We are not at present discussing the question, whether it ought to be so or not, but simply arguing, that the constitution of Methodism, by defining what classes of persons shall take a part in its administration, and in what particular cases they shall so act, has necessarily excluded vast numbers of her members from meddling with its general management. In doing this it has at the same time furnished the weakest member of its communion with every needful guarantee against individual wrong, and keeps an open door of egress for all who wish to seek another home. We may confidently appeal to the working of the system in proof of its practical excellence ; and can well afford a comparison of its peaceful and spiritual efficiency, with the operations of professedly improved Methodist systems. The fact is, that the masses of the people never feel they have grievances to complain of, until they are informed by some noisy agitator, that they are a parcel of slaves ; and then for the first time some of them begin to fancy they feel their fetters. The greater part of our societies think no more about their constitution than a healthy man does of the state of his pulse, and for much the same reason ; for as long as they live up to their privileges, and attend to their duties, nothing reminds them of the government under which they are placed. And just as when you hear a man complaining of his pulse, you infer that he is feverish ; or of his head, you attribute it to biliousness ; or of his lungs, you

think of a cough; or of his limbs, you associate the idea of rheumatism: so if you hear a Methodist complaining of the law of 1835, you may be sure that there is something constitutionally wrong about him, either in his head or heart.

If the above propositions be sound, they furnish the Constitutional Methodist with a good chart to steer by, amidst the storms of the present agitation. He is not insensible to the value of reforms, especially when it is found that abuses exist; he is not indisposed to change, if he can be tolerably certain that it is for the better;—but he will require to know well what he is about. He will keep to his fundamental principles; and whatever would overturn them he calls *revolution*, not reform. He will no more allow himself to disturb the Connexional principle of Wesleyan Methodism than a loyal Englishman would sanction an agitation to change the form of government to a republic or an absolute monarchy. Such reforms as he may think necessary he will seek in the way which the constitution provides, and reject, with indignation, the interference of Dissenters, Chartists, and men of the world with his own church affairs. And upon these principles the Constitutional Methodist must condemn with all his heart, and oppose with all his might, the mischievous, divisive, and wicked proceedings of the avowed leaders of the present agitation.

THE MINISTERS' DECLARATION.

THE Declaration issued at this time by the Wesleyan Ministers, is, in our judgment, most judicious and seasonable. It may not please the leaders of agitation in Methodism, whose very livelihood, in some cases, seems to depend on continued excitement and disaffection; and it may not be approved by the professed champions of Independent churches, who are accustomed to condemn the united acts of Christian Ministers;* but every candid and spiritually-minded Methodist will see in it undoubted proofs of ministerial fidelity and tenderness. Its object is to *prevent evil*; which would be *better than the cure* of it, after it should be committed, if that should be found practicable. Every faithful Minister of God, like his divine Master, “hateth putting away;” and, as separation from Methodism must be the inevitable result to those parties, who, after lengthened forbearance, shall continue to agitate and disturb the societies, it is prudent and compassionate, on the part of spiritual Pastors, that they should set forth the *sinfulness* of their misguided people,—who engage in agitating proceedings,—the *impracticability* of their obtaining the objects profess-

* Dr. Campbell thinks the Preachers' Declaration is all wrong, because opposed to the views of, what he calls, the “more enlightened portion of the people,” meaning such Wesleyans as happen to sympathize with himself. In order that navigators may proceed with safety, they need not only light, but also charts and a compass; and as it appears to us, that he and his “enlightened” associates have gone to sea without either the one or the other, we think that, to bear their abuse is a less evil than to share in the results of a voyage of *light without security*.

edly sought by such means; and solemnly *declare* their fixed and immovable resolution to hold fast, to the end of their lives, the great essential principles of Wesleyan Methodism, intrusted to them by their fathers, whatever may be the clamour that may arise, or the results that may follow. From the part taken by the leaders of the present agitations, and from the great and extended exercise of ministerial forbearance, it might be supposed by the members of the Wesleyan-Methodist societies, that such conduct is allowable; and that, in the exercise of Christian liberty, they could call meetings, and denounce their Ministers and brethren as "tyrants and slaves," and still continue in Methodism. But the men who have advised agitation, and the continuance of agitators in Methodism, until removed from church-meetings by the police, know well, that the separation of such persons from the Wesleyan community is inevitable; and it is only that the division, when it comes, may be larger on their side, so that they may feed longer on the spoils, that they urge continued strife and conflict.

Various have been the reasons urged for continued warfare against the Conference and its Ministers. Some have urged it on the ground of original Wesleyan Methodism; and, while professedly claiming the greatest liberty of the people, have, tacitly, in their ignorance, asked for the abrogation of the "Plan of Pacification;" for what else can they mean, when they plead for John Wesley's own Methodism? Others have denounced the declaratory law of 1835, as if it were a new law, and not the declaration of an old one; and, on the ground of the unconstitutional and illegal act of the last Conference, they urge the demand that disaffected and calumnious men should be restored to the Wesleyan ministry. Another has stood forth professing great respect for Wesleyan Ministers, individually, and yet advised united effort against them, on the false ground that they together dipped their hands in the Children's Fund, and unrighteously extracted large sums for their own interests. Others have complained of old personal grievances, and have advised lay-delegation, that their Ministers may be watched and governed; and have urged the stopping of pecuniary supplies, until they shall be starved into such measures as their consciences condemn. These conflicting counsellors, however, all seem to agree on a course of protracted agitation; and, after the manner of Reform and Corn-Law Leagues, they propose to make a united attack on the Wesleyan Connexion. It is said, that to prepare for this, a meeting of self-appointed delegates is to be held in London, in March next; and without warning and declaration of the sinfulness of such conduct, and of the impracticability of the objects sought by it, some unsuspecting Methodists might be led into conduct which would, most probably, issue in their separation from a church by whose instrumentality they were converted, and by which they hope to be eternally saved. To give such warning, and thus to prevent the unwary from being misled by designing men, who have already done too much themselves to remain with honour in Methodism, is the Ministers' Declaration

issued. It had been confidently and repeatedly urged, that hundreds of the Ministers were with the people in these things, if they only dare express their views; and that, if supported from without, they would be found successful for them within the next Conference: but this plea is now groundless; for the Declaration against change and surrender of the fundamental principles of Wesleyan Methodism, has been solemnly made by nearly *thirteen hundred* Ministers within a fortnight; and has thus made it evident, that the Conference will not be likely to yield to an organized body of agitators, whatever may be the clamour they make, or the threats they employ. Let every Wesleyan Methodist, invited and urged to unite himself with the disaffected, read this Declaration; and let him "ponder the paths of his feet," before he take a step in future agitating and divisive proceedings; and we earnestly pray that he may be preserved to Methodism and to God.

MISSION-HOUSE MANAGEMENT.

WE suppose the conflict on Mission-House Management is over, but we insert in our Periodical the two following valuable communications: one of them should have appeared in our Number for the last month. The victory, on this ground, has been fairly and fully won; and by Resolutions passed unanimously, after the most searching investigations, by different parties, expressive of *satisfaction, confidence, and support*, God has made "the wrath of man to praise Him." The remainder of their wrath He will restrain; but, if not immediately, the assailants of Methodism will now have to find employment in attacking some other of its institutions. Which it will be, we cannot *divine*; but after the rash and reckless temerity evinced in their assault on the great Missionary Society, with which are connected interests so great and important, we shall not be surprised to see them furiously attack any institution in Methodism. It may be their next attack will be on the "Book-Room," or on the "Theological Institution," or on the "Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove Schools." We must wait and see if Dr. Watts's lines be true with regard to men, as well as to children,—that

"Satan finds some mischief still,
For idle hands to do."—EDIT.*

LETTER BY A RETURNED MISSIONARY.

(To the Editors of the *Wesleyan Vindicator and Constitutional Methodist*.)

DEAR SIRS,—Much has been written, and more said, lately, on the subject of Mission-House management. I have thought that a brief digest of the ascertained facts respecting it, might serve our noble Mission cause, and would not be unsuitable to your periodical.

That returned Missionaries have been the most forward and painstaking in repelling the wicked attacks made on our Mission-House, proves that they have not been so hardly dealt with as the enemy would insinuate,—that *they* have the fullest

* See the article on the CONTINGENT FUND, page 31.

confidence in the executive,—and that they, knowing the heart and difficulties of a Missionary far from home, are fully alive to the discouraging and embarrassing influence of such assaults when they become known abroad.

Many of the allegations have been of such a vile and degrading character, that the only fitting reply, if noticed at all, was a simple denial, throwing the *onus probandi* on the parties making them. That denial has been officially and publicly given; but no attempt at proof has been heard of, although the enemy has been driven to the declaration, that he never intended to call into question the “honesty” of our managers. How this can be reconciled with the nature of the charges preferred, or what character ought to be given to the men who could advance such criminations without a tittle of evidence in their support, are questions soon decided, if God’s word is to be the standard of judgment.

As the assault aimed at shaking the confidence of the supporters of our Missions in the *general economy* of their home-management, it was quite natural that defenders, not on the Missionary Committee, should, for their own satisfaction, and to aid them in their defence, make inquiry as to the cost of managing other similar Societies. There could be nothing unfair in this, when confined to the printed Reports of those institutions; and the result, even keeping in view the peculiar characteristics of each separate Society, affecting in a greater or less degree the home expenditure, manifested, most decidedly, that the Methodist Missionary Society accomplishes by far the largest amount of Mission-work at a much less proportionate amount of home expenditure,—or, in other words, a greater number of Missionaries are employed by that Society, a greater work is done, for a smaller charge on our churches at home. Some have gone into detail, and compared items in one Report with items in another; and, in doing so, have regretted the necessity laid upon them, being apprehensive that kindred institutions might misunderstand, or be inconvenienced by, the course taken; and assuredly defenders of our Missions, having their minds exclusively fixed upon the defence, may, by their possibly inaccurately reported platform utterances, have inflicted an undesigned wound on the provincial branch of some other Society, or at least started questions troublesome to the administrative of that Society. No one, however, has so violated all delicacy and propriety on this subject, as the Editor and correspondents of an anti-“Wesleyan” journal. Persons desirous of obtaining truer *data* for comparative views, than given by him and his correspondents, may find them in the “Wesleyan-Methodist Kalendar” for 1850.

The calculation, founded on the Rev. Dr. Harris’s Table of Missionary Statistics, and used by the Rev. William Arthur with such good effect at Leeds, and introduced by G. Smith, Esq., into his invaluable pamphlet, is convincing to every candid mind, and happily avoids the comparison of our Society with any other, singly. The Doctor, in his “Great Commission,” p. 184, gives, in a tabular form, the statistics of the various Missionary Societies; according to which it appears, that the united income of the Church, London, and Baptist Missionary Societies was, in 1841, £208,332. They employed, together, 338 ordained Missionaries, had under their charge 46,088 members, and in the Mission-schools 57,618 pupils. The Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society received that year £90,182; employed 367 ordained Missionaries, numbered 84,234 church-members, and afforded instruction to 56,849 scholars. From which it appears that our Society, with less than half the amount of funds, maintained in that year more Missionaries than did the three Societies named above, unitedly: it had nearly as many scholars, and almost twice as many members.

A letter from a valued returned Missionary, the Rev. M. T. Male, confines the expenditure to mere salaries at the Mission-House; and, even in this aspect, the comparison is in favour of our Society. In estimating the comparative amount of business done, however, we must not only keep in view the much greater number of country Societies in *direct* communication with our Mission-House, and of Agents abroad, but also the fact, seldom adverted to, that while other Societies simply pay a fixed salary to the Missionary, the old Methodist system of allowances, ordinary and extraordinary, is generally carried out on all our Stations; and thus, with reference to each foreign District, the whole business of four Quarterly-Meetings for every Station, and of the Annual District-Meeting, has to be rigidly scrutinized every year at the Mission-House in Bishopsgate-street; while, in accordance with our church-system, the General Secretaries stand in an ecclesiastical relation to the Missionaries, and have onerous duties to discharge in this relation, not, it is believed, devolving on similar officers elsewhere.

The REV. G. SCOTT has entered very fully into this matter, and by doing so he has given the assailants of the Wesleyan Missionary Society very much trouble;

and "some of them" have largely increased their guilt by attempts to pervert the truth, and to mislead the misinformed respecting the expenses incurred in Mission-House management. He has most satisfactorily shown the proofs of the strict economy practised at the Mission-House.

The Editor of a newspaper, in which many glaring falsehoods have appeared in reference to the Methodist Missionary Society, denies the correctness of the statement respecting the aggregate expenditure at home, and has put forth statements that, when examined, make it evident he intended to mislead his readers. Let us look at one or two of them; and as the Church Missionary Society and our own approach the nearest in their relative amount of income, let us take them for comparison. On the 29th of October this misleading Editor gives for the Church Missionary Society £5,692, instead of £11,787; and for the Wesleyan £11,625, instead of £9,670; while in a leader of November 12th, which contains nearly a column of small-print statistics, he makes the relative sums £6,313, and £11,597. We may fairly assume this latter calculation, which is so minutely made, to be in his view most accurate. Now, *first*, we must deduct from the Methodist account the sum charged for interest, £2,335, in order to make the comparison fair; for it is well known that the Church Society possesses funded capital, and happily does not need to borrow money as the Methodist Missionary Society is forced to do. Let there be added for the expenses of the Travelling Agent £388, and £20 for repairs on Mission-House, and then the amount will be £9,670. *Secondly*. To the Church account, as given by the Editor, must be added £2,726 for salaries paid for home management; then, £1,540, the sum corresponding to our Travelling Agent, and £1,206 left out of the publication account,—no corresponding item to "publications sold" being found in the Wesleyan Balance-Sheet; and it should be observed, that *more than one-third* of this very sum was received for the sale of "the Rev. G. Smith's China,"—a work not published by the Society, and therefore not included in the gross account for printing, but forming simply a donation to the funds. The Editor who made such numerous and minute calculations on the relative expenditure of the several Missionary Societies, must have known these things; but it did not suit his purpose to state them.

As to Publications, the printed laws of the Society authorize each subscriber of one guinea to receive a copy of the Report, and of the monthly Notices; while to each Collector of 1s. a week the same privilege is secured. Every penny-a-week subscriber may claim a Quarterly Paper. A much larger number of Reports, Notices, and Quarterly Papers must, in these arrangements of the Methodist Missionary Society, be required by it, than by any other Missionary Society in the country. The Committee of Management at the Centenary-Hall cannot decide on the number of Notices or Papers deemed requisite by any Branch Society; they simply forward what is ordered. There are some anonymous writers who aver, that too much is paid to the printers of these publications; and the Report, which for 1847-8 costs 1s. 3½*d.*, may, it is said, be produced for 10¾*d.* Many questions have, however, to be settled, before this anonymous estimate can be received in argument; and especially as it is impossible to calculate beforehand what unavoidable corrections in fine table-work will cost. It would not be wise to jump to the conclusion, that some £400 can be saved on the printing of the Report. Any of our larger religious Societies will state, that a considerable expense is incurred by unforeseen corrections; and, indeed, the history of publication-management by some of the parties complaining, as lately revealed in our Courts of Law, does not encourage us much to look in that direction for improved integrity and economy in conducting publication-work. Mr. KAYE, himself, knows this to his cost. The Report published this year contains seventy-six fewer pages than that of last year, and a portion of it is on somewhat lighter paper; so that the forthcoming Balance-Sheet, it is said, will exhibit a somewhat smaller charge on this item. The would-be-thought economists have already said, this saving is to be viewed as the effect of their strictures on Mission-House management; but this is mere vain-boasting. It will be found, on comparison, that the Wesleyan Report is not more expensive than that issued by the Bible Society, although peculiar facilities for obtaining paper and printing at the lowest price are at the command of that Society; and when it is borne in mind, that the former contains one hundred and fifty-four pages of tabular work, one hundred and seven of which are very fine, and four columns on a page, while the latter has only ninety-six tabular pages, and not one with four columns, the economy of our Committee in managing the Report becomes very manifest.

The charge for *Interest* and *Discounts* has called up many calculators. The lucid and candid statements of the clerical Treasurer, proving that signal good management prevails in this department, while fully satisfactory to every lover of

truth, are perverted by mischief-makers, just as wickedly as his remarks about a halfpenny in the shilling have been. The necessity for borrowing has been repeatedly shown; and it is a fact, that while the year 1848 begins with a debt of £6,000, and the home salaries and Missionaries' allowances are payable in advance, only £60,000 of the £117,485 to be met in 1848 had been received up to the end of December in that year. The remainder was paid in January and February, 1849,—the remittances, in most cases, being by bills of twenty-one days; in some, of a longer date: so that the money could not be immediately realized, without paying "discounts" at the Bankers. If annual subscribers will kindly pay their subscriptions for 1850 at the beginning of the year, and Branch and District Treasurers make prompt remittances, much may be done to lessen the charge for interest in future, but not without.

It is intimated, that the Treasurers are afraid to show the moneys-borrowed ledger, lest their mal-practices should be "detected" and "exposed;" but I know, on good authority, that, in the meeting of the Committee for special investigation, lately held, that ledger, as well as others, was on the table, and the sums were stated as far as was judged necessary. But that Committee properly felt that it would not be just or delicate towards the lenders of money to the Society, to read out aloud their names and sums lent, to the whole Committee. No right-minded person would desire such a mode of proceeding.

The "Fly-Sheet" men have repeatedly asserted, that the Missionary Secretaries have £500 a year each; an amount they arrive at by dividing among them the purchase of a house in Hatton-Garden. Dr. Campbell (see the "Christian Witness" for this month) thinks that this sum is the least a Missionary Secretary in London ought to have; and declares, "that there is a spirit of penurious, griping economy cherished in some quarters in relation to public institutions and their officers," with which he has no sympathy; adding, that the Vestry-Clerk of St. Luke's "has for his common-place labours £600 *per annum*." No such amount, however, is given to our Missionary Secretaries, as the writers of the "Fly-Sheets" know. The personal salary of each is exactly as stated by Mr. Scott and Mr. Arthur,—£150. If they have children, (a most unaccountable extravagance in the estimation of "Fly-Sheet" men,) the usual allowances for quarterage and education are added. A house, as plainly furnished as any Methodist Minister's house in London, with fuel and light, is provided for each. And let it be remembered, that some of the houses taken by the Committee for the Secretaries are *official residences*, designed to afford accommodation to Missionaries and their families going out, or on returning home; involving, on that ground, an amount of rent, taxes, furniture, and fuel, much beyond what would be necessary for a mere family dwelling; and imposing on some of the Secretaries an expenditure for domestic service not included in the £150, and not paid for by the Society.

George Smith, Esq., in his able pamphlet entitled, "The Wesleyan Ministers and their Slanderers," declares, from personal knowledge, the arrangements respecting provision for outward-bound or returning Missionaries to be a wise, provident, and kind arrangement. He says, "I have sat down at Dr. Beecham's table, with several young Missionaries and their wives, who were staying in London previous to their sailing for foreign stations; and have thought how much better it was for these young people to be in a place where they could obtain useful information and advice respecting their future perilous work, and strengthen each other's hands in God, than if they were scattered abroad in London lodging-houses, exposed to all the excitement and dissipation of mind which a first sight of the great metropolis is so calculated to induce. Yet the expense of this arrangement is unjustly set down as if it were complete emolument passing into the pockets of the Secretaries!"

The fables, certainly not *moral*, about a "slop-shop," "commissions and discounts" pocketed by the Secretaries, with a long train of *etceteras*, are, in plain language, "wicked slanders," for the propagation of which, at least, the proprietor and editor of a paper in which they were circulated, must be left to answer before God.

The very decided Resolutions passed unanimously, and with *every hand held up* in approval of them, by the Ministers and gentlemen present at the Committee Meeting for the particular investigation of the expenditure of the Society, will not, of course, satisfy the late assailants of the Mission-House management. It is evident they do not seek satisfaction in anything else than in mischief-making among Christians. But all right-minded men are satisfied with the Resolutions; and painfully humiliating as it may have been for men of known integrity like the Treasurers, the Secretaries, and the Committee, to rebut false and calumnious charges brought

against them in public, by men who had little or no regard for character, yet the result, in this case, will undoubtedly be that of benefit to the Society they represent. Already that result appears in increased contributions, as well as in increased confidence, if possible, in the integrity, ability, and economy of the officers of the Methodist Missionary Society.

Apologizing for the length of this paper on a subject which is dear alike to you and me, and which is not less beloved by many thousands of our brethren in Christ,
I am, yours truly,

December, 1849.

A RETURNED MISSIONARY.

THE LONDON DISTRICT MISSIONARY COMMITTEE.

(To the Editors of the *Wesleyan Vindicator* and *Constitutional Methodist*.)

DEAR SIRS,—As a Wesleyan Methodist, deeply interested in the great and holy cause of Christian Missions, I could not look with indifference upon the attempts lately made to bring into public discredit our own Missionary Society. It must be evident to every person acquainted with what has been lately passing in Methodism, that personal and interested motives have influenced the leaders in the unrighteous conduct pursued against the Mission-House. The same envious and vindictive spirit that produced the “wicked and slanderous ‘Fly-Sheets,’” undoubtedly originated the surmisings and calumnies respecting the Officers and Committee of the Missionary Society. Indeed, the seeds of all the fruits of bitterness that have since appeared were first deposited in those foul heaps of scandal. The parties that have been principally assailed in “Mr. Kaye’s Times,” and in anonymous letters and circulars, for their proceedings in connexion with the Missionary Society, were the parties first maligned and denounced in those very dishonourable and illegal publications; and the same evil conduct and motives were there insinuated, that have since been more openly declared. The originators and abettors of this wickedness must now be left to their own reflections before God; and, certainly, no thanks are due to them from Wesleyan Methodists for the continued stability and efficiency of our beloved Missionary Society.

If concern for the work of God had solely influenced them, they would not have put forth such false and contradictory statements concerning the items of annual expenditure as they did; nor have so doggedly persevered in repeating them, when their untruthfulness was made known. The falsehoods relating to Jamaica, though openly refuted by the most competent witnesses, have never been retracted, or apologized for, but tenaciously adhered to, and laboriously bolstered up with additional falsehoods. First, it was stated, there were complaints against the Officers of the Society, in a Memorial to the Conference by the Missionaries of Jamaica, for the misappropriation of funds; and that the Editor of the newspaper in which the statement was first made, had a copy of a Memorial from which he derived his authority for the statements he made. Then, when the person said to be charged with such a Memorial to the Conference declared he was not, it was pretended that the statement was founded upon the authority of returned Missionaries, who were named. This statement being contradicted, it was then said, the accusations made, and the grounds for them, were as they had been set forth, but they were in error only as to the District. It was Antigua, and not Jamaica; but not being quite confident of public exoneration from falsehood, they have tried to cast the odium of their doings on a returned Missionary, and graciously offered him space in their disgraceful journal for any communication he may have to make on the subject. Mr. Walton indignantly refuses to have any association with such parties; but denies that there was any “discrepancy” in the accounts ever spoken of by him; and expresses his belief, that every Missionary who had laboured in the District referred to, had the fullest confidence in the financial operations of the Committee. What next? I suppose we must wait and see. In the meantime, the meanness of the parties, thus employing themselves in reiterating and attempting to justify falsehoods, must be evident to all reflecting minds.

One of the DUBLIN CORRESPONDENTS, who professed himself so very deeply concerned for the honour and efficiency of the Methodist Missionary Society, has been crushed flat, as a mischievous creature trodden upon in the street. His venom is spent, and his internal motives have been exposed by one stroke with the foot of his giant countryman. The *half-crown* complainer of want of economy in the Mission-House has ceased his complainings, after a few piteous cries which he sent forth as he was so “tyrannically” trodden down. The LEEK correspondent, who, as interested in a certain printing establishment in town, might be expected to write on

the extravagance of employing another printer than the one he would recommend, has spent much time in mystifying the accounts given in the balance-sheet; and has especially dwelt upon the great saving to be made in allowing other parties to print the Annual Reports. Was there not another balance-sheet made out some years ago, for the Bankruptcy Court, that may yet claim some attention from him? To him and others, I find, the Editor of "Kaye's Times" recommends the exposure by Mr. Hoole of the falsehood of his statements, and of those sent to Oxford to be printed there; so we may expect he will do something more in the way of misrepresentation, before he acknowledges that he has done wrong.*

In the *General Committee of Investigation* on Mission-House matters, there was one individual, at least, whom the Missionary assailants are accustomed to laud as honest, manly, and courageous; and his hand, as well as all others, the printed report declares, was held up in support of the Resolution of satisfaction and confidence. But this does not suffice. The parties who made the investigation were interested and partial, it is said. On Friday, January 11th, at least two hundred and fifty persons were assembled in the Centenary-Hall for further investigation. Some subjects had been most indiscreetly proposed for consideration by Mr. J. W. Gabriel at the former meeting of the London District Committee, when surrounded by men prominent in agitating and divisive proceedings. I do not believe that Mr. Gabriel had any connexion with such men; but his youthful counsellor and prompter knew of his purpose, and Messrs. Kaye, Gibbons, Hunt, Gosjean, and Co. assembled to agitate and disturb. Understanding that the absurd and impracticable propositions were to be again presented, more than *two hundred* persons assembled at the next Committee Meeting. The introduction of such propositions at that meeting was very properly declared to be *illegal*; and though a meeting for free conversation on the subjects in which he and others professed to be most deeply interested, was held,—on the proposal of the General Secretaries,—yet the subjects of the Resolutions were not so much as named; and the complaining parties were evidently disposed to spend the time on some trivial inaccuracies of the report in the "Watchman" of the former meeting, than on the constitution of the Committee, and the questions relating to their integrity and efficiency.

Mr. Hoole, evidently very much against the will of some persons present in the meeting, went into explanations on several of the subjects which had been publicly misrepresented and falsified; and the result was in Resolutions of *satisfaction, confidence, and support*, almost unanimously passed,—there being but four dissentients, and they voted against one Resolution only. Is not this sufficient? It should be; and practically it must prove so. But the Editor of the "Dispatch" in Methodism, having summoned his workmen to the exercise of their wicked ingenuity, more misstatements may be expected. Yea, already he has led the way; for he has declared that *nearly half the number* of persons in the meeting were Ministers; and has so distorted what was said and done at the meeting, that his leading article and report are lengthy and dishonourable falsehoods.

I have a word to say on the character and proceedings of the meeting of Friday evening. It was a good and triumphant meeting for the real friends of Methodism. I have known much of London Methodists, but never did I see a larger gathering of the most prominent and influential persons in the societies of the metropolis, than in that meeting; and never was there manifested a stronger and healthier feeling for *Constitutional* Methodism. I have heard much of Yorkshire Methodist fire and earnestness, but nothing could possibly exceed the manly glow of fervent and zealous support to Wesleyan Methodism, and the Missionary cause, exhibited by my London brethren. It is manifest that the Methodists here are substantially sound; and that the noisy agitators, who, like trunk-makers, produce "more noise than work," are a small and unimportant minority. The Ministers present must have felt grateful for their beloved President: never were firmness and kindness more fully united in one man than in him; and both he and they must have been strengthened and encouraged by what occurred.

On the other hand, reflecting persons must have been amused by the inconsistency of the parties who have denounced personal examination by the Conference, being

* In a country town, about forty miles from the metropolis, a Constitutional Methodist went into the house of a Wesleyan Reformer, where several of the disaffected were searching for discrepancies in the Balance-Sheet of the Missionary Report; and having one such, as it was said to be, pointed out to him, he said, "Gentlemen, I cannot regard you as worthy judges of the management of a concern of more than £100,000 a year, when all of you, except one, have proved, by failure in business, that you could not manage affairs of far less amounts."

so clamorous for the interrogation of Mr. Hoole on the subject of the report of the former meeting. They readily dispensed with all things else to be gratified in this. Mr. Hoole, it is now known, had voluntarily told Mr. Gabriel, *before the meeting*, that he sent the report to the "Watchman." I and all true friends of Methodist Missions applaud him for his purpose, in supplying that report. In these days judgment must not be allowed to go by default. Proof was given, even by Mr. Gabriel himself, that the report was substantially correct. Two slight inaccuracies only were pointed out, which were, evidently, mere inadvertencies; whilst, otherwise, the report was declared by several persons to be most satisfactorily true. How consistent all this eagerness on the part of the denouncers of Conference examinations, and the defenders of a report, in another paper, almost wholly false and misleading! It was also amusing to see how delicate some persons seemed on the judgment of motives. Some who sat near could not but think and speak of what was said in the former meeting of the motives of Secretaries in nominating members for the Committee; and of the Committee, in requesting from the Conference the re-appointment of the Secretaries. Why were the London Quarterly-Meetings to appoint the Committee? It seems to me, as to others, that the "Liberty Boys" in Methodism want to have liberty all on one side. They would not allow the Missionary Society even to defend itself against attacks; nor individuals, if not with them, to have any credit for truthful purpose in writing a report. Some ironical *Oh's!* were uttered when Mr. Hoole said he did not write officially; as if he ought not to have liberty to write personally if he judged it necessary to do so, in defence of a Society for which he has spent the best portion of his life. Some loud complaints have been made of "tyranny and oppression" exercised in the meeting, on Friday evening last, in not allowing men who had rendered themselves notorious by disturbing Missionary Meetings to disturb that meeting; but the spirit there manifested by "Methodist Reformers," as well as at the meeting held three months before, gave additional proof and illustration of the common sentiment, "The noisiest champions for liberty would be, if they had power, the greatest tyrants in the world."

I am, dear Sirs,

A METHODIST IN LONDON, AND A MEMBER OF THE
LONDON DISTRICT MISSIONARY COMMITTEE.

January 16th, 1850.

LETTER FROM A MEMBER OF MR. BROMLEY'S COMMITTEE.

(To the Editors of the *Wesleyan Vindicator*.)

DEAR SIRS,—I fully agree with the Rev. Joseph Fowler in the estimate he has formed of the conduct of the expelled Ministers. He very properly designates that conduct "wicked" and "most condemnable," and declares that it cannot be defended by any persons, "until they have lost sight of reason and revelation." Much has been said by the expelled as to their blameless character and Christian proceedings; and they have been cheered onward in their career of agitation by the most extravagant comparisons with some of the best and greatest men this world has ever known. But if their proceedings be estimated according to their influence upon the spiritual interests of men, and as they are likely to issue in eternity, they will most assuredly appear anything rather than Christians. Many souls have already been greatly damaged; others have been effectually turned out of the way of peace; and if mercy do not interpose to rescue them from the destroyer, the period will doubtless arrive when they will bitterly regret the day they ever saw the faces of those men, whom they now so enthusiastically cheer, and so violently support. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

It has been said, in some of the Meetings of the expelled, that persons suffering spiritual loss by the present agitation must indeed be "weak brethren." Perhaps so. But then weak brethren have always been found in the Christian church: nor can the Wesleyan community, any more than other Christian denominations, claim exemption from them. I would not speak offensively; but it is manifestly upon *such* characters, who, according to St. Paul, are not to be endangered by "doubtful disputations," nor to have any "stumbling-block or occasion to fall" placed in their way, that the agitators are *principally* making an unfavourable, and, in some cases, I fear, a ruinous, impression. Nor let any man, however *strong* he may be, suppose he can indulge in "bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and anger, and evil speaking," without grieving the Holy Spirit of God, and suffering spiritual loss. If one thing more than another has shocked my feelings in this divisive movement,

it is its *Antinomian tendency*. Certain individuals, after bitterly vituperating some of the best of God's Ministers, and seeking, by inflammatory addresses, to rouse the very worst passions of the human heart, have not only asked the Divine Being to sanction their unholy proceedings, but have professed an ardent love for souls, and increasing conformity to the image of God! "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" If the fruit of the Spirit be love, such persons are evidently deceiving themselves, or they are seeking to deceive others.

I have just received a letter from an esteemed friend, informing me of many who once ran well, but who, by means of the present agitation, have been hindered, and are now "rejoicing in iniquity," and so "full of debate, deceit, and malignity," that he greatly fears most of them are entirely lost, not only to Methodism, but to the church of God. Appalling consideration! And what will it profit the agitators if they should each secure a life annuity, and gain the applause of every Chart-ist and Radical throughout the land, if upon their skirts be found the blood of souls! For *them* to talk of their being restored at the next Conference, and of their obtaining certain organic changes in the Constitution of Methodism, may furnish topics for agitation with the view of accomplishing some other object; but it is certainly not ingenuous thus to excite a hope which *they* KNOW can never be realized.

I am deeply grieved that Mr. Bromley should in any degree have contributed to increase the agitation. He may not have intended it; but his letter in the "Cheltenham Gazette" has undoubtedly done so. His statements in that communication have induced some to believe, that the last Conference acted with criminal partiality in retaining him, after having expelled others, apparently no more guilty than himself. Had he told the whole truth, this impression would not have been made; and I greatly regret, that in his letter he omitted to state, that in the Committee before which he was allowed to offer all his objections to the law of 1835, he *voluntarily* declared, that he had no connexion with the "Fly-Sheets," but highly disapproved of them; and that if he might be allowed, with his strong and unaltered views of the declaratory laws, still to retain his *status* in the Wesleyan Body, he *would not* agitate the subject farther, nor give any encouragement to those who might seek to disturb the peace of the Connexion. Had the expelled given similar satisfaction to their brethren, they would have been saved from their present unhappy position.

A MEMBER OF MR. BROMLEY'S COMMITTEE.

NOTICES OF AGITATION MEETINGS.

LINCOLN, Monday, December 24th, 1849.—At this "enthusiastic" Meeting, Mr. Everett made a statement which was scarcely expected, considering that it is almost impossible to hear his name, or see his face, without thinking of the "Fly-Sheets." It was this: "Foul slander, foul suspicion, black imputations, are to be entertained in the Wesleyan body, and the object of malice is not to know his accusers. I ask you, Is this Wesleyanism? If it is, the sooner it is expunged the better." It was the wish of the "Fly-Sheet" folks that such things as these should be "entertained by the Wesleyan body;" but the attempt failed, and the names of the parties making it were "expunged" from the printed Minutes. It is with such things as these that the people who attended this Meeting "sympathize;" and they were, therefore, very naturally, hostile to the Conference.

THIRD LONDON CIRCUIT, Wednesday, December 26th.—Here the Chairman resolved to speak what he had thought for "a long series of years;" and as it is generally a pleasure to a man to speak what he thinks, he might have been happy sooner,—for he has uttered nothing which required concealment for any "series of years," whether "long" or short. It is his opinion that, in all the quarrels which have arisen in Methodism, from the death of Mr. Wesley to the present time, the Conference has always been in the wrong, and its opponents in the right. In giving a history of Methodism for the last fifty years, he thought it best to say nothing about the suit in Chancery. There was obviously in his mind a desire to exalt the writer of the "Southwark Address," and to depreciate Richard Watson; and so he did not add, that the main points then in dispute had been since decided by the highest legal authority. Being a literary man, he recommended several books to his audience; but thought it most prudent not to call attention to the elaborate judgment of Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst. "Lay-delegation," he thought, was scarcely the thing; but he had his own plan of reform, which probably to himself displayed considerable wisdom. The REV. S. DUNN could not go so far as the Chairman, as "there is not a soul in this world, at this moment, who knows the

opinion of Samuel Dunn "respecting the Lay-delegation business." Whatever he may think at present, it will be his wisdom, sooner or later, to be of the same opinion with the "London Committee," as they do not like contradiction any more than other people, and may possibly "stop the supplies." When he said they had been "backward" to "predict," he should have excepted Mr. Griffith, who, in that line, has been the reverse of "backward" for several weeks past.

MIDSOMER-NORTON, January 1st, 1850.—Here, it seems, the most remarkable circumstance related to the three travellers; for, "as they each appeared on the platform, the people began to cheer them, and continued to do so for some time." No doubt they needed this little solace; for although, at present, it is, probably, to them, a very agreeable task to go about the country, saying all sorts of bad things about the Conference, yet it is possible their masters in London may give them quite enough, if not too much, of even this good thing.

FROME, January 2d.—On the platform there was a large array of Dissenting Ministers, and the Chairman was also a member of that portion of the community. He said, "As this difference arose so completely in the heart and core of Methodism, by Methodists alone ought it to be decided." It seems the "Ministers" knew this was said merely to save appearances, and therefore they did not arise and go home. Respecting a similar assembly "held at BATH," and presided over by a brother Dissenter, he added, "No Christian could read the public reports of that meeting without great pain and regret." To the Wesleyans who were present, he said, the Church "hated you from the beginning; it hates you now." Yet the Church never hated us so intensely as to interfere in our domestic quarrels; but even an Apostle cannot prevail upon the Dissenters to "study to be quiet, and to mind their own business."

SALISBURY, January 3d.—It seems this was "not a crowded assembly," and the Chairman must have made a slight mistake, when he said, "I have always *thought* that these gentlemen were unjustly treated: now I am *assured* of the fact." When a number of men conspire to obstruct the course of justice, and avow their determination to shelter from its operation a malignant, anonymous, and systematic libeller, whatever a Chairman may have "thought" in certain states of mind, he never was, and never can be, "assured," that, after this, a body of Christian Ministers are bound still to acknowledge such men as their brethren; or that parties who have so acted are "unjustly treated," when they are "put out" from the community of Ministers, with whose libeller they have chosen to identify themselves.

CONTINGENT FUND.

SINCE the paragraph at page 23 was set up in type, it has appeared, in the Agitators' weekly organ, that the next attack is to be on the poorer Circuits in the Connexion, through the medium of the Contingent Fund. After stating, that "it is a growing opinion, that the most merciful plan to all parties concerned would be *at once to stop all supplies*, from whatever source derived," it is urged that, at any rate, the CONTINGENT FUND should not receive a single contribution from persons desirous of effecting a reform in Methodism; and, with something like a show of reasons for what is urged, it is declared, that this Fund is employed as "a sort of secret-service money" by the Ministers against the people; and that, by means of it, pamphlets and speeches in opposition to the "reformers" are published and circulated.

Such declarations are known by the parties who make them to be untrue. Mr. DUNN, who made them first in his speeches in the north, and who had been a Financial Secretary, knew them to be so; and for them he, at least, stands convicted before the Methodists of the world, not merely of error, but of deliberate sin. The Contingent Fund is not at the disposal of the Ministers in the way represented, but at the disposal of a Committee of thirty persons, composed of fifteen laymen, and fifteen Ministers. The fifteen laymen are chosen by the Circuit-Stewards alone, (the Ministers not voting,) at the May District-Meeting; and from Circuits conti-

guous to the town where the Conference is that year to be held. The accounts of *Receipts* and *Expenditure* are published every year in the Minutes of Conference ; so that any person may ascertain how the money received has been expended. But where, in the last year's accounts, is there to be found an entry for the cost of controversial publications ? Very few of the publications issued in this controversy have been given away at all, and they almost wholly by parties in the Circuits who have purchased them for gratuitous distribution ; while as many have been sold as to excite the envy and *chagrin* of the less successful publisher of the " Wesley Banner." The Contingent Fund is faithfully applied to the assistance of the poorer Circuits in Methodism ; and is distributed among the Circuits, in the several Districts, at the September District-Meetings, by the Circuit-Stewards and Ministers. As many as *nine hundred* Stewards belong to those Meetings ; and not less than *four hundred and fifty* persons have, in the past year, received money from the Contingent Fund ; and if any one of that number can prove the misappropriation of the Fund, then let MR. DUNN be heard as a man of truth.

NOTICE OF PUBLICATIONS.

WE earnestly recommend to our readers, and for distribution among Methodists unacquainted with the *constitution* and *objects* of Wesleyan Methodism, the periodical tracts written by the REV. JOHN MACLEAN, of Sheffield, and entitled, **WORDS IN SEASON FOR YOUNG WESLEYANS.** They may be had either of Mr. Samuel Harrison, High-Street, Sheffield, or of Mr. Mason, Conference-Office, London. They evince the author's thorough acquaintance with the constitutional principles of Wesleyan Methodism ; and are written with ability and persuasiveness that are equally creditable to his head and his heart.

The Principles of Wesleyan Methodism ascertained by Historical Analysis, and defended by Scripture and Reason : an Essay adapted to the Times, by James H. Rigg, Wesleyan Minister. 12mo. Partridge and Oakey, London.—In our next Number we shall give a more lengthened notice of this very able and reasonable pamphlet. In the mean time we say to Methodists, Lose no time in obtaining it.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

To an Admirer of Dr. Clarke.—You are right in your judgment respecting the " Ministerial Notes on the ' Fly-Sheets,' " from which the quotations were given in Mr. Kaye's " Times " of January 14th and 21st. Were they not written by a Minister who, at the time, was under suspension for falsehood, drunkenness, and fraud, before he left the country ? We cannot reconcile the statement made in the preamble concerning the writer of the Notes being " a Wesleyan Preacher who has stood high in the esteem of the Conference party, and has been on different Connexional Committees,"—and which contains not a word concerning his expulsion,—with other statements made by the same party of his character and conduct, any more than we can reconcile many other kinds of double-dealing practised by them. While it served their purpose, they could denounce the Conference in connexion with the name of such a man ; but now they can covertly employ his revengeful effusions to assail its leading members, and write of him whom they had previously held up to public odium, as if he were a most respectable and honourable Minister. This is a fair specimen of " Fly-Sheet " writing.

J. B., *Cromford Circuit.*—We are obliged by the information in your letter.

A PASTOR.—Thanks for your article ; but we have not room for it this month.

Articles to be inserted in a forthcoming Number of our Periodical, must be delivered in London by the middle of the month, *at the latest.* All communications must have the names of the writers confidentially given to the Editors, if not attached for publication,—to be addressed, " *To the Editors of ' the Wesleyan Vindicator and Constitutional Methodist,' 14, City-Road, London.* "

No. III.

PRICE 1d.

THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

MARCH, 1850.

WHICH IS BEST? TO LEGISLATE FOR METHODISM,
OR TO WORK IT?

WE have heard it said, that nothing is so well distributed as sense, for every one is pleased with his own share. The highest kind of sense is that which fits a man to frame regulations for the benefit of any great community. Yet even of this special kind of sense you find most men think they have got a fair portion. If there be one thing from which no one shrinks, but at which every one in turn makes a trial, it is just the thing for which only one man in every million has any notable fitness; namely, legislation. There are few villages in which you will not find a man who could vastly mend all the laws that exist in the world. There are few churches so inconsiderable, that they do not contain some one who has clearer views on church-polity than any one ever had before; and plans ready in his own right hand which, if carried into effect, would most magically further the cause for which he is zealous. When, in any particular locality, or in any particular section of the church, a more rapid extension is felt to be desirable, two different classes of persons begin to seek it in two different ways. One is going to have better plans, to change this, to mend that, and to begin a new thing which has not been known before. His sympathies may be high, and he would secure prosperity by raising the tone of church-polity to a higher ecclesiastical standard. His sympathies may be low, and he would secure prosperity by bringing matters down to a more popular level. One would have Methodism take a loftier stand, and become a little more like Episcopacy; another would have it take a lower stand, and assimilate itself to the Independents. One would modify the itiner-

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ancy, and give us settled Pastors; another would chequer the uniformity of Conference by a lay-admixture. One would have Bishops, as in America; another would have as few Local Preachers as could possibly be employed; and another would have it Local Preachers all.

Another class of persons, when they desire to see Methodism prosper, either in their own neighbourhood, or in the whole world, do not think of setting about new plans, but feel that a shorter path to prosperity lies in prayer, faith, and work. They do not think what the Conference should do, or the Ministers do, or the Local Preachers do, or the Quarterly-Meeting do; but even and alone what themselves should do. They do not regale their Christian friends with an exposition of sage improvements, which only want trying to do the church incalculable service; but they secretly go to God, they mourn for perishing souls, they search and chide their own hearts, they plead for power from above; and, thus prepared, they go out to light a holy glow in their class, to meet and move the prayer-meeting, to mix with faith every passage of the sermon, and to seek the dark, the wilful sinner, or the sick, that they may personally urge them to come to Christ. While others are endeavouring to advance Methodism by legislating for it, they endeavour to advance religion by working Methodism.

Now, did you ever remark two persons of these two classes, and note which did most for Methodism in any ten years of his life? If you did, you have come to your conclusion. You have seen the great planner go on planning; and all the good that his plans have done to Methodism, to the souls of his neighbours, or to his own soul, might soon be told. You have seen the holy, hearty worker go on working; and every department of God's cause, in the society to which he belongs, has, year by year, been strengthened by his deeds. The one sets his friends to discuss, the other sets his friends to labour. The one makes heads ponder what they can devise, the other makes hearts ask what they can do. The one fosters a love of ruling men, the other fosters a love of saving men. The one habituates men to look on the church as an organ, on which they may show their skill by additions and changes that will ennoble its swell, or enrich its variety. The other accustoms men to look on the church as a trumpet, by which they may awake those that sleep.

"If we are to prosper, we must have so and so." We tell you solemnly, that the secret of prosperity does not lie in legislation. Churches die under the highest sacerdotal, the strictest presbyterian, or the loosest congregational, *régime*. See the high Episcopal Church of England, how long she lay dead! See by her side the Presbyterian churches, not only dead, but heretical,—formalism in the Church, Socinianism in the meeting-house. See the state Presbyterian Church of Scotland, holding fast her testimony as to doctrine; and the state Presbyterian Churches of Germany and Switzerland, terribly fallen.

See the Voluntary Presbyterian Church of Ireland sink into Arianism ; and, at the same time, the Voluntary Presbyterian Churches of America retain their orthodoxy ; while the persecuted Presbyterian Church in France falls into the lowest depths. See, at this moment, the Congregational Churches of England chiefly orthodox, and the Congregational Churches of America chiefly Unitarian. See the Methodist Church of America, with Bishops, rapidly prospering ; and the Methodist Connexion of England, without Bishops, increasing by one hundred thousand members in the last twelve years. See the Methodist New Connexion, with lay-delegation, going down ; and the Primitive Methodists, with lay-delegation, rapidly advancing. Then see the same Churches, with the same constitution, at one time flourish, and at another decay ; at one time preach a pure faith, and at another give an uncertain sound ; at one time awaken multitudes, and at another soothe all to sleep. Look at all this, and say, in the name of common reason, will you have us to look for the secret and principle of success in differences of law and polity ? Again we tell you, it does not lie there. You may legislate for Methodism till it is dead. You may plan for Methodism till it is not worth preserving. But if you take it, and work it, with a full faith in God, and a hearty love for man, be assured you will see blessed results of vigour, peace, and increase.

Few men are following their calling, when they undertake to legislate either for a nation or for a church. Few have the knowledge of past experience and of present emergencies, few the calmness and penetration, the foresight and the sagacious instinct of what will succeed, which are absolutely necessary to constitute a legislator. Yet all are liable to the delusion that they can scheme more wisely than those whose superior opportunities, and whose closer application, they would not think of questioning. We do not hope to cure all of planning. We know men who will go on planning as long as they live ; and when they can plan no more, not a fragment of their legislation will be found to outlive them. Their fancied wisdom is their weakness. Their fine schemes are their humiliation. They might be useful, they are only busy. They might be honoured, they are only talked about. They might build up the church of God, they only annoy the architect, and derange the workmen, by continually consulting and suggesting alterations in the plans. Your habitual law-makers are a contriving, inquiring, discussing, and withal a useless, race ; and alas for the society or the Circuit where the influential men have become touched with the legislating mania ! Give us our lot in a society where all that have influence set themselves, not to mend Methodism, either on the high side or the low side, but to work it.

And as to present storms, who, think you, will do most for Methodism at this crisis ? They who plan most, or they who work most ? they who hold most discussions as to what must be altered, or they who pay most visits to the dying and the poor ? they who lose no chance of confuting a radical or of assailing a Conference-man, or they

who lose no chance of bringing a sinner to hear the Gospel, or an inquirer to class? they that get up a new memorial, or they that get up a new chapel? they that study hard speeches and hard letters, or they that study the Bible? they that assail or that defend the Preachers, or they that plead much for them at a throne of grace? He that works Methodism with most heart, is the best friend of Methodism, and the best servant of religion. He that spends his strength in mending Methodism, is not wise either for Methodism, for religion, or for his own soul.

THE LAW OF CHRIST, MATTHEW XVIII. 15—17.

IN the painful controversy which has for some time disturbed the Wesleyan Connexion, the Declaratory Minute of 1835 has been represented as in direct opposition to our LORD'S Rule on the proper mode of treating an offending brother. Were I to entertain the same opinion, I should feel it my duty, if spared, to move in the next Conference the immediate repeal of that Minute. Our LORD'S words are: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

These words undoubtedly assume two things;—namely, that the "trespass" is a *personal* matter between two brethren, and that the individual against whom it has been committed *knows* who the offending brother is. Were it a trespass against many, and of public notoriety, a strictly private interview between two brethren, as here commanded, would not meet the case; and were there any doubt in the mind of the aggrieved party as to the "brother" trespassing, he obviously could not with any confidence "go and tell him his fault."

The Rule of 1835 does not contemplate a case of this kind; and, I believe, has never been so understood or applied. In every such case, our Lord's directions are to be strictly observed. "Trespass," however, may be committed, not only against an individual, but against many, even against a whole church; and so secretly that no direct evidence can be brought home to the guilty party, while yet general rumour and much presumptive evidence may direct suspicion to a certain individual. Provision is most properly made for this case; that, if innocent, the suspected party may have a fair opportunity of removing an unjust suspicion; and that, if guilty, he may no longer have any cloak for his sin. This provision, not originated, but re-asserted and embodied, in the Minutes of 1835, permits any Minister to be questioned in the District-Meeting, (as, of course, also in the Conference,) on any dubious part of his Christian or ministerial conduct;

and I know that the law, thus applied, has been frequently attended with beneficial results.

To say that it is wrong for a Minister to be asked to criminate himself, is tantamount to saying that, although criminal, he is not to be disturbed in his iniquity, (however injurious it may be to his brethren or to the cause of God,) so long as he can practise it under a mask. But is this right? A Wesleyan Minister professes to be in the favour of God,—a state of grace incompatible with sin, however secretly committed; and whilst he lives in the enjoyment of that blessing, he certainly has nothing to fear from any brotherly inquiry. But if he should yield to temptation, and by a dishonourable and unchristian course entirely lose his spiritual *status*, is it not an important duty, if possible, to detect him in his apostasy, that he may be brought to sincere repentance or deposed from his sacred office?—A state of mind which can indulge in sin manifestly unfits a man for the work of the ministry; and our people are so fully aware of this, that a Wesleyan Minister, however talented, would not be received in any Circuit in the Connexion, were he known to be living in sin. Why, then, so much clamour against a law which *cannot by any possibility injure an innocent man*; and the sole object of which is to search out iniquity, and to restrain Wesleyan Ministers from doing anything which will not bear the light? Besides, it is in perfect accordance with the honest and open genius of Methodism,—and with the supreme Word of God, which calls us not to “cover sin,” but to “confess our faults one to another.” This is Christian duty. Instead of denouncing the law in question, let all our people be thankful for its existence and faithful application.

In the “Plan of Pacification,” adopted by the Conference of 1795, we find the following Rule:—“To prevent as much as possible the progress of strife and debate, and consequent divisions in our Connexion, no pamphlet or printed letter shall be circulated among us without the author’s name, and the postage or carriage paid.” Pamphlets without the author’s name, of the very character here described, calculated to promote “strife, and debate, and consequent divisions,” had for some time been circulated in the Connexion; and the gravest suspicions had descended on one man as the principal author. That man was very properly questioned on the subject. Had he denied the authorship of the pamphlets, the Conference would, no doubt, in the absence of direct proof, have received in good faith that denial. Had he acknowledged the authorship, and confessed that he had written in haste, under the influence of mistaken views, and that he was sorry for it, he might have retained his position amongst us. Or had he acknowledged the publications, and professed his readiness to substantiate the allegations therein contained, the Conference, as he well knew, would have investigated the whole case. He adopted none of these courses; but said that he would reply to the question “neither yea nor nay.”

Few, if any, *now* doubt that the individual thus questioned was the chief writer of those slanderous publications. With the fullest confidence I assume, therefore, that he was. Then how stands the case? He believed what he wrote was *truth*; or he believed it was *falsehood*. If the former, his professed love to Methodism should have induced him to require a formal investigation. This was the more incumbent upon him as an advocate of "justice," seeing that the accused earnestly and repeatedly called for this course, that they might be in a position to defend themselves. When questioned by the President at the bar of the Conference in relation to the obnoxious documents, he had the very best opportunity of preferring his charges. Was he afraid? Afraid of what? *He* could not fear transportation to a "penal settlement." I marvel at his cowardice as a man, and still more at his unfaithfulness as a Minister. Talk of Luther before the Diet of Worms, indeed! What a cruel reflection upon the memory of that *honest* man is implied in the comparison!—If he believed what he wrote was falsehood, his proceedings throughout will easily be explained; "for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd."

THE CHAIRMAN OF A DISTRICT.

ALLEGED DESPOTISM OF THE CONFERENCE.

THAT hard word "despotism" is said to mean "absolute power;" and although that appears a dreadful thing to be in the hands of any body of men, yet, as it is not wise to be frightened at shadows, let us stop and consider what, when the term is applied to Wesleyanism, is its usual import.

Everybody knows that the Conference makes no pretension to political power; and therefore it has long been tolerated by Parliament, and was never prosecuted by the Attorney-General.

Nor are we now about to speak of that spiritual power with which John Wesley, in common with every true Christian Minister, was invested; and which is derived from Christ, the Head of the church.

We refer to that power over the persons and property of other people, which was the result of circumstances, and providentially devolved upon him, in the ordinary course of earthly events; and which he, by express deed, bequeathed to the Conference.

Since it has been said, that Wesley's ecclesiastical representatives have wrested from the people almost the last fragment of power belonging to them, let us just glance at the "despotism" still in the hands of every man who is a Methodist, although but a private member of the Body.

He has "absolute power" to determine whether or not he will join the Society. No man is born a Methodist; nor can the entire Conference, however wishful to increase the number of members, make

any man one, without his own consent and concurrence. Then, having joined the community, he can leave it again, on any day, and at any hour, most agreeable to himself, whether the Preachers happen to like it or not. Should an attempt be made to force him out of the Society against his own inclination, he can demand a trial before a Leaders'-Meeting; and, if not fairly treated there, he has the right of appeal to higher courts, which, however reviled, have, in point of fact, often decided against a Minister, and in favour of a private member.

Then every individual Methodist possesses "despotic" power over his own money. Yet it might not be amiss for the reader to pause a moment and be quite sure on this point. Such fearful things have been lately said about the "despotism" of Ministers, that it is no wonder if some people begin to think that the Conference can, by some secret legerdemain, take title-deeds out of chests of oak and iron, and filch money out of pockets themselves. When a man who can yet "do what he will with his own," leaves the Society, of course, his contributions go with him, and the Preachers must submit, whether they can obtain their allowances or not. Should he choose to remain, he can be quite a respectable member by paying a penny a week, and a shilling a quarter; and possibly, if he manage matters pretty well, for even still less. When any member of Society is displeased with the Conference, he can easily raise the cry of "Stop the supplies;" and, should it be universally taken up by the people, it will in power resemble the rod of Moses; for since their Ministers have so far trusted to their honour as to follow them into the midst of a sea, this confidence may end, if God permit, in an overwhelming embarrassment and ruin. Stewards, in more Circuits than one, at the recent Quarterly Meetings, have either taken the contributions of the people to pay off old Circuit debts, or put the money into their own pockets; and every private member, if he choose, has the "absolute power" to support this policy, and the Preachers may complain, but can recover no quarterage. Thus any member of the Methodist Society, who conceives himself to be oppressed, can, when he happens to be right, readily defend himself, by means which are perfectly obvious and regular; and when he is plainly in the wrong, and the worst comes to the worst, he can, by the easy process of keeping his money in his own pocket, dissolve the connexion between his Ministers and himself, and thereby escape from their tyranny for ever. Whoever, with this power, cannot preserve his own liberty, should be put under somebody's protection; for it is clear, in such a world as this, he cannot take care of himself.

Then as to the "despotism" of the Conference. In reference to the subject now under consideration, there was originally no difference between John Wesley, and any other man in the United Kingdom. All are equally capable of the same "absolute power;" and the only difference between him and them is, that nobody thinks proper to submit to them, but many did freely place themselves under his authority. That was the circumstance which gave him power. What he

possessed himself he gave to the Conference. He did not give it less. He could not give it more. From him the Conference received a power, legislative, administrative, and judicial, which, however, was not of the slightest value to them, or anybody else, unless they could, as he had done before them, attract human beings to themselves, and prevail upon others to submit to their authority. Wesley gave to the Conference power to receive Ministers into connexion with itself. But what, if there were no tenders of service? He gave it power to send out Preachers; but how, if there were no people to find them board and quarterage? He authorised his successors to occupy certain chapels; but they must first persuade other parties to build these, and place them at their disposal. By him they were empowered to decide cases; namely, if parties brought any into their courts. Finally, he gave to them a Book-Room, with power to sell as many publications as they could induce people to pay for. Many parties think this power of the Conference is a wonderfully fine thing, of which they should like to have a share; but of what use would it be to some of them, provided they had it to-morrow? Of just as much as would be a medical diploma to a man who, after all, could obtain no patients. But the Conference, like its great predecessor, has so exercised its power, now for many years, as to prevail upon tens of thousands to submit to its rule, by making it their interest to do so. If the present position of a newspaper, such as the daily "Times," is a proof of the sagacity of its proprietors, and the intellectual energy of its editors, the history of Methodism is a credit to its Conference, as well as a cause of gratitude to God. Agitators may find it convenient to speak of that body of Ministers as composed of many fools, and a few knaves; but notorious facts demonstrate the utter nonsense of such representations. For the possession of power, John Wesley was under no obligation to any man. He always said it was his burden, not his enjoyment. But as the Lord gave, so He should take it away. All complainers were invariably told, that the moment submission had ceased to be an advantage to themselves, they were at liberty to obey him no longer. Such is the present position of his successors. Any man who, merely to oblige the Conference, continues to acknowledge its authority, after that it has, in his judgment, ceased to be an advantage to mankind, is either a simpleton or something worse for his pains. As he who puts money into the pocket of his physician is actuated chiefly by a regard to himself, so the primary concern of those who gave power to John Wesley was about their own souls. In fact, tens of thousands did think themselves greatly benefited by a connexion with him, and thus gave him power; and, because he had this power, by others he was hated and insulted. So it is now. Those who do not like such a state of things, might as well make up their minds to endure it; for it is the inevitable result of laws, in ceaseless operation, which they can neither repeal nor suspend. If the Conference tread in the steps of John Wesley, like him it will acquire power, in spite of earth and hell. Though deprived of

all its present power to-day, if still actuated by the spirit of its Founder, and bent on the conversion of the world to Christ, like Samson, it must become mighty again. Whenever it ceases to be useful, it will cease to be powerful. Things which have been tried, and found useless, are generally dropped and forgotten.

Many people think if they had but the power of the Conference in their own hands, they could employ it to much better advantage; and the thing is certainly possible. But suppose they should fail, and manage things not better, but worse, that would be clearly a dead loss to mankind. If they succeeded quite as well as the parties now in possession, the world would gain nothing by the simple transfer. If they really could, as they think, do things a great deal better, it is a pity that such superior skill and energy should be thrown away upon an old ship, which, according to their own account, is already rickety and rotten, and cannot hold out much longer. They had far better go to work, like men, and build a new one, on their own approved model, and thus ultimately get all the trade into their own hands; and, in the meantime, honour themselves by an act of magnanimity, in just suffering the old vessel to do as well as she can, until the time arrive when she must be laid aside. As to those who will do neither the one nor the other, but are resolved to maintain an irritating connexion with the Conference, for the purpose of insulting its authorities, and teasing and tormenting its agents, although in this way they may gratify their spite, they are likely to disappoint their ambition; for while flies may indeed sting a horse to madness, or even to death, insects can never succeed to his power.

“WHITHER SHALL I FLY?”

THIS is a question which should be well pondered by many persons in the present posture of affairs. It is undeniable, that there are hundreds of Methodists who have rushed forward in a course of agitation, which they commenced without due consideration, until they have come to the verge of a secession from the church of their early choice, and perhaps, too, the church of their fathers. They have utterly lost the confidence of their old friends; they have disgusted all sober-minded persons by their extravagances; they have ceased to profit by the means of grace; and, either by the force of their own impetuosity, or by the power of legitimate and inevitable church-discipline, they must, in all probability, soon cease to be Methodists of John Wesley's Connexion. Where, then, will they go? Not to any of the existing bodies of Methodistical separatists; for Mr. Kaye's "Times" warns them that the success of these adventures has not been such as to encourage others to embark with them. We suspect that a temporary visit to some of them would have much the same effect on discontented Methodists, as a trip to America is said to have had on many dissatisfied English-

men; namely, that of sending them home right loyal and conservative men.

But will not they who have led these people into this dilemma, offer them a home? Truly, they have done nothing yet to warrant such a hope. They have been disturbing everything, but they have settled nothing; they have done their best to pull down the old family mansion about the ears of its inmates, but they have built up no place of refuge to which they may take them for shelter. Verily, we charge them with great cruelty in this matter towards their deluded adherents.

It is said, that when the mother of the infidel Hume found herself dying, she sent for her son, who was at a distance, and besought him, as he had taken away from her the ground of her hope as a Christian, that he would give her something in the place of it, to help her to meet death. It will be well if some outcast Methodists have not cause thus to reproach the authors of this agitation for having left them to struggle unassisted, and perhaps to perish at the last. What have these leaders of the disaffected done to meet the necessity which they have created? Absolutely nothing. Mr. Everett has done little more than declare against the law of 1835. Mr. Dunn says, his mind is not yet made up on some points. Mr. Griffith escapes from the difficulty under a metaphor, much in the same way as old Homer's heroes were rescued by some friendly god under the cover of a cloud. He says, if they cannot get the old ship made seaworthy, they must construct a light little vessel of their own, to sail alongside of her. Well, but what more about the said vessel? Nothing, unless it be that Mr. Griffith is to be the pilot,—an announcement, one would think, not very consolatory to timid passengers, or "intending emigrants." Yet this is a very serious consideration for a man who perhaps has a family, or other dependents, who will be powerfully influenced for good or evil by his decision.

The history of the secession originated by Dr. Warren, supplies some melancholy illustrations of the sad consequences of unsettling the minds of religious people by such agitations, which we shall take occasion perhaps, at some future time, to adduce more at length as a warning to those who are exposed to similar dangers. It is, however, an ascertained fact, that the number of those who joined the Association was less by several thousands, than the number of seceders from the Wesleyan Societies. We take it for granted now that a secession is inevitable. If not voluntary, to some extent it will, and must in some instances, be compulsory. And it is to be feared that some are so far committed to a course of evil, that they cannot recover themselves. But, to all that are not yet irreparably damaged in the estimation of the members of the church to which they belong, we say, "Look before you leap;" "Lose not the substance in catching at a shadow;" and, before you leave the ark, where you have long found shelter and safety, pause, and ponder the question, "Whither shall I fly?"

SUSPENSION OF THE REV. JAMES BROMLEY, OF BATH.

IN ordinary cases of suspension by a District-Meeting of any of its members from the office of the Wesleyan ministry, we should deem it most becoming to be silent; leaving them without any remarks in the interval that may elapse, to be reviewed and decided upon by the next Conference. But in this case we are not left at liberty to do so, a party-statement respecting it having been put forth, and Mr. Bromley, himself, having, as plainly appears from the internal evidence supplied by that statement, contributed to it.

It is well known that, at the last Conference, Mr. Bromley was one of the Ministers summoned to answer concerning the suspicions generally prevalent respecting the authorship and circulation of "the slanderous and wicked Fly-Sheets;" and that, after some paltry excuse for non-compliance, on the alleged ground of want of pecuniary means to travel from Bath to Manchester, (as if there were neither Stewards nor private friends in his Circuit to assist him,) and after sending a most un-Christian and un-gentlemanly letter to his brethren, he appeared before them, and, according to his own testimony, was treated with great kindness and forbearance. At his own request, a Committee was appointed to hear, what he called, his conscientious objections to some parts of the Wesleyan Disciplinary Rules and Regulations; and, after receiving from him strong and repeated expressions of thankfulness for the great patience exercised towards him, during the long and protracted period occupied by the delivery of his sentiments,—and having received from him explicit and repeated assurances that from that time he would not make the objections he had expressed the subjects of discussion and debate in the Circuits and Meetings where he might be called to exercise his ministerial office,—it was recommended to the Conference, by the Committee, that no further proceedings should be taken in Mr. Bromley's case. This recommendation was strengthened by the reading of a letter of Mr. Bromley's, which specifically recorded the pledges he had previously given by word of mouth. It was agreed to by the Conference, and was, apparently, so satisfactory to Mr. Bromley, that he voluntarily wrote a letter to the President, expressing his deep sense of obligation to him and to his brethren; and stating, that he should go to his Circuit, and show, by his conduct, that he was not unworthy of the confidence reposed in him. This was all *after* the expulsion of Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith! Mr. Bromley went to his Circuit; but it was soon apparent that he was not observant of the pledges of fidelity which he had recently given. In private and social intercourse with the members of Society in Bath, his conversation was not such as might be expected from him, after what had passed at the Conference. And many of his own people were deeply grieved to see that he was employing himself in sowing the seeds of discontentment and division among the Methodists of their city. On the visit of the Ministers, who had been put away from association

with Methodism by the Conference, and who were engaged in agitating and dividing the Societies, Mr. Bromley received Mr. Dunn into his own house, at the front of which was long exhibited a bill announcing the public Meeting to be held by the agitators, and to which Meeting he, Mr. Bromley, went, to hear the Conference and his brethren slandered and misrepresented; receiving the plaudits of the multitude, and, by unmistakable signs and gestures, approving what was said and done. This conduct, though it may be argued for by Wesleyan Reformers, on the ground of personal liberty, was not most becoming, and cannot be supported on the ground of ministerial propriety. But this was passed over by his brethren, and left to Mr. Bromley's own reflections, with the hope that he would proceed no further in violating the promises he had given at the preceding Conference. In this hope they were disappointed; and, on the visit of the President of the Conference to Bath, to administer spiritual counsel to the Society, Mr. Bromley published, in a Newspaper of the city, No. 1 of a series of Letters on Conference Acts and Discipline,—a letter the most scurrilous and abusive, perhaps, that has appeared on the subject; and thus openly violated the pledges he had previously given. This was followed by Letters, No. 2 and No. 3; which, in their character and contents, were in keeping with No. 1. For this unfaithful and dishonourable conduct, he was accused by three Wesleyan Ministers in the Bath District; and, having had copies of the charges to be preferred duly sent to him, he was summoned to trial before his brethren,—the President of the Conference having been invited to preside, in the place of his Superintendent, the Rev. J. Rigg.

The grounds of these charges, as stated to him, were, in substance, 1. *That he had violated the great principle of our Connexional union, in not quietly submitting to the majority of his brethren, when a question had been discussed and decided by the Conference.* 2. *That he had made himself the public apologist of, and had openly abetted, the slanderers of his brother Ministers.* 3. *That he himself had grossly aspersed the public acts and principles of his ministerial brethren.* And, 4. *That he had openly and distinctly broken the pledges given by him to the last Conference; and on account of which proceedings in his case had been stayed.* These charges, though formally preferred against him, Mr. Bromley refused to meet; and most dishonourably sought to obtain charges against himself from the Trustees of Walcot chapel, which might secure for him a mixed meeting of Ministers and Trustees,—some of the Trustees being known to be favourable to him. At the meeting of the Trustees in which charges against Mr. Bromley were got up,—which, as it was supposed, would put aside the District-Meeting already summoned,—Mr. Bromley *himself* presided; and was told, by a Trustee present, that the attempt made by him and by some parties in the meeting was a dishonourable "*trick*," to which he (the Trustee) would not be a party. The Trustees sent their charges; but,

of course, no meeting could be convened to consider them, until *after* the charges from his brethren—on account of which the District-Meeting had been summoned—had been disposed of. But this would frustrate Mr. Bromley's object; and so he framed a letter of objection to the Meeting, and sent it, refusing to attend. The main principle of objection stated in his letter is, that the members of the Meeting were committed to the condemnation of his published sentiments, by having previously written pamphlets and signed declarations against them. This was seen to be mere quibbling; but a deputation of four Ministers, appointed by the District-Meeting, waited upon Mr. Bromley, requesting him to withdraw his objection, and to appear before his brethren, to meet the charges preferred against him. He refused to do so; and, having no alternative, the Meeting carefully considered the charges in his absence; and declared, *unanimously*, that they were all proved, and that Mr. Bromley should be suspended from the office and duties of the Wesleyan ministry until the next Conference. Thus he is now left to receive his temporal support from Methodism, but not to minister in its sanctuaries, until his case shall have been determined by the next Conference.

The foregoing is a plain and an impartial statement concerning the case of Mr. Bromley and his suspension by the District-Meeting; but there are one or two reflections that we must add. The first is respecting the *violation of the pledge* Mr. Bromley gave at the Conference, to refrain from agitation and strife respecting the Declaratory Law of 1835, to which he objected; and to peacefully prosecute his work, as a Wesleyan Minister, in the Circuit to which he had been appointed. Such a violation of a pledge made under such circumstances, is in itself sufficient ground for the suspension of any man from the office and duties of the Christian ministry. But, in Mr. Bromley's case, it is an aggravated offence; for this is not the first time he has broken a pledge of peaceful conduct given to his brethren, when he had hazarded his continuance in the Wesleyan ministry by disorderly and unbecoming acts. A Christian Minister, undoubtedly, ought to show that he is a man of truth and honour.*

Another prominent feature in this case is, *the glaring inconsistency* in the conduct of a man who, after having been the public advocate of formal charge and proof to be given in every case of a Wesleyan Minister who shall be placed on his trial before his brethren, refuses to submit himself to their judgment when, with all due form and order, charges of ministerial unfaithfulness and impropriety were preferred, and when a copy of the charges had been previously sent to him. The objection raised, on the ground that the members of the District-

* It has been stated, that Mr. Bromley endeavours to excuse himself, as to the violation of his pledges, on the intended meaning of some of the words he employed; but a publication of written documents, in which they are, will show how insufficient is such a pretended excuse.

Meeting would not afford him a fair trial, because they were publicly committed against his published sentiments, by pamphlets they had written, and by the Declaration they had put forth, is as absurd as if some revolutionary Chartists, when accused in a civil court of acts contrary to British law, were to object to the constitution of the court, and refuse to be tried by it, because the parties, before whom they were summoned for trial, were pledged to uphold the sovereignty and Government of Great Britain, having taken the oath of allegiance.

But, if possible, a still more dishonourable part was performed by Mr. Bromley, and by those of his partisans among the Trustees of Walcot chapel, in their endeavour to rescue an accused Minister from trial before his peers, by a *feigned* charge against him, to which he himself was a consenting party, if not the first suggester. Such a "*trick*," as it was properly described by one of the faithful Trustees present at the Meeting, to get up a charge, is most dishonourable to men professing Christianity, and must be ruinous to all their pretensions to truth and honour in the estimation of rightly-constituted and unbiassed minds.

NOTICES OF AGITATION MEETINGS.

IPSWICH, January 9th, 1850.—The part of amusing the meeting by buffoonery, seems to have been assigned to Mr. Everett; while Mr. Griffith gave it as his opinion that "the Connexion could do much better without the Conference, than the Conference could do without the Connexion." Of course, by the "Connexion," he means himself, his two brethren, and their sympathizers; and what the Conference asks of them is, just to go and try how well they can do for themselves. This "Connexion" resembles a wife, who is always complaining of the ill-usage of her husband, and often alarming the neighbourhood with cries of "murder;" but when urged to leave him, replies, "No: I will stay and *reform* him; for there is no place like home."

GREAT YARMOUTH, January 10th.—In the official report the speeches of the three ex-Ministers are not given, probably because that had been done so often before. Slander itself becomes wearisome, in time, by incessant repetition. Touching reference was made, by the Chairman, to himself, and a noble band of heroes, who "might soon expect to be expelled for daring to question the infallibility of Conference." Men must bring their minds to their circumstances; and, as their only chance of becoming famous, they have set up a scarecrow, called the "infallibility of the Conference;" and then, by "daring" to knock it down again, they hope to attain the honours of an expulsion.

FRAMLINGHAM, January 11th.—As the speeches were probably old ones, they are not reported; but the Chairman "spoke upon the 'Fly-Sheets,' observing, that he did not know who was their author, but wished he did, that he might love him all the more for his work's sake." It seems Mr. Bromley's expositions on Matt. xviii. 15—17, are intended to serve a purely party purpose; for the agitators do not believe a word of them, with any reference to the "Fly-Sheets."

LUTON, BEDS., January 17th.—This meeting was happy in having a truly sympathizing Chairman, he having been expelled himself a few years ago. Yet he was not malignant, but said of Methodism, "With all thy faults, I love thee still." A speaker said, "Popery requires implicit faith in human authority; the Conference required the same." To all who believe this, there is a voice which says, "Wherefore come out from among them;" and if these parties would do their duty, it would give great and general satisfaction.

GREENWICH, January 18th.—In the official report, the most prominent place is assigned to a member of the Hinde-Street Circuit, who took that opportunity of stating how ill he had been treated at a Quarterly-Meeting of the London District Missionary Committee, which had been held a few days before. Although a Secretary to the revolution Committee, he felt himself competent to go to the Mission-House, and tender his advice as to the best mode of managing matters

there. How many characters he could and would have assumed, we cannot tell; but simple Methodists thought it enough for him to be one thing at once. Being an official agitator elsewhere, they thought he had no right to be speaking there, and so refused to hear him. However, he has his revenge, and resolves to reduce his quarterage from twenty shillings to one; namely, unless the Conference will consent to revolutionize Methodism, in order to secure the other nineteen.

DURSLEY, January 21st.—Treated by Mr. Kaye as an unimportant matter.

HALIFAX, January 28th.—Arrangements had been made for holding two meetings, in different places, at the same time; but one of the rooms was found sufficient to contain all the people. After this disappointment, the speakers were rude and insulting towards the Reporter, who was thought to have some Conference leanings. They were, however, soothed by the docility of the audience, who, unlike most Judges and Juries, brought in a verdict after hearing just one side of the case.

ROCHDALE, January 29th.—In the Association chapel, they should have sung "Never part again." While Mr. Everett was reading, "the emphasis placed on the words 'in perils among false brethren,' produced a visible sensation amongst the audience." They perhaps thought of a man, who, for years, had been subsisting on money subscribed by his "brethren," and repaid their kindness by collecting and writing down all their faults, and then publishing them anonymously, in "Fly-Sheets;" and if he was then actually before them, no wonder there was "sensation."

NOTICE OF PUBLICATIONS.

The Principles of Wesleyan Methodism ascertained by Historical Analysis, and defended by Scripture and Reason: an Essay adapted to the Times. By James H. Rigg, Wesleyan Minister. Pp. 128. 12mo. London: Partridge and Oakey; sold also by John Mason.—A title truly inviting to the honest and conscientious Methodistical inquirer, at the present juncture, when the very foundations of our Connexional system are assailed by the spirit of reckless innovation. Does he wish to know whether the Conference has it in its power to make such changes as are now demanded by certain agitators? He must listen to the teaching of History; and he will learn that the Conference has no such power; that its own constitution is definitively fixed by the law of the land; and that the only authority which itself possesses is to administer Methodism according to its great leading principles, and not to revolutionize it. Is Methodism, viewing it in reference to those great principles, sufficiently in accordance with Scripture teaching? Let the inquirer make himself thoroughly master of the system in its principles and details, and then study it in the light of the New Testament. If he do so, he will find cause for gratitude to God that he enjoys the advantages of such a system. Methodism maintains the pastoral office in the position which Christ himself designed that it should occupy, and does not degrade it by putting it into commission; but it also throws around the office such a variety of wholesome checks and guards, as is sufficient to preserve the people from any arbitrary exercise of power. Lay-delegates are not admitted into the Conference; but ample provision is made for the due exercise of lay-influence in the management of the various institutions of the Connexion. But, would it not be desirable that we should make the experiment, and try how lay-delegation would work? Why should we? Let the inquirer look at those offshoots from the Wesleyan body where lay-delegation exists; and say whether the beneficial results of its operation are such, as would render it desirable, were it in our power, to try the experiment among ourselves. If decided, manifest success is to be the test, the comparison is greatly in favour of the old system.

We regard this Essay as a very seasonable production. It will serve as a guide to the inquirer, and will be a convenient book of reference to the well-informed. It displays great ability and research. The writer, actuated by a laudable public spirit, takes upon himself the entire responsibility of the publication; but we confidently anticipate that the extensive sale will justify the pecuniary risk which he has incurred. We close our notice by remarking, that the talent, piety, and sound principles of our junior Ministers, as indicated by such a production as this, augur well for the Methodism of the future.

Wesleyan Discipline. A Statement of the Case of Mr. John Harrison, as presented to the Islington Leaders'-Meeting, January 22d: With their Decision, January 24th; and that of the Superintendent Minister, the Rev. John Scott, February 5th, 1850. John Mason.—We are glad to see the publica-

tion of this very valuable pamphlet; and that, not only because it furnishes an authentic statement of the case of Mr. Harrison and the Islington Leaders'-Meeting, but also because of the truly Christian and judicious model of the mode of dealing with such cases which it supplies. It is well known that Mr. Harrison has, from its commencement, been the editor and avowed publisher of a weekly Newspaper, which, under the name of the "Wesleyan Times," has been almost wholly devoted, in its Methodistical portions, to misrepresentation, slander, and falsehood. This paper was condemned at the last Conference, for its foul and most virulent slanders and falsehoods, by more than five hundred Christian Ministers, as unworthy of credit and support: it was, therefore, not to be expected that an individual could be known to be the responsible editor of such a publication, and continue an authorized member and Local Preacher in the Wesleyan Society. Sufficient time having been given for the consideration of the probable results of continuing to be thus publicly identified with a paper, whose evil and dishonourable character had been formally declared; and after timely warnings and admonitions, Mr. Harrison—who not only continued the editor and publisher of the paper, but also had announced himself to be a Secretary to a central Committee for reforming (revolutionizing) Wesleyan Methodism—was served with notice of trial before the Leaders'-Meeting at Islington, and, on the unanimous decision of that Meeting of his flagrant breach of Scriptural and Methodistical laws and requirements, was, on Tuesday evening, February 5th, expelled from the Society.

This pamphlet shows that Mr. Scott's charges rested mainly on Mr. Harrison's breach of the laws of Holy Scripture; and particularly on his breach of the law of *peace* so prominently set forth, and so positively enjoined by the Lord Jesus Christ on all His followers. This is as it should be with all who sustain the pastoral office in the Christian church. The requirements of their Lord and Saviour are paramount, and must be held binding upon all over whom, on His behalf, they are charged with spiritual oversight. This has been too much disregarded, of late, by men who have, under the pretence of reforming Methodism, employed the most un-Christian means to accomplish their ends. Evil surmisings, falsehood, slander, and the fomenting of divisions among brethren, are *sins* explicitly condemned by the laws of Christ. Mr. Scott has ably shown this in the case of Mr. Harrison, as he presented it to the Leaders'-Meeting at Islington; and, after most convincing proof of the dishonourable falsehoods and slanders published in successive numbers of the "Wesleyan Times" newspaper, and that Mr. Harrison had, by other agitating and divisive proceedings, broken the laws of the Bible and of Methodism, an unanimous decision against him was given by the Meeting; and he was, on the week following, expelled from the Society. Nearly all the points of objection that could be possibly raised against the constitution of the Meeting, and the supposed mode of proceeding, were raised by Mr. Harrison; but they were most ably answered by Mr. Scott; and this authentic record of them is not only worth an attentive perusal, but also should be carefully preserved by every true supporter of Constitutional Methodism.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

1. O., *Hinde-street*.—The appointment of a Minister to a Circuit is by the Conference, which cannot be put aside by Methodist Reformers.

2. *Bristol Riots*, deferred. A legal process will probably be more effectual in taming down the turbulent spirits whose names were taken down, than a written exposure of their conduct.

3. J.—The President never uttered such a sentiment as, "The chapels are the Preachers', and the debts the Trustees'." This, like another saying, concerning sweeping expulsions, is a fabrication of unprincipled men.

4. *Methodist Economy*.—The spirit is good; but the time of agitation and rebellion, is not the time for suggesting or discussing *any* changes in Methodism. "*Follow peace.*"

5. *Received*.—H., Manchester; J. H. B., Prescot Circuit; JUNIO, Nottingham. *Thanks.*

Articles to be inserted in a forthcoming number of our Periodical, must be delivered in London by the middle of the month, *at the latest*. All communications must have the names of the writers confidentially given to the Editors, if not attached for publication,—to be addressed, "*To the Editors of 'The Wesleyan Vindicator and Constitutional Methodist,' 14, City-Road, London.*"

No. IV.

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THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

APRIL, 1850.

THE COMPACT OF '95 AND '97.

AGITATORS are continually referring to this celebrated "compact," and reminding us of the privilege secured to a certain class of people, namely, that of being tried before a Leaders'-Meeting. Honest men, indeed, think little about the privileges connected with any mode of trial, as they never intend to be tried at all; but some other parties, knowing their deserts, are, above all things, anxious about the rights of supposed culprits, and the doors by which they may possibly escape. If, however, that important settlement in Methodism was indeed a "compact," it must have a binding power obliging equally *both* the contracting parties; and no men can retain the right to its privileges after they have thrown off its authority, and ceased to perform its conditions.

It is scarcely necessary to inquire whether or not these conditions have been observed by the present agitators.

1. According to the regulations of 1795, assented to by all parties, "no pamphlet, or printed letter, shall be circulated among us without the writer's name." It has been said, that, legally, we know not the authors of the "Fly-Sheets;" yet we know that such things were written, and that three Ministers avowed their determination to protect the writers from justice; and that, subsequently, a large number of people have confederated for the same end; and we can infer that all these parties care no more for this rule, than did Samson for the new cords by which he seemed to be bound.

2. In the entire catalogue of what are called concessions to the people, at the period to which we have referred, there is not contained

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any surrender of the right, always exercised by the Ministers, to enforce discipline one upon another. By consent of the people themselves, the Ministers were then left in the undisputed possession of the power to call before them, when assembled in Conference, any number of their own brethren, to examine them "one by one," and deal with each as his case might require. There is now an avowed and resolute attempt, on the part of a large body of the people, to wrest from the Conference this right, by forcing it to take back again the men it has already expelled; and this is another distinct violation of the "compact" said to be made in '95 and '97.

3. In the same oft-quoted regulations it is "allowed" by one party, and accepted by the other, that, beside "Leaders'" and Quarterly Meetings, "other formal meetings may be held, if they first receive the approbation of the Superintendent and the Leaders' or Quarterly Meeting." It is notorious that Meetings have been held by the agitators all over the kingdom, not only without consulting either the Superintendent or his colleagues, but for the express purpose of pouring utter contempt on him, and all the other authorities in Methodism. Here is another point in which the "compact" has been palpably violated.

4. What is commonly called "lay-delegation" is not merely not inserted in the "compact," but is designedly, expressly, and formally excluded from it. At present, by a large number of people, that point is re-proposed and demanded, accompanied by threats to "stop the supplies;" and this act of theirs has clearly put it into the power of the other contracting party, as far as these individuals are concerned, to set aside the former compact altogether. Just as a man who has actually sold an estate for a thousand pounds, and shall afterwards formally, and with threats, or other modes of coercion, demand eleven hundred, thereby renders it optional with the buyer, either to accede to this new item in the contract, or, if he cannot enforce the original bargain, to refuse to take the property on any terms.

Undoubtedly the Conference is the legal and ecclesiastical successor of John Wesley, and either is or ought to be substantially in his position, sustaining the same relations to the people, who voluntarily choose to be in connexion with it, and equally at liberty to fulfil its high and holy mission. His words respecting the Preachers describe also the relation subsisting between him and his people. He says, "Each had a power to go away when he pleased, as I had also to go away from them, or any of them, if I saw sufficient cause;" "and to tell any, if I saw cause, I do not desire your help any longer." This state of things is perfectly fair and equitable. Rights, to be equal, must be mutual. There is neither equity nor true freedom where liberty is all on one side. Some unions are indissoluble; and in that case neither party is at liberty to leave the other. If the union between Pastor and people be of this kind, both parties should be equally bound. If it is a union during pleasure, both should be equally

free. Any member of the Methodist society, or any number of members, can leave the Conference, with or without a cause, whenever they deem it expedient, even though it may at the time be involved in inextricable embarrassment and confusion, in a great measure brought on by the seceders themselves. In fairness and equity the Conference ought to have some power to leave them, and to say, "We do not desire your help any longer."

But the Conference has entered into a "compact," in which it has put the question, whether or not it shall withdraw from any portion of the people, in the first instance, into the hands of the people themselves. Although by this arrangement it has, up to a certain point, bound itself, while the people are left perfectly free, it intends to remain faithful to its engagements. Of course all those officers in Methodism who, in circulating pamphlets, calling meetings, &c., choose to walk according to the compact of '95 and '97, in cases of trial, have an incontestable right to exercise the prerogatives of jurors, according to that arrangement. But agitators by profession, who set all laws at defiance, will scarcely even pretend to be permanently entitled to the same privilege. It is true the Conference, while obliged to be just, may choose to be generous, and so connive at these irregularities, and not actually take away privileges which have been indubitably forfeited. Hence it follows, that individual Superintendents, in their respective Circuits, are not at liberty to assume that even the most lawless of the agitators have violated the compact under which some of them claim to be jurors, and to treat them accordingly; since the Conference may possibly say to him, "To determine that point was our business, and not yours," and he may find himself placed in unpleasant circumstances. Until August next, therefore, except in the case of a special District-Meeting, which has power to "redress any grievance," all proceedings against offenders must be conducted in the regular way, and before a Leaders' Meeting, even when the alleged offender must either be tried by a jury of notorious accomplices, or his trial be construed into a martyrdom; and each Superintendent is obliged, like Mr. Scott, to print a pamphlet in his own defence, for having discharged a most disagreeable but incumbent duty.

But the assembled Conference itself can be under no obligation to fulfil in perpetuity a compact, the terms of which, by the other parties to it, have been openly and habitually violated; any more than a man, who has contracted with a trader to supply him with provisions for seven years to come, is bound to make continuous payments, after the other has ceased to furnish the goods. No man ever entered a trading company on the principle that all the other partners in the firm were to be perfectly at liberty, under any circumstances, to leave him, but that he should be able, under no circumstances, to leave them. It is due to the quiet and orderly Methodists, who are annoyed beyond endurance by present proceedings, that the Conference should separate itself from those that "walk disorderly, and will not be reprov'd;"

and to say to combined and lawless agitators, in administering our discipline, "We do not desire your help any longer."

Whatever may be the authority of Conference, it has lost the true Wesleyan spirit if it dare not, when necessary, affirm what all the world knows to be true, or do an act of justice for the protection of peaceable people, or in some way or other solemnly declare, that by every member of the Corresponding Committee, by all the Delegates, and their confederates throughout the Connexion, the compact of '95 and '97 has been flagrantly violated; and that, therefore, in future, its administration must be committed to the hands of men who will not utterly disregard their duties, while they insist on the exercise of their privileges.

"But," say the agitators, "Methodism is ours as well as yours; and we will stay in the house and reform it, in spite of the clique in power. You are dependent on us for your bread; and we will sit down in the character of besiegers, and starve you into submission." All the Conference has to do, is to "be just and fear not;" and when it has distinctly said to these men, "The laws of '95 and '97 have been broken by yourselves, you have therefore forfeited the privileges they confer, and we 'do not desire your help any longer;'" all the rest may be left to each Superintendent in his own Circuit. This is a result already anticipated by those who assume themselves to be the Methodist "people," and who, having declared "the people can do better without the Conference than the Conference can do without the people," are doubtless waiting for an opportunity practically to evince the truth of their own maxim. Then again shall the churches have "rest, and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost," be "multiplied."

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS NOT AN ECCLESIASTICAL NOVELTY.

REPORTS respecting the present agitation in Methodism having, in the autumn of last year, reached an intelligent and respectable Clergyman, an impression had been made on his mind unfavourable to the Conference and its proceedings in the case, when a friend of ours put into his hands the pamphlet written by the President, and soon after received from him the following communication, from which it appears, that further and more accurate information, and a re-consideration of the subject, had produced an alteration in his views and feelings:—

I have read the statement you were so kind as to lend me with much interest, and with complete conviction that the impressions I had formed, from an imperfect view of the controversy, must at once yield before the bare facts of the case, to say nothing of the argument upon them, which is very excellent, and put forth with great judgment and moderation. As there is nothing new under the sun, so it would appear that this controversy (as far, at least, as relates to the method of interrogating a supposed culprit) is of older date than our own century. The ancient

practice of our Ecclesiastical Courts was exactly similar to that adopted on this occasion, a power being given to the Judge to call upon persons by oath to purge themselves from alleged or supposed guilt. This was called "canonical purgation" by an oath *ex officio*. In a scarce tract written on the subject, (immediately after the custom, in this respect, was changed by a statute of Charles II.,) the author of which was Edward Lake, a learned Royalist in the previous reign, I find some curious facts relating to the controversy which the adversaries of the Ecclesiastical Courts had raised on this point. I have extracted from this work a passage of a writing, by the great Dr. Davenant, on this question, which was drawn up for the Lords of the Council, and appears to have led them for a time to put off any alteration of the law. It is so forcible an argument, and so exactly adapted to the case which now so much interests the Wesleyan body, that I should think the President would be pleased with it. At all events, I venture to transmit it to you, as I think it cannot but be satisfactory to you to see the concurrence of so eminent a Divine as Bishop Davenant, whose views on this point were maintained, with equal clearness and force, by Bishop Lancelot Andrews, of still greater celebrity in our Church. The perusal of the President's pamphlet has strengthened the conviction I had ever held of the wisdom and moderation of the communion to which he belongs; and I cannot but congratulate you that the government of its members is, in these perilous times, intrusted to men who are so firm in the maintenance of truth, and so grave and judicious in the far more painful office of administering ecclesiastical discipline.

From a Manuscript treating of the Oath Ex Officio, said to be Dr. Davenant's, late Lord Bishop of Salisbury, and offered to the Lords of the Privy Council.*

I. THE end of all judgments in all Courts is to remove evil. The heathen man says, *Interest reipublicæ ut malefici tollantur*. And the very same is God's course in his commonwealth; ten several times in Deuteronomy he repeats it, *Ut sic tollatis malum de medio Israël*.

II. Evil then is to be removed, not only civil, but ecclesiastical; so doth God take express orders that corrupt religion, contumacy, defamation (matters all of ecclesiastical cognisance) should be removed, expressly terming every one of them *malum in Israël*.....

III. If they are to be removed, they must be known. For St. Hierome saith well, *Quod ignorat medicina non curat*. Physicians, both corporal and civil, must know the peccant humour before they can purge it.

IV. If know it they must, by the parties themselves they shall never know it. The first that ever did trespass were not so ready to commit sin, but that they were twice as ready to conceal it. And as Tertullian saith to good purpose, *Reliqui omnes congeneres primo*. "All other offenders do as the first did; seek to keep their offence from being known."

V. Then if they must be known, and will not by the parties themselves, some other means must be used to bring them to light; where if there be a party to stand up and accuse, 'tis well, and he not to be refused, But we know.....that it is holden an odious matter to be an accuser, and with the better sort of men more odious.....

VI. For that cause God hath authorized those that hold judicial places for the removing of evil, not only to receive accusations when they be brought against it, but, if none be brought, to make inquiry after it, in Deuteronomy xiii. 14, 18; that by inquiry it may be found, and found it may be removed. Which inquiry is not left at large promiscuously, hand over head, but hath his limitation upon what ground to proceed. Now, if you ask what ground we can have, no better rule for it than if we follow God's own proceeding in His judicial courses; for the

* Extracted from the "Memoranda touching the Oath *Ex Officio*," by Edward Lake. 4to. London, 1662, pp. 60—65.

judgment is God's properly, and not man's. And there is nothing more to be desired than that God would give the King His judgments. For the judgments of all those that be in place are then best when they are likest God's: the rather for that God, needing not to hold any course of inquiry, because to Him all things are clear and manifest, not only then, but before they be done, and yet binding Himself to a certain way in His proceeding, no other reason is or can be rendered why He should do so, but only to instruct us how to proceed by His example.....

(After showing that God proceeds by presumption, and by fame or rumour, and that Christ "gives warrant to the church," even in the case of denunciation, "to call the party and take order with him," he proceeds,)—But this point of proceeding upon fame hath not only warrant of proceeding in God's example, but in His express charge; two several places of the law where the ground is, Deut. xiii. 12; Deut. xvii. 4: "If it be told thee that such and such a fault is done," the proceeding is *perscrutando et investigando*; *Perscrutando*, that is, by searching and evidence; *interrogando*, that is, by interrogating the party about the fault suggested. And we see plainly in a case of ecclesiastical correction, the Apostle goeth no further, but layeth this for his ground, "There goeth a report that such a party there is among you." As, therefore, when an accuser offereth himself, he is not to be rejected; so, though none do, rather than faults should go uncensurable, the Judge even of very duty is to search them out.

(After showing that such interrogatories are lawfully administered even in civil causes, the writer proceeds,)—And if this be done in civil causes, and be not unlawful in them, we argue that much rather it ought to be allowed the church in her proceedings.

First, for that both commonwealth and church be to remove evil, yet work they not both one way; for the commonwealth, as is well known, doth *agere ad pœnam*; the church never so, but doth only *agere ad pœnitentiam*; seeketh to alter men's minds from the evil courses they have entered into, seeketh by making them to yield to a voluntary submission themselves to take away the scandal whereof they have been a cause..... Besides, it is well known that the civil power hath many ways and means to sift out the truth, though not by this; but that the church (if accusations cease) hath none but this only.

In the way of objection to the preceding reasonings, it will probably be said that the examination, by questions, of a supposed offender, is still the custom of the Popish Inquisition, was the practice of our own notorious Star-Chamber, and has often been made an instrument of tyranny and oppression. All this is perfectly true. It is equally true that, from the abuse of a thing, to argue in favour of its total disuse is to prove too much: and therefore this form of reasoning is but seldom employed. In each of these unrighteous courts there was a Judge to conduct the business, and a Notary to make some record of the proceedings; and both these offices, at times, were filled with the instruments of injustice: but does anybody, on that ground, recommend their total abolition? Even the forms of procedure in our own civil courts have, repeatedly, and by various parties, been perverted to purposes of iniquity; but is any man prepared, for that reason, seriously to advise their entire discontinuance? Persons not resolved to go these lengths must admit, that the proceedings of the Wesleyan Conference, against which such an outcry has been made, do not hinge on some crude and iniquitous principle, which cannot for a moment bear a severe scrutiny in the light of day; but, on the contrary, upon

one which has the express sanction of Scripture, is in harmony with ancient and long-established ecclesiastical usage, and has been successfully defended by learned, able, conscientious, and honourable men, the ornaments of a former age. Any difference between the precise process here contemplated, and that adopted and used in our own community, is altogether in favour of Wesleyanism: for amongst ourselves the inquiry is essentially "brotherly;" no man being, in any case, required to answer upon his "oath;" but his simple affirmation or denial always admitted at once, and without reserve. It is also mutual. Any man may question, as well as be questioned, through the official medium, and with the consent of his brethren. While in general, and wherever practicable, it is the right and "more excellent way" to proceed against supposed delinquents on a formal charge, and the testimony of witnesses, yet there are, manifestly, cases in which it is the imperative duty of the officers of the church to summon the suspected offender before them, and to ascertain, if practicable, by answers from his own lips, the true state of the case, and then correct whatever is amiss.

Possibly the local authorities in the Corinthian Church, (1 Cor. v. 2,) and in the Church of Thyatira, (Rev. ii. 20,) might be able to say, that, before them, against the offenders no charge had been preferred, nor had either accuser or witnesses appeared; but it is clearly assumed that, upon this failure, it became their imperative duty to "inquire, and make search, and ask diligently" concerning the matter; and for not having done this, they were, in both cases, visited by the terrible punishment involved in a divine rebuke. We shall doubtless be told of the "dark ages," and the modern "march of mind;" yet, while some are praised for retaining "civil government," "trial by jury," and other institutions known and in use during the same "dark ages," others may, it is hoped, be suffered, without offence, to adhere to principles and usages which, however abused, are yet to be clearly traced through all "ages," up to "Moses and the Prophets," Christ and the Apostles.

THE MEETING OF DELEGATES.

I HAVE looked over the report of what the "Wesleyan Times" calls "this important convention." That it consists of very important personages, there can be no manner of doubt; although the most prominent are but stars of the seventh magnitude, while the rest have hitherto been merely telescopic ones, whose light has now beamed upon us for the first time. But it is a well-known fact, that in actual or attempted revolutions talent before unknown is brought to light. Without going back to the great French Revolution for instances of this, we all remember the display of senatorial and legislative ability in the Duffy-Chartist Convention, whose debates were duly reported in the daily papers two or three years ago. What talent will turn up

among the Delegates of the "Wesleyan Times" Convention, remains to be seen. The two days' proceedings first reported, exhibit no indication or promise of anything brilliant. One thing is certain: however loudly they may declaim against Conference tyranny, their eloquence need not be damped by the fear of any such result as that which followed the declamation of the unfortunate Chartist leaders just referred to. Even the dread of expulsion cannot affect all; for many of them, although "Wesleyan Delegates," are not even members of society.

Some of these "Delegates" represent nobody but themselves; others have been appointed at hole-and-corner meetings, which, in their respective neighbourhoods, have been scarcely heard of; while others—as at Birmingham—have been elected in mixed public assemblies, by the suffrages of all who chose to attend and vote.

Of course, Mr. John Harrison, whose expulsion by the unanimous vote of the Leaders'-Meeting only qualified him the better to sympathize with Messrs. Everett, &c., took the initiative, and acted the great man in the assembly. He expressed the *extreme delicacy* which the Committee felt, lest it should be *fancied* they were taking too much upon themselves, in selecting a Chairman or President beforehand, hiring Exeter-Hall, and fixing for a public meeting, without waiting to consult the Delegates. On Mr. R. S. Stanley—the nominee of Mr. Harrison—taking the chair, the latter moved, "that a deputation be sent to invite the attendance of Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith." "Mr. Brown opposed the motion. Mr. Archbutt did not object, *on principle*, to the expelled Ministers being present *as spectators*. He would suggest that the motion should be withdrawn, leaving it to the expelled Ministers to come, if they thought well. They had themselves considerable difficulty in showing their own authority to be present. Would it not affect the legality of the Meeting if they were invited to attend? Mr. Chipchase *exceedingly regretted*, that any difference of opinion should exist on this subject. The Meeting was already altogether and unequivocally illegal. They had as much right to invite these three gentlemen as to be there themselves, and that was just simply *no right at all*. (Hear.);" Here was a confession, plainly enough made, that the whole proceeding is *wrong*. It was finally agreed, that the expelled should be admitted *merely as spectators*, and to *watch* the proceedings; but, as the Chairman reiterated, they were to *take no part in the deliberations!* They were accordingly sent for, and entered the Hall of the assembly—LIKE CERBERUS, MUZZLED! The Meeting, doubtless, did right to impose silence on these gentlemen. Dunn's three-hours speech, repeated for the seventy-first time, would have been no joke; and Everett's "I love thee, O my native isle," would have been an infliction of which the Meeting appear to have entertained a wholesome dread. The Rev. James Bromley was also invited to attend *as a spectator*.

It was proposed by Mr. Ibbitt, that an invitation should likewise be

sent to all the Wesleyan Ministers resident in London, to attend in the same capacity. "Mr. Cotton approved of this suggestion: he did not think they would attend; but if they did, *let them be bound in like manner to silence.*" Mr. Lawes, who seemed to think the Wesleyan Ministers more sensitive or more scrupulous than the expelled and suspended, very properly replied, "According to the laws of Methodism, *the Meeting was decidedly illegal*; and to invite the Preachers to take part in such a course, would carry an insult on the face of it." "The Chairman suggested, that the Resolution should be withdrawn. Mr. Ibbitt declined to do so. They had nothing to do with the expelled, except so far as their case showed the necessity of *a general change in Methodism.*"!

The *object* of the Delegates is to effect A GENERAL CHANGE IN METHODISM! The attempt at revolution is here avowed. Yet even in the *first sitting* of these Delegates, complaint is made of an attempt, on the part of the leaders in the movement, to copy the example of "the clique." "MR. G. W. HARRISON.—The Committee propose that Mr. Gandy be the Chairman this evening, that I should take it to-morrow morning, and Mr. Cozens Hardy to-morrow afternoon. MR. BROWN.—I submit that it is inconsistent on our part to have a Nomination Committee. We find fault with the Conference Nomination Committee, and yet *we are adopting the course we condemn!* MR. G. W. HARRISON.—We do not want a Nomination Committee; but if we did want it, it was chosen by yourselves. The Committee prove to be men of business. They know that you are such. They do not want to keep you here till Midsummer. Their object and motive is the very opposite of that dictation which Nomination Committees are *said* to have sometimes used." So here, at the very first sitting of the Delegates, a Nomination Committee is found convenient, if not indispensable; is appointed; is assailed with complaint; and is defended on the ground of *motive* and object! and a distinction is attempted to be drawn between that and other Nomination Committees, from what is *said* of the latter, but only proved on "Fly-Sheet" authority!

On the subject of LAY-DELEGATION, it was stated in the Report read by the Secretary, that a *difference of opinion* existed in the Committee; to put an end to which "Mr. Sutcliffe was instructed to draw up a case for Counsel; and by his advice it was submitted to the Solicitor-General and Mr. Prendergast. That Counsel's opinion *is most decided*, that the admission of Lay-Delegates into Conference, as members of that assembly, would be AN INFRACTION OF THE DEED-POLL THAT WOULD NOT STAND GOOD IN LAW." Notwithstanding this, "Mr. Colman said, Nothing short of Lay-Delegation would satisfy the public. They should not for a moment look at difficulties; and as for expediency, he hated the name." Mr. Colman's method of reform is, to shut one's eyes and dash on, however inexpedient it may be to hit one's head against a post. What a clever guide he would

make! "Mr. Grosjean opposed anything like a sort of moderate Lay-Delegation. Nothing short of out-and-out Lay-Delegation would suit him; and as to legal technicalities and difficulties, he would not bother nor perplex himself about them. The great Revolution on the Continent had gone on the principle, that the people should have a finger in the representative pie! The Preachers were like little children. They knew nothing of money-matters; and whenever they had to do with them, they made a mess of them. He had been accustomed to business and money-matters since he commenced his apprenticeship. He called upon the Delegates to go the whole hog. (Laughter and cheers.)" Mr. Grosjean, according to his own account, is pre-eminently qualified to go the whole hog in taking care of the Preachers' money. Without waiting to solve the *dignus vindice nodus*, Mr. Alderman Schofield proceeds beyond the principle of Lay-Delegation, to discuss the proportion of the two ingredients in a reformed Conference. "But if we must have laymen in Conference," he says, "I never can subscribe to your printed suggestion, that the proportion of laymen to Preachers ought to be one to one. *One to one would ruin the whole concern.* (Cheers.) I think we should never carry on our Connexion with benefit and advantage, unless we could by possibility bring in two Lay-Delegates to one Preacher. Upon that principle the Connexion *might work.*"!

On the rule of 1835, "Mr. Oakenshaw said,—I am desirous of giving my decided veto to the rule. If it stays, I shall not stay. Mr. Patterson said, he should like to see every parchment in which any vestige of that law was to be found, made a funeral-pile of. Mr. Schofield said, instead of a funeral-pile, he would propose that it be buried in the Quakers' burying-ground."

Various plans of reform, in addition to the preceding, were urged by the Delegates. The most moderate was that of Mr. James Phillips, of Bristol, who "thought every desirable point would be gained, if the Conference Committees were enlarged, and the doors of Conference thrown open, under certain restrictions, to the press and the public." Mr. Mallinson proposed to relieve the Conference, by transferring its legislative functions to the whole of the private members, including "old men and maidens, young men and children." Every one who takes a ticket is to become *ipso facto* a legislator or legislatress! "He would have all the laws intended to be made, brought before the societies. Every Circuit in England, Wales, and Scotland shall send in a return of the numbers in society, and how many are for, and how many against, the proposed enactment. If it should appear that three-fourths are in favour of it, it should be carried into effect; or if on the contrary, they shall have the power of passing a veto on it." This, of course, would render a Conference unnecessary, an advantage carefully pointed out by Mr. Gandy, on behalf of the Committee. "Mr. Gandy said, The Committee heartily concurred in the propriety of Lay-Delegation. They also thought that the Conference, instead of being the

highest court in Methodism, SHOULD BE ABOLISHED; and if that were *abolished*, the Lay-Delegates there would *not be required!* If the District-Meetings were enlarged, and the power of the Preachers divided by a new infusion, (!) Lay-Delegation would be obtained; and if, in addition to this, *all the laws of Methodism* were reviewed, and the laws when *next settled* should be considered *unalterable, until again a change* was considered necessary, and that that change should be effected by a Conference of laymen and Preachers, Lay-Delegation *would greatly be obtained!* *These* were propositions *which the Committee intended to make to the Delegates.* (Cheers.)"! Behold the Solomons and the Solons of the age!

Mr. Bramwell (described as a Lawyer, and one of the Committee) appeared to think the abolition of the Conference a work of supererogation; as, in his opinion, it is *already defunct*. The following passage from his speech I quote, but with reluctance, on account of its profaneness. The Chairman announced him as "the son of the Rev. William Bramwell."! "The fact was, the Conference had been seeking the Lord long enough; but, as Cromwell said, they had not often found Him. (Loud laughter.)! Still they might have a pentecostal season hereafter; already, indeed, the gift of tongues had been poured out upon them in rich abundance. (Continued laughter.)! The Committee considered Lay-Delegation scriptural. They believed the present Conference to be an illegal body, a defunct body, a body in law extinct, not food for vultures; and they prayed to the Lord to deliver them from the Lawyers. (Great laughter and cheers.)"!

Mr. Ibbitt was more modest in his demands. "He thought there were objectionable *features** against the Conference: the principal was, that they were establishing an oligarchy in connexion with the body, which was calculated to engender pride. He was decidedly of opinion, that the Local Preachers were as much Christian Ministers as the Travelling Preachers. (Cheers.) *If the reformers could obtain the principle*, that the Local Preachers were Christian Ministers, then the legal difficulty would be, to a great extent, got over."

Mr. Archbutt announced a solution of difficulties *in petto*, different from all the preceding, but as yet unexplained. "He differed, wide as the poles asunder, from all the plans of Lay-Delegation which had hitherto been propounded; and at the proper time he would tell them why he differed from those plans." Mr. Colman thought "Lay-Delegation would work satisfactorily, *when something like universal suffrage* in the society gained ascendancy."

With this diversity of opinions and projects, it is not surprising that the President, or Chairman, had some trouble in keeping order. Tuesday afternoon, Mr. William Gandy, on taking the chair, dwelt at some length on the necessity of decorum in their proceedings. He said, "You have not been among the last to complain of the proceed-

* Yes; all the features in the Delegate-Meeting seem to be against it.

ings of the Conference; and I do hope that *we who set up as reformers* and correctors of evils, shall take care to avoid those evils which we censure so unqualifiedly in others. *There was not that order and propriety in our morning sitting which I should like to have seen.*" Again: "The Chairman,—I hope you will endeavour to conduct yourselves as a deliberative assembly, and not a public meeting. It does not comport with your position and dignity, to give such expression to your feelings. ('Who can help it?')" At one time, from the difficulty of knowing what the speakers were talking about in this deliberative assembly, "a Delegate suggested that a black board should be prepared, and the Resolution under discussion written on it with chalk, and suspended over the chair." "Mr. Grosjean said, Dr. Bunting had entered the Hundred like a thief and a robber. Mr. Archbutt said, this was not the proper and respectful way of treating a man who, however obnoxious on political grounds, had nevertheless entitled himself to the honour and admiration of the Connexion. The Chairman expressed a hope that personalities would be avoided."

Of course, the powers of imagination and eloquence, in some of the deputies, were called into exercise. Mr. Colman, referring to his Resolution, said, "Liberty is here spoken of; (hear;) that's a household word with us; it is one of the sweetest sounds that ever dropped on mortal ear;—liberty, that bright light which, in the dark hour of adversity, comes over our spirits like the bright orb of day emerging from behind some lowering cloud, and throwing abroad his broad beams to warm, cheer, animate, and bless our world. Yet, Sir, this great and glorious blessing of Heaven *is infringed*. So says my Resolution; (hear;) *and I say ditto!* Such an infringement of that blessed gift of God has never been heard of or read of." (!) Mr. Alderman Isaac Schofield repudiated his name by calling himself "an old ram caught in a thicket by the horns." He said, "Had it not been for Methodism, I might not have been worth a five-pound note in the world; and therefore I am greatly indebted to Wesleyan Methodism." Well, how does he act in requital? Why, as the Jews did, when God complained, "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." The worthy Alderman goes on to say, "I have indulged in a flight of imagination, and seen the altar built, the wood riven and laid in order, the large sacrificial knife newly whetted and lifted up in order to offer me up in connexion with this movement. Well, so be it. They might as well offer an old ram caught in a thicket by the horns, as any other animal. (Roars of laughter and cheers.)" Isaac's taste, in thus taking "the lower analogy," I certainly cannot admire.

So much for the first two days' sittings of the "Fly-Sheet Convocation."

I am, Sir,

Yours truly,

OBSERVER.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AGITATORS.

THERE is lamentable proof that the present agitation is a conspiracy, a malicious attack under a false name on the Christian ministry, and as certainly, though not as manifestly, on Wesleyan Methodism itself. By the leaders of the movement—the “expelled Ministers”—it is a mischievous experiment made upon the Connexion; and though it cannot succeed, it is calculated to injure souls, and to bring religion into contempt. These men are attempting, by every means in their power, to carry out the spirit and objects of the infamous “Fly-Sheets,”—a proceeding the most disgusting and disgraceful; at variance with every honourable feeling, and in direct opposition to the spirit and principles of true Christianity.

The church of Christ has seldom witnessed so foul and malicious an outrage of everything like decency and propriety as that which we now deplore, and are called to expose. Falsehood and misrepresentation have characterized the movement from the beginning, and in all its stages. Evil speaking, in all the various forms and modifications which that most detestable vice assumes, has been prominent in the whole proceedings of these pretended reformers, who have the hardihood to boast of pious feelings and love to souls,—

“While mingling truth with falsehood, sneers with smiles,
A thread of candour with a web of wiles.”

Under the plausible pretence of a desire to do good, the “expelled Ministers” have maliciously defamed the innocent, charging upright and eminently useful Ministers with priestcraft, tyranny, and dishonesty. They have taken “as large a charter as the winds to blow on whom they please;” and palpable falsehoods, as well as all loose reports that could admit of a bad construction, or place the most respectable characters in a contemptible point of view, have been repeated before excited multitudes, for the purpose of blasting the reputation and destroying the usefulness of our most successful Ministers. The popular cry of “religious liberty” has been set up, in order to create sympathy with themselves, and to alienate members of our society from those who were the instruments of their conversion. Who can hear or read of Mr. Dunn as the man of the people, one of the special patrons of liberty, without being disgusted? There is not so domineering a Superintendent now in the Wesleyan ministry as was this same Mr. Dunn. Though he has denied the charges of the Dudley Stewards, and has falsely stated that Dr. Bunting approved of his whole conduct in that case, it is true that, to serve a selfish purpose, he denied the right of the great body of members of the Quarterly-Meeting to vote, and attempted to prevent all but the Ministers and Stewards exercising that privilege. When the Conference, as usual, determined to protect the people, and sent the case to a Committee, this *liberal* man left the Conference in disgust, and sought

in vain an introduction into the Established Church, hoping to escape the mortification of bending his stubborn will, either to the people or the Conference. Surely Methodism is not to be altered to suit the views of men whose public conduct is in direct opposition to every principle of honour, truth, and consistency. Those who think the "expelled" were severely dealt with, or that their restoration is desirable, would do well to pay a little attention to the course they have adopted during the year. They have recommended publications of a disgraceful character, and an injurious tendency, in which the living and the dead have been spoken of in language unbecoming, false, and cruel. They have gone among peaceful societies, and have attempted, by the free circulation of slander and falsehood, to promote discord and every evil work, pretending, by a show of hands, to settle points on which no fair statement had been made.

Mr. Everett may be regarded as the leader of the agitating band. He has had considerable practice in the "black art" of injuring character, and shows great dexterity in the management of his weapons, as well as in the oblique manner in which he inflicts the deepest wounds. He can throw out hints and insinuations full of malicious venom, or express doubts and surmises in such a way as to make them quite as mischievous. Attacking reputation, which is sacred and valuable as life itself, he judges without candour, and censures without mercy, manifesting a readiness to gather up any kind of private scandal, and, after adding to it his own embellishment, to circulate it where there is a probability of the greatest mischief. The subtlety employed is an aggravation of the crime. Professing a strong attachment to Methodism, he does all in his power to destroy its influence, and prevent its spread. How can he love Methodism who has spared no pains to make others despise it; who, after giving publicity to base falsehoods, has crowned all by giving to the public "Notes," written by a mortified man smarting under the pain of suspension, and *Stamped* with infamy, as if written by one still in the ministry? Surely deception cannot be more complete, or depravity more certain.

Mr. Dunn, with more seeming sanctity of manner and expression, indulges in gross and offensive personalities, and repeats falsehoods which have been publicly and satisfactorily contradicted. Though his speeches are very much about himself, and the many good things he has done, he does also speak of others; but it is to disparage and injure those who are not of his party. His statement of what took place at the Conference is a wilful perversion of the truth. It is false to say, that he and Mr. Griffith were expelled for sympathizing with Mr. Everett. He knows that they were expelled because they stubbornly refused submission to their brethren, and to give up the office of Superintendent, which many think neither of them ought ever to have held.

Though he stated, that the Conference had power to sell the chapels, leaving the Trustees with the debts, he knew it to be otherwise.

His reiterated statements, that thousands and tens of thousands of pamphlets being gratuitously distributed were paid for out of the Contingent Fund, is an impudent falsehood, propagated for the purpose of injuring the Funds of the Connexion. The pretence, that the recent "Declaration" was got up at Manchester, by Mr. Bunting, and others, is an entire fabrication, like many other statements made by the party.

It is a gross deception to complain of not having received back any portion of the money paid into the Preachers' Fund, when the whole sum, £133, has been offered to him and refused.

Mr. Dunn has solemnly urged persons to resist the exercise of discipline, and to allow no power but the policeman to enforce it upon them.

Mr. Griffith is more honest, but he is also more violent, than either of the others. He speaks out what he thinks, and in doing so manifests great bitterness of spirit; and, reckless of consequences, makes furious attacks on all persons opposed to his views. He is

"Loquacious, loud, and turbulent of tongue,
Awed by no shame, by no respect controll'd,
In scandal busy, in reproaches bold."

This rash young man has recommended the "Fly-Sheets," has made light of their wicked and lying statements, and gloried in foul attacks on character, of which real Christians ought all to feel ashamed. Infidels could not forge baser or more malicious falsehoods than are found in the vile publications recommended and patronized by Mr. Griffith. He has stated, that the "Declaration" issued in 1847 is "a public and disgraceful lie!" that the parties concerned in its issue are guilty of forging names, and that he can produce proof of this disgraceful conduct. In rashly giving names, he has, however, degraded himself; for in those instances the most complete refutation of his false charges has been given. The blustering statement made at Halifax about his father's signature, was proved to be false. Mr. Griffith has made violent attacks on the Missionary authorities, and has insinuated that the Secretaries received as much as £700 a year, though he knew to the contrary.

He has urged the stopping of the supplies.

He publicly called a Local Preacher, who had defended the Conference, "a villain," and his statement "a villanous lie."

On one occasion he urged the people to secure the pulpits for the expelled; and assured them that they would be put out of society soon, if they did not tell all about their love-letters.

This reformer is found at one agitating meeting receiving the money that has been withheld from the Ministers of the Circuit, without remonstrance against such a proceeding; and at another meeting burlesquing the solemn service of ordination to the Christian ministry.

The idea of such men as these being restored to the Wesleyan ministry is preposterous.

The question has been long since foreclosed by their own acts. As in the case of the man who placed his ladder against the bough he was cutting off, their efforts must injure themselves. Their professed attachment to Methodism is worthless, and the effect of their being allowed to cling to it would be like that of the ivy which injures the wall it embraces.

They have been actively employed in slandering the whole body of Ministers, and, at the bidding of a self-constituted Committee, have endeavoured to promote discord and strife throughout the societies. If the Conference is an "Inquisition," let them avoid it; if not, then, for their wicked slanders, they deserve to be kept out.

Such men are, in their present state, utterly unfit for the Christian ministry. They have systematically insulted our amiable President, and have sanctioned and applauded a riotous proceeding at Bristol, which was a disgrace to the Christian name. Who could have brotherly confidence in, or communion with, them, until they have brought forth fruits meet for repentance? It is impossible, and they know it. Therefore they ought not to pretend to expect restoration to a Body they have insulted and injured in every possible way.

NOTICE OF PUBLICATIONS.

The Claims of Lay-Delegation fully examined, by Charles Welch. Second Edition. Sold by John Mason, 14, City-Road.—It is well known that this acute and able pamphlet embodies the deliberate and conscientious views of the author, on a subject which, for many years together, he has earnestly and repeatedly considered.

A Second Letter to J. B. ; or, the Law of 1835, on Memorials to Conference, considered. London: Palmer and Hoby. Sold by John Mason.—This is a seasonable and ably-written pamphlet; showing, that the means of memorializing the Conference were greatly extended by the law of 1835; and that the time appointed for preparing memorials, respecting supposed grievances, is ample, and most suitable to the circumstances of the Wesleyan Connexion. We earnestly recommend it to our readers, and respectfully solicit their co-operation in its distribution.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

J. WALTHER, Liverpool.—With thanks. Can he *prove* that ——— was the author of the extract?

J. R.—Properly identifying the Bristol rioters with the enemies of Israel.

C. P.—Many other Dissenting Ministers have been long "regretting that, on great public occasions, they could not have the hearty co-operation of the Wesleyans." Our people are not sufficiently intolerant to join the Dissenters in persecuting the Church of England. So, with the help of Hardy, Colman, and Co., Methodism is to be "changed," in order that their liberal and agitating Inquisition may be left, without obstruction, to work out its appropriate results.

OBSERVER.—Will accept our thanks.

P. O., Brecon.—The extract is excellent, but has already appeared in the President's pamphlet.

R. M. very justly says, "I am no grammarian. I dare say you will find some words not spelt right;" while his letter proves him to labour under defects of a far more serious character. He is, however, certainly a Reformer, and possibly a Delegate.

J. H., Ripon.—It is the habit of Mr. Kaye and his Editor to injure people by untrue statements, and then refuse them all redress.

No. V.

PRICE 1d.

THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

MAY, 1850.

AN EXPOSURE OF THE FALSE CHARACTER, ABSURD PROPOSALS, AND DISORDERLY PROCEEDINGS, OF THE PRETENDED DELEGATE-MEETING, HELD IN ALBION CHAPEL, MOORGATE, MARCH 12TH, AND FOLLOWING DAYS, 1850.

As the long-threatened Meeting of *professed* Delegates from the Methodist societies, to effect the reform of Wesleyan Methodism, is over, it may now be calmly reviewed in its character and proceedings; and its results may with propriety be compared with the previously-expressed anticipations of its promoters. Indeed, this service on behalf of our friends, as what might be confidently looked for, has been publicly claimed from us by the *honourable gentleman* who edits the weekly journal which so faithfully expresses the sentiments of those who most boastfully proclaim their undiminished and inviolable *love* for Wesleyan Methodism, and yet band themselves together to subvert its essential principles, and to overthrow its institutions. As if too much worn and wearied by the persecutions he had endured, and by the laborious exertions he had put forth on behalf of the *great* and *good* cause which he and his friends have so laudably espoused,—but, in reality, afraid to investigate too closely the composition of the Meeting of pretending Delegates, and to speak out fully on its unity, discussions, and decisions,—he says, in a leader introducing the report of the Meeting, “We need be in no hurry to make a rigid analysis either of the Delegates or of their decisions. Our opponents will be very glad to take this work off our hands. They will soon let us know whether a complete, coherent, and practicable scheme of reform

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has been shadowed forth. They will soon tell us whether the Delegates assembled had any pretensions to be regarded as a fair representation of the Wesleyan people. The Circuits from which they came will be compared with the whole number of Circuits in the Connexion. The relative importance of the represented Circuits in point of numbers, wealth, and influence will be tested. We shall be told, moreover, whether some Circuits out of each District sent Delegates or not. And, in short, the statistics of the Meeting will be tried by every test which may give colour to the assertion, that this Delegate-Meeting is not to be viewed as a representation of the Methodist people, but merely as the voice of a factious and discontented minority." We must acknowledge, that, after the charges of Mr. John Harrison's falsehoods and scandals, which were *satisfactorily proved* in the Islington Leaders' Meeting, we are not in much danger of being ordinarily influenced by his opinions; nor are we generally disposed to act under his dictation; but just to show that he anticipates more truth and fairness from others than they do from him,—and to make it apparent that, notwithstanding the grievous odium under which he is now struggling, he has not entirely lost his influence on society,—we do something to answer the call he has publicly made upon us. And, first, we shall investigate

THE CHARACTER AND COMPOSITION OF THE MEETING.

According to the anticipations of Mr. John Harrison, and his friend Mr. Grosjean, who are both Secretaries of the Corresponding Committee, and who may therefore be considered as speaking upon certain *data*, the Meeting was to be very much larger in the number of its members than it has really been. The most worthy Editor, who, at the Delegate-Meeting, complained most piteously that, as "a member of the fourth estate in the country," he should have been condemned for untruthfulness; and who there declared, "that, with but *one* or *two* exceptions, there have been no statements conveyed through or by his journal which cannot be sustained and fully borne out by facts," wrote, on March 4th,—“Our next publication will find us on the eve of the most important gathering ever convened in connexion with Methodism. The Delegate-Meetings of 1795, '96, and '97, sink into insignificance in comparison with that of 1850, however regarded, whether in point of numbers, principles, or probable results.” Mr. Grosjean, the co-Secretary of Mr. Harrison, and who with him knew, from the returns obtained, how many professed Delegates were coming, said, at a public assembly held in the Town-Hall of Birmingham, only a few days before the Meeting, that “they were going to have *six hundred* Delegates meet in London.” The great discrepancy between these professed anticipations, and what really appeared, would have surprised us, had we not been placed on our guard by other statements made by these gentlemen; such, for instance, as Mr. Harrison's, in the public Meeting of Birmingham, that “it was *simply* as Editor of the ‘Wesleyan Times’ he had been expelled;” and of Mr.

Grosjean in the same Meeting, that "£40,000 had been spent on the Centenary-Hall, where there was a man in attendance with a cocked-hat, gold lace on his coat, a gold-headed cane in his hand, and walking about like a man at the Horse-Guards."

These and other statements, by the same gentlemen, prevented our most ready and full reception of what they said concerning the anticipated number of the Delegates about to assemble; and, therefore, we were not surprised to find, after an announcement made the week before, that "on that day (the 12th of March) Delegates to the number of *above* four hundred, from all parts of the country, met together," that only three hundred and sixty-nine professed Delegates met in Albion chapel, Moorgate, to *reform* Methodism. Thus, to say nothing of exaggerated predictions of a thousand, and eight hundred Delegates, so vauntingly put forth months and weeks before the Meeting, the number announced only a few days before, by men who had received returns to guide them in making provision for the Delegates, during their stay in town, exceeded the true number by more than two hundred. From these facts, one of two conclusions is irresistible,—either the Corresponding-Committee falsely represented the number expected, or they were disappointed with the number which really appeared. To take the most charitable view, that of disappointment, then, in the number of professed Delegates, there is not much occasion for the boast made by reformers.

And as to the *character* of the "Delegates from the Wesleyan societies," as they describe themselves, and as they are set forth in their journal, they are *false* in their professions. What Methodist society delegated any one of them to attend a Meeting in London to secure Methodist reform? Not one, in the whole kingdom. Some few were appointed at Meetings for agitation, composed of Dissenters, Socinians, Chartists, political reformers, and Methodists; but, chiefly, if sent at all, they were sent from "hole-and-corner" meetings, held in private houses, and composed of the disaffected only. Not one of the professed "Delegates *from* the Wesleyan societies" was appointed by a properly constituted Meeting in Methodism; and more than a few of them have been indignantly and openly repudiated as their Delegates by the Quarterly Meetings of the Circuits from which they professed to be sent. Thus, the Meeting in Moorgate, vauntingly set forth by the *truthful* Editor of Mr. Kaye's Times as "a *great fact*," is, in reality, a GREAT FALSEHOOD. It was not what it declared itself to be; and every member of that Meeting entered it with misrepresentation and falsehood associated with his name. We could tell some strange tales of some of the professed Delegates, if we were disposed to quote from letters we have received respecting them. Most of them are men little known and less respected in the Circuits in which they live; and a general reference to the annual records of practical liberality and support of Methodism will show, that, with some few exceptions, there is not much reason to fear from the threatening shout, raised and reiterated by them, of, "*Stop the supplies!*" It is a remarkable circumstance in the "great fact" of

the Meeting of professed Delegates, that, proportionately, the greater number are from Circuits most dependent on the Contingent Fund for support. The Circuits *said* to be represented by the pretending Delegates, contain 123,056 members of the Wesleyan-Methodist societies; but the total number of Wesleyan Methodists in England, Scotland, and Wales, is 348,274; so that, according to their own pretensions, nearly two-thirds of the members of the Methodist societies were unrepresented in the Delegate-Meeting. Of the hundred and thirty Circuits falsely professed to be represented, forty-three receive annual grants from the Contingent Fund; and from these forty-three Circuits have appeared one hundred and eight Delegates!

Towards the total number of three hundred and sixty-nine Delegates, sixty-two were collected from London and its immediate suburbs; a pretty fair illustration of "*centralization*" as acted upon by Wesleyan reformers; and of these, the Circuits most dependent on the Contingent Fund, and almost alone in this respect, supply the greatest number of Delegates. Spitalfields, for instance, which, while second in the number of its members, is the only Circuit in London which receives assistance from the Contingent Fund, supplies *ten*; and Leyton, with the fewest members of any Circuit in the District, and receiving, proportionately, the largest grant, supplies *five* Delegates. This circumstance, of the great number of professed Delegates from the Circuits most dependent on the Contingent Fund, might, if they were not influenced by a higher motive than retaliation, draw forth from Constitutional Methodists, at least the echo of the revolutionists' cry, "Stop the supplies!"

There are one or two other circumstances which appear on such an analysis of the late Meeting as Mr. Harrison recommends, which are worthy of observation. One is, that *more than two hundred* of the pretending Delegates are Local Preachers; a circumstance which, we doubt not, is deeply deplored by the faithful working men in this important department of Methodism. Another, that only eighteen Circuit-Stewards—the official representatives of the society—are found to have been at the Meeting: a decisive proof, that the Delegates are not "from the Wesleyan societies." Of these eighteen Circuits, nine are on the Contingent Fund; and, in all, the average number of members in each Circuit, is from seven to eight hundred. In fact, analyze the Meeting as we may, so long as it is done as the truthful Editor of the "Wesleyan Times" recommends,—"*with fairness*,"—the result must condemn his representations; and supply a decisive negative, as the only just answer to every one of the inquiries suggested by him in the paragraph we have quoted. The Delegates assembled can "make no just nor reasonable pretension to be regarded as a fair representation of the Wesleyan people." The Circuits from which they came are far down in the minority among the Circuits in the Connexion, both as to numbers and influence; and the *great fact* of the Meeting held in Albion chapel,—so exultantly set forth, as composed of men who have "skill to plan,

and vigour to execute; as having calm judgment which nothing can disturb, and employing eloquence which nothing can resist; and as including NESTORS, ULYSSES, and COBDENS, to such an extent as to render the presence and ability of a PEEL quite unnecessary to their help, in taking to pieces the old, tottering system of Wesleyan Methodism,"—the Delegate-Meeting, *said* to include all these able, warlike, and reforming men, nevertheless does show that, if Mr. Harrison's last sentence in his paragraph be broken off from its intended connexion, it is true,—namely, that "it is *not* to be viewed as a representation of the Methodist people, but merely as the voice of a factious and discontented minority."

THE OPENING OF THE MEETING; THE DISPUTES, DIVISIONS, AND
DISORDERS IN THE ASSEMBLY.

The opening of the Meeting was fully in character with its constitution. It was opened by the Editor of Mr. Kaye's "Times," who, after having, with a selected band in London, most unconstitutionally and most presumptuously assumed authority to organize Committees in the several Circuits of the Connexion; and after having gone into them to agitate and divide them, now came forward, and said,—“We have felt *extreme delicacy*, lest our friends in the country should fancy that we are taking too much upon ourselves.” He and his London friends then proceeded to dictate to the country brethren on behalf of the Corresponding Committee, what should be done in the case of the expelled Ministers, in the election of Chairmen, and in the appointment of a Select Committee to prepare the Resolutions, and to arrange the business of the Meeting. This dictation was not as readily submitted to as was anticipated. There was a manifest unwillingness, on the part of many in the Meeting, to unite themselves with the expelled. One said, “it was too early to commit themselves to their cause.” Another, that “it would have an unfavourable influence on the minds of those whom, to a certain extent, they had to satisfy.” Another inquired “if it would not affect the legality of the Meeting, if they were invited to attend.” Another remarked, that, “if they invited the three gentlemen to be present, it would prevent many from joining their ranks, who would otherwise unite with them;” and he asserted, that “the cause of the expelled and the cause of the reform were two separate things.” But after the explanations and pleas of Mr. Chipchase, and others, showing that they *themselves* had no Methodistical right to be in the Meeting; that several parties, not Delegates, were already in it; that others dare not go home and face their Circuits, if they excluded from their assembly Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith; and that one of the Ministers—who had been present with the Committee when it was observed, that if invited to be present, they would not be expected to take part in the discussions—had stated, that he would “*gladly* be present as a *visiter*;” the three *worthy* champions and “martyrs” for Wesleyan reform were then admitted as mere *spectators* or *visitors*, two of them seating themselves with the Reporters, and the other placing himself

nearer to the chair of presidency. Of course, we cannot say what were the feelings of the triumvirate in being thus reluctantly allowed to enter a Meeting composed of reformers, whom they had been accustomed to lead; but many, not of the Meeting, think and say, they were used shabbily by their friends. What could be the reason for such treatment? Either the conviction has generally spread, through what was known before Conference and still more from what has been said and done since, that they were justly-suspected men; and that the Conference—as Mr. Martin said for thousands in the presence of the three gentlemen in Exeter-Hall, where again they were mere spectators—had no other alternative than to expel them; or that they were generally so uncertain and exaggerating in their public statements, that they could not be trusted to speak in connexion with Methodist reform: or, it might be, that several of the leading reformers cared nothing for the case of the expelled, save as it served them as a stepping-stone to the objects they had kept before them since the days of Dr. Warren's agitation. This is evident, whatever may be said on the other grounds; and there is, undoubtedly, reason in them. But the men, the proposals, and the very language employed in the Meeting of pretended Delegates, all show that the efforts made by the leaders in this professed reform movement are the repetition of what they unsuccessfully made in past years. One of them openly stated this, and said, "With regard to their (Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith) being the cause of the reform movement, I beg to say, I have not been made a reformer by their expulsion; I have been a reformer since 1835. At the same time, I am thankful for any addition to our ranks. This is an accidental circumstance. Perhaps you will say it is a providential one. Well, then, I am thankful to God for that."

In accordance with this fact, the Committee of Reform have possessed themselves of the money collected for the purchase of annuities for the expelled; and, already, they have expended more than £500 in the prosecution of their Reforming course. We expect some dissatisfaction will arise among the subscribers of the money to the life-annuities of Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith, before it shall be finally distributed. It will be well if some of it do not go, as no small portion of the money of the Strangers' Friend Society went, through *mal*-appropriation, by one that was prominent and busy, as a friend of the expelled, at their great Exeter-Hall Meeting. Mr. Everett has, with his characteristic sagacity, secured to *himself* the money collected among his friends at York; but Messrs. Dunn and Griffith are left to the mercy of a London Committee, who have their own expenditure to defray out of what they receive, before they can make any disbursements; and they may, through travelling expenses, the hiring of a Committee-room at Exeter-Hall, and of buildings for public meetings, and by advertisements in Mr. Kaye's "Times," require a large proportion of the remaining £2,000. After the humiliating treatment received lately, the *trio* cannot have very great confidence in the Committee of Reform. The case of their expulsion, and that of Methodist

reform, are declared to be "two separate things." To be safe, then, we should say, Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith should take their own case into their own hands. Already there are discrepancies in the reports of money transactions given to the public, which we cannot reconcile with truth and honesty. In the Circular issued by the Corresponding Committee to the local Committees in November last, it was stated, that £6,000 would be required to secure a life-annuity for each of the expelled Ministers. At the Meeting in Birmingham, held a few days previously to the Delegate Meeting, MR. GROSJEAN, one of the Secretaries of the Corresponding Committee, stated, he was thankful the money was coming in for the expelled Ministers. "*We have got,*" said he, "*the sum we first started for.*" And, at the Meeting of the pretended Delegates, Mr. Kaye, the Treasurer of the Fund, reported a balance of £2,107 in the bank, after deducting the expenses that had been incurred. We confess ourselves unable to reconcile with truth all these statements; and, hoping there is no dishonesty with those who have charge of the money, we are disposed to associate MR. GROSJEAN'S statement in Birmingham Town-Hall, respecting the money received, with what he had previously stated respecting the door-keeper at the Centenary-Hall. It was more than a *little bit* of an exaggeration, to say the least of it. As old friends of Mr. Dunn and Mr. Griffith, we would advise them to do with the Nottingham and Ripley subscriptions, what Mr. Everett has done with those of York.

* THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE UP-STAIRS.

This heading of a paragraph may startle some of our friends; for a Nomination Committee of the Conference has been so unmercifully denounced by Methodist reformers, that it could not be supposed they would have one at their very first Meeting. But they had; and one far more objectionable in its composition and preparations, than any Committee, acting under the same name, for the Conference. The Nomination Committee for the Conference is composed of the *official* persons connected with the several departments of Methodist agency; and of parties, selected from the Districts, who are acquainted with localities to be represented. This Committee, therefore, is large, and general in its composition; and it does nothing more than prepare a list of names to be submitted to the Conference, to be exchanged for others, reduced in number, or increased, as the Conference may deem best. This is a mere matter of preparation, to expedite the business of the Conference; and neither that Committee nor any other (unless appointed for some one specific object) ever prepares resolutions for the Conference. The business of the Conference is left to shape its own course, and supply its own resolutions, as freedom of expressed thought and judgment may direct. But at the Meeting of pretended Delegates, a clique was proposed by the Corresponding Committee to prepare resolutions, and to nominate men to the Chair, and to office, consisting of themselves, with a *few* additions of country members; and these met in another room up-stairs, prepared the resolutions, and not unfrequently nominated the

parties to move and to support them in the Meeting! In some instances objections were made to such proceedings, and the manifest inconsistency of what was thus done by men who had publicly denounced Nomination Committees in the Conference was spoken of; and to obviate the difficulty of withstanding the undue influence of the up-stairs Committee, vote by ballot was proposed: but Mr. Harrison, of Wakefield, reconciled the complaining ones to the Committee, on the ground that it differed from the Nomination Committee of the Conference, inasmuch as it was appointed by themselves. This is, certainly, one of the cases in which there occurs "a distinction where there is no difference;" for the Nomination Committee of the Conference is *always* appointed by the members of that Conference. This small-room Committee sat to the end of the Meeting of the professed Delegates, nominating Presidents, shaping the course of business, preparing resolutions, appointing movers and supporters; and, when found necessary by down-stairs disagreements, deputing some of their members to explain and plead for the resolutions. In some instances, individuals sent down from the Committee rather gruffly told parties objecting, and proposing alterations in the resolutions presented, that they could not allow the resolutions so carefully prepared by the Committee to be thus treated. We suspect that when "the friends from the provinces," as Mr. Gandy described the country members of the professed Delegate-Meeting, shall have had time calmly to reflect on its proceedings, they will see good reason to suspect that they were adroitly managed by the London Committee. Some felt this before they left town; and disturbances in the Meeting seem to have been very common, one Chairman after another finding it necessary, on taking the seat of presidency, to bespeak the better and more peaceable behaviour of their friends. At times the laws of decency and propriety, in the use of language, seem to have been so grossly outraged, that one member of the Managing Committee had to call another to order; and the Chairman had to request that personalities might be avoided. And now the Corresponding Committee have got themselves appointed under another name; and the reformers of London have to manage the reformers of the provinces. There are some few country friends, who live at a considerable distance, associated with them in name: but who expects they will attend the Meetings? It is not likely they will be frequently in London, when they have to come from Sunderland, Bristol, and Liverpool. It is evident, that the London reformers, such as Messrs. Gandy, Child, Chipchase, and Kaye, have seized the strings that move the loose, jumping figure of Methodist reform, and that they are to produce whatever movements they choose; the loosely-strung limbs of arms and legs being expected to act as they who live at the seat of action may tighten or relax the strings they hold. And while they do this, Mr. Harrison, one of their own number, is, in the pages of his *truthful* weekly journal, to describe the wisdom and the ability by which the movements, throughout the dangling body of reformers, are produced.

THE PROPOSALS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE MEETING.

These were not such as had been expected; for it had most convincingly appeared, that the *fraud* to be perpetrated by the Trustees of Methodist chapels, as suggested and recommended by Mr. COZENS HARDY, a worthy Magistrate of Norfolk, as the most ready and effectual way of robbing Methodism of its chapels, would be dangerous to the *pockets* of those who should follow his legal advice and recommendation. It had also been given as the decided judgment of the Solicitor-General, of Mr. Prendergast, and of other authorities in the courts of English law, that, according to the case submitted to them by Mr. Sutcliffe, a case not thought of by him of late only, "*that the admission of laymen into Conference, as members of that assembly, would be an infraction of the Deed-Poll that could not stand good in law.*" The removal of these two cherished plans of operation took away from the Meeting the principal part of the ground intended to be occupied: but the up-stairs Committee exerted all its ingenuity, and combined all its wisdom, to devise occupation for the Meeting below; and succeeded in doing so for three or four days. The folly and impracticability of the proposals must have been only a secondary consideration to that of finding

————— "Mischief still,
For idle hands to do."

1. The first proposal from the up-stairs Committee, composed chiefly of the members of the London Corresponding Committee, was the very modest one, that *the best thanks of the Meeting should be given to themselves; and that they, who were not Delegates, should favour the Conference with their company during all its sittings.* It had been pleaded that Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith could not take part in the Meeting, because they were not *appointed* Delegates, and, on that ground, they were prohibited from engaging in the proceedings; but this *managing* and self-applauding Committee found no difficulty in taking the most prominent part in them, though they were confessedly no more eligible, by professed appointment, to do so, than the party prohibited. This very circumstance illustrates the meaning of what one of the *master-spirits* in this Committee of the reformers has written in his journal, that they "possess minds with the comprehensive grasp of a Statesman, and tact and method which no complication of details could vanquish or confuse. Whatever," says he, of himself and his friends, "of human appliance a good cause can require, is ready to *our* hand,—men of action, men of counsel, age with experience, and that intuitive perception of the right which *sometimes supplies the place* of both."

2. The second Resolution, proposed and seconded by men who, like several others in the assembly, are not even members of the Wesleyan-Methodist society, *expressed the Meeting's cordial approval of the doctrines of John Wesley as being scriptural, but condemned the discipline and the legislative acts of the Conference as unscriptural.* This

Resolution, as might be expected, was ably expounded and affectingly dwelt upon, by Mr. Keed, of Lynn, an expelled Local Preacher; who has not very scripturally *taken upon himself* to administer the sacraments, and to perform other ministerial acts, in connexion with the falsehoods and slanders he puts forth; and by Mr. Bramwell, of Durham, who, though no Methodist, said, "As Methodists, *we* do admit that under Christ," &c., "*we* are the children and *we* are the followers of John Wesley," &c.; and who denounced the Conference in unmeasured terms for assuming the authority to constitute itself the sole legislative body of the Connexion,—carefully avoiding any distant allusion to the fact, that no law of Methodism, proposed by the Conference, becomes the law of the Connexion until the Circuits shall have had the opportunity of expressing their views respecting it.

Mr. Nicholls, of the Second London Circuit, (who is falsely set forth as having been a Local Preacher for twenty-four years, and who has openly violated a pledge he gave of future peaceful conduct, on his earnestly-sought restoration to Methodism, after he had quarrelled with Mr. Eckett and his party,) proposed to add to the Resolution, that the Meeting condemned the Wesleyan form of ecclesiastical government, because it was "not conformable to the laws and usages of any other evangelical religious body." So that he was for swamping Wesleyan Methodism altogether, by amalgamating it with the "old Church of Scotland," which he named; or with the "Methodist Association," which he had forsaken after having tried it; or with Congregationalism, more suitable to the views of ecclesiastical government expressed by the reformers. Whatever might be the name employed to distinguish such persons as should follow the expositions of Scripture by Wesleyan reformers, the Connexional principle would undoubtedly be severed by their reforms. Class-meetings must be given up; fellowship-meetings, band-meetings, love-feasts, and the ticket as a token of membership, must be abandoned, because precise and definite rules in the letter are not given for them in the Scriptures. A church may be scriptural in its principles and objects, using the most appropriate means to secure their maintenance and attainment, and yet not have the *letter* of the law to point to in the Bible for every one of those means. This has been acknowledged by all denominations of Christians; and, by the most evangelical and liberal, it has been understood and declared, that those means of church-government are most to be approved that secure most fully the spiritual ends set forth and enjoined upon Christians in the word of God: but these *sticklers* for the letter of Scripture, while negligent of its spirit, profess to require scripture law for every meeting and means in the church. Where do they find scripture warrant for agitating and dividing peaceful churches, as they have done by concert and of set purpose since the last Conference? Where can they discover scripture authority for the falsehoods and slanders they have propagated respecting holy and venerable men in Christ's church? Where can Messrs. Keed, Colman, Cozens Hardy, Gandy, and the BRISTOL RIOTERS, find scripture teaching for the

insulting treatment directed by them against their Ministers? Where is their scripture direction for the Meeting of pretended Delegates? With Mr. Mallinson, who spoke on this subject, we say, in connexion with these questions, "What saith the Book?" and we are willing to abide by its decisions.

3. The next Resolution—moved by Mr. Colman, who said, he "was apt to say strong things and harsh words in the provinces," but who promised to be "more guarded in the great city"—was in condemnation of *the law of 1835, as infringing on the liberties of the people*. This Nestor or Ulysses, in Mr. Harrison's estimation, delivered a florid and bombastic oration on liberty, as the gift of Heaven to all men; then gave "all honour" to the men of Swaffham, for carrying away the money-bag of the Circuit, and thus seeking to starve the Preachers and their friends into a way of acting opposed to their conscientious sense of duty. He then described the Methodist revolutionists as men of *peace*; and declared the oppression and tyranny that led martyrs to Smithfield, and drove "pilgrim fathers" across the Atlantic, was not to be compared to the oppression and tyranny of the Conference, which can hold no man, woman, or child, in connexion with itself against his or her will. He declared, "in all honesty," that Wesleyan Methodism is so corrupt and bad, that he could not recommend any one to unite himself to it; and then, working himself up into a frenzy,—which made him think of his school-boy task in the Latin *Delectus*, and shout with the revolutionists of France, *Vox populi vox Dei*,—he, after the manner of one set forth in the first book of Milton's "Paradise Lost," summoned all the discontented and fallen in Methodism to rise in arms against the tyrants and despots who should assemble in Conference in London next August;—exclaiming, at the full height of his voice, "Up, then, men of Methodism, Leaders, Local Preachers! Arouse the best feelings of your hearts, and, as the sacramental host of God's elect, vindicate your rights!" This very animating and rousing call to battle against the Ministers of Christ's Gospel, was responded to by the whole body of reformers, who immediately rose and sang,—

"Together let us sweetly live,
Together let us die;
And each a starry crown receive,
And reign above the sky."

Mr. Cozens Hardy seconded the Resolution; and, after denouncing the law of 1835 without reason, and telling a direct falsehood concerning the President,—stating, that when he was at Lynn, he declared that "every one of the Delegates should be expelled,"—he concluded by saying, "When you go back to your respective Circuits, agitate the question in every possible way. Talk of it by day, think of it by night. Agitate, agitate, agitate, till public opinion gain the day!"

Mr. Martin, from the Circuit of Altrincham, but not sent as a Delegate from any society, professed his intimate acquaintance with the rule of 1835, and recommended that Lecturers should be em-

ployed to expound it to others ; so that the "half-and-half men," as he called them, might be brought over to the views entertained of it by the *radical* reformers. This recommendation was supported by Mr. Patterson, of Blyth, who affirmed that a "vast amount of ignorance existed in the Circuits respecting the law" by which the Connexion is disturbed. He concluded by a flaming peroration on the burning of all the parchment on which any fragment of the law was written ; and exclaimed, as he predicted the bonfire destruction he desired, "So perish all despotism !" Of course, after such advocacy, the Resolution passed "with *loud* applause."

It was immediately discovered that the Resolution had been too hastily passed ; for the Chairman informed the Meeting, that the Committee up-stairs had not completed the next Resolution to be submitted to the Meeting, the Delegates having got on much faster than was anticipated. Some old letters from "hole-and-corner" meetings held in the Lowestoff, Yeadon, Market-Raisen, and Alston Circuits were therefore read, to fill up the time, and lest any member of the Meeting should think himself competent to move a Resolution of his own framing.

4. After this uninteresting parenthesis of stale memorials, in language repeated a hundred times over, Mr. Alderman Schofield, who acknowledged himself indebted to Methodism for every five-pound note he possessed, moved a Resolution disapproving of all the regulations which prevent the members and officials of the Wesleyan Methodist society from holding meetings, and memorializing the Conference, on *any subject whatever*. To obtain these he, after much butting against the Conference, to use his own language, offered himself as "an old ram" for sacrifice. Mr. Coultas, of York, the suspected printer of the infamous "Fly-Sheets," and the son of a Methodist Preacher, seconded the Resolution ; and, after showing that the Queen of England possessed her throne by birth, said, "Who placed the members of the Wesleyan Conference in the positions they occupy ? Have they not been taken from our ranks ? Some of them were taken from the dregs of the people, and placed among Princes ; and therefore it is the very essence of presumption, one of the most perfect specimens of impertinence, for them to refuse our memorials on any question whatever." This was not very complimentary to himself and his family, nor very flattering to the assembly in which he was ; for it associated them with "the dregs of the people:" and we rather suspect that the same kind of argument would denounce, as most presumptuous and impertinent, the fishermen of Galilee and the miner's son of Germany.

5. Mr. Palmer, of Belper, moved the next Resolution, though he said he had only had a few minutes to think about it. His purpose, he said, was to have given "the monster law of 1835 a kick, and he was sorry he had not had afforded him the opportunity of doing so ;" but as Mr. Everett supported him when a child, by carrying him on his shoulder from a chapel to his father's house, he would move the Resolution

intrusted to him, which was to the effect, *that if the Conference would confine itself to the assembling of the legal Hundred only, and abstain from all legislative measures, leaving them to Laymen out of the Conference, then the introduction of Laymen to the Conference would be unnecessary.* This was evidently a patch prepared by the up-stairs Committee to cover the wound inflicted by the Solicitor-General's and Mr. Prendergast's judgment on the illegality of uniting laymen with the Conference. It was well understood that several members of the unconstitutional Meeting had come to Town to speak on the subject of Lay-Delegation; and though this was known to be utterly impracticable, yet, to gratify them, the *Managing* Committee prepared and sent down stairs a Resolution on the subject. As might be expected, this Resolution occasioned much dispute; for, as one of the members of the Committee said, they were as far asunder from each other on the subject of it as the poles of the earth. One was for having two laymen in the Conference to one Minister, that they might swamp the Preachers. Another, who said "Dr. Bunting had entered the Hundred like a thief and a robber," would have "nothing but an out-and-out Lay-Delegation," and called upon the Meeting "to go the whole hog." Another was for having the Local Preachers in the Conference; for "they were as much Christian Ministers as the Travelling Preachers." Another was for moving an amendment, which was not allowed to be read until the *Managing* Committee had been called down-stairs to hear it. Another was for no Lay-Delegates in the Conference, but only in the Committees. Another was for driving through the Poll-Deed, and making no obstacle of legal impracticabilities. Another, who saw this was not so easily to be done as proposed, recommended an Act of Parliament. Another, with more reason, said, "It is no use to say you *will* have it; the fact is, it *cannot be done*;" and added, "As long as we are connected with Methodism, we ought to submit to it. The Poll-Deed is one against which you cannot kick with success." Another suggested "that, in the present temper of the Meeting, a vote on the question of Lay-Delegation should be postponed;" but the Chairman overruled the more prudent brother, and put the Resolution to the Meeting, and declared it to be carried by a very large majority. This declaration, however, was so unsatisfactory to many, that, on the next day, their protest against it had to be recorded.

6. Mr. Benson, of Newcastle, moved the next Resolution, which was, *that all Leaders and office-bearers should be chosen by the church.* The seconder of this said that "the Meeting had not known what it had done in the last half hour, and that they would have no more discussion on Lay-Delegation; for he was quite sure the people did not understand the question sufficiently." This Resolution was strongly objected to by several parties, on the ground of the confusion and disturbances that would be occasioned by calling the members of the church together whenever a Leader or other officer had to be elected. Some spoke against it, from the evils which they had seen in the practice

recommended when in the "Association:" others said that "the friends they represented desired no such democratic law." Others said that Ministers, in their nomination of Leaders and other officers, had acted most judiciously, and, therefore, there was no need for a new law: but the Chairman put the Resolution prepared by the *Managing Committee*, and it was declared to be carried. One of the older Methodists, when he arrived at his lodgings, wept, and said he was sure the Resolution passed by the Meeting, if carried out into practice, would occasion nothing but strife and divisions in the societies. We think so too. To call the whole society of any place together, and discuss the eligibility or non-eligibility of any Leader or Steward nominated to office, and that so frequently as would be required in Methodism, would be to train Wesleyans to noisy debate and angry discussions—such as would eventually destroy their Connexional union and religious life, and render them a nuisance and a curse in the nation and in the world, rather than a spiritual savour and a blessing.

7. The next Resolution, proposing *that all disciplinary acts, as to admission to and expulsion from the church, should be determined by the Leaders' Meeting*, was moved by Mr. Love, of Swaffham. He, having been himself expelled, expatiated, according to his own terms, "very touchingly and very tenderly" upon the Resolution he moved; and, of course, showed that the Pastor of a church ought to have no part in receiving sheep into the fold of Christ, or in excluding goats from it. Some thought that the Leaders' Meeting was not sufficient; and that the whole church assembled for that purpose ought to receive and expel members. Others declared the Leaders' Meeting to be *the church*. A Local Preacher said, his brethren would not be willing to submit their case of Christian character to the investigation of a Leaders' Meeting. But after explanations by the Chairman, and by two members of the *Managing Committee*, who came down-stairs to enlighten their friends from the provinces, the Resolution was passed, almost unanimously. This Resolution goes to make the Leaders' Meeting judge and jury too; and, like all the others, to make a cipher of the Ministers appointed to feed and govern the church of Christ.

8. Mr. Massingham, of Norwich, next moved, that *the Quarterly Meetings should consist of all the Travelling and Local Preachers, Leaders, Trustees, and Stewards in the Circuit*. Mr. Volckman supported it, as did also Mr. Pigg; and they both expressed their deep regret that the London First Circuit, which they falsely professed to represent, was "extremely backward in reference to the reform movement." Mr. Bell, of Nottingham, proposed that officers of Sunday-schools should be members of the Quarterly Meeting; but, as this was a proposal from a mere country member of the Meeting, he was told, as others were who proposed amendments on Resolutions sent down prepared from the up-stairs Committee, that it was only a matter of detail, which need not be included in the Resolution. With this *satisfactory* explanation, it passed.

9. It was then proposed, seconded, and carried, that *there should be as many laymen as Preachers in the District-Meetings*. This was avowedly to supply the loss occasioned to the laity by exclusion from the Conference, through the Deed-Poll. Some were for having *two* laymen to one Minister; but this, it was suggested, would make the Meetings too large. Questions were asked concerning the powers to be given to a District-Meeting thus composed; but Mr. Gandy, of the *Managing* Committee, again observed, the speakers were going into matters of detail. The Resolution was then quickly passed.

10. A Resolution was next sent down to the Meeting, proposing that *there should be as many laymen as Preachers on the Connexional Committees, and that they should be chosen by the lay-members of the District-Meeting only. All Treasurers of the Connexional Funds to be laymen*. This Resolution was expatiated upon, as might have been expected. Ministers might be left to obtain the Funds, but not be trusted with the care of them. They were not men of business; and they were known to desire to be relieved from all such secularities, as it was said they ought to be, and from *all Connexional* matters. Mr. Stanley, of Newcastle, showed how it appeared that the Treasurers of Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove Schools had “robbed the bairns;” and declared that he, having been many years an officer in the Excise, had “lost all confidence in the Preachers’ ability for account-keeping.” Mr. Street, of Mansfield, suggested, “on behalf of his constituency, that the Secretaries should be laymen, as well as the Treasurers:” but this, from the labour that would be required, was feared to be impracticable; and the words added on this suggestion were as moderate as they could be made. This was not a *sine quâ non*, as Mr. Chipchase would have said,—who would have it supposed, by the repeated use of this solitary quotation, that he understands Latin.

11. A Resolution, most important to the London Corresponding and Managing Committee, was then proposed;—namely, *that a Committee of laymen should be appointed to guard the rights and privileges of the people; and that such a Committee should revise the whole of the Methodistic laws, and settle such a code as they might deem best calculated to promote the peace of the Connexion*. There were some lengthy and incoherent speeches delivered in support of this Resolution. It was thought, by some, not to go far enough: so a Mr. Dutton proposed, as an addition, “that no law should be passed at the Conference, and no old law rescinded, without the consent of *our* Committee.” Mr. William Phillips, of Bristol, explained, that “it was not the intention of the Committee up-stairs to give the Conference *any* power independent of the people. Mr. Gandy objected to Mr. Dutton’s addendum, and “assured the Meeting that every Resolution had received the careful consideration of *the Committee up-stairs* ;” and so the Resolution, without the amendment, was put and carried.

A parenthesis now occurred in the *ordinary* proceedings of the Meeting, while the pretended Delegates consulted how they could

serve their own ends by sending a deputation from their unconstitutional Meeting to the President of the Conference; which, as they afterwards said, they expected he would reject. This deputation, on behalf of a deputation, met with a godly and severe rebuke, which made them quail in the presence of the venerable man they went to insult. The President said to them,—“I consider the movement with which you now identify yourselves as a flagrant violation of the principles upon which our Connexional system has been hitherto carried out; and, in the fear of the Lord, I denounce it as directly irreligious in its tendency. I decline to receive the deputation proposed. I think it would be a breach of trust in me to do so.” On hearing this, the deputation said, “If you please, Sir, will you write down your answer, that we may convey it correctly?” “No,” said the President: “my answer is, I will receive no deputation from so unconstitutional a Meeting.” An answer in such terms as these was, of course, severely animadverted upon by the members of the Meeting. But they reconciled themselves to it by saying, through Mr. Chipchase, a member of the Managing Committee, that they were “not surprised at the answer given by the President; but they would have been, if a different answer had been given.” And they resolved to make good use of the answer received, by representing, through the Connexion, that they had done all they could to obtain an amicable settlement of the existing differences. A Resolution, prepared in anticipation of the answer, was proposed, *deeply deploring* the conduct of the President towards them. The inconsistency of this Resolution with the speeches delivered upon it, was pointed out by Mr. W. Phillips, of Bristol, who said, “The Resolution expresses great regret at what the President has done; but *every speaker* has expressed *gratification* that the President has come to the conclusion of refusing an interview with the Delegates.” Mr. Rees, of Dover, declared his belief that the President was not sincere when he spoke of “the fear of the Lord;” and then the Resolution of deep regret for his answer passed unanimously.

13. The next Resolution was, *that Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith should be restored to their place in the Wesleyan ministry.* The propriety of this Resolution was questioned by several. Words of warning, concerning the passing of such a Resolution, were uttered by one speaker after another. Mr. Mallinson said it involved more than the Meeting could see in a moment; and that they were in danger, by the Resolution proposed, of making a *fatal* mistake. Mr. Mallinson was immediately and seasonably informed that his presence was required upstairs, and was told he misunderstood the Resolution. Mr. Brown, of Manchester, whose own case justly deserves exposure, said,—“I believe that your decision this day will either divide or unite the societies;” and, professing to speak on behalf of Manchester, said, “I am decidedly opposed to the Resolution.” He then reasonably asked, “Would the expelled go back to a Conference which they have called ‘tyrannical,’ ‘unconstitutional,’ and ‘oppressive?’” He contended that

“ they should not make a division in the church on their account, seeing there is such a decided front against their restoration ;” and showed that Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith were consenting parties to the law of 1835, and that, if afterwards they disapproved of it, they should have quietly retired from all connexion with the Conference. Mr. Pope suggested, that on the same principle they all ought to go out. Mr. Brown answered, “ Decidedly,” and told the Meeting, plainly, it “ did not expect the Conference to restore the men.” Mr. Archbutt and Mr. Nicholls spoke on the same side; and the latter said, “ There are *many* reformers that are not agreed on the point.” But Mr. Chipchase, *from up-stairs*, said, more than once, “ The restoration of the expelled is a *sine quâ non*.” So the Resolution, after all the dissension in speech, was passed *unanimously*.

At this stage of the proceedings, a letter from Mr. Bromley was read, stating that, on account of the crowds that now flocked to hear him, he could not attend the Meeting; but urging the professed Delegates to seek what they required in the form of a “ Bill of Rights.”

Dr. Burrows, of Liverpool, then proposed, *that if the Superintendent Preacher objected to put any Resolution to a meeting, which he deemed unconstitutional and improper, the meeting should be at liberty to elect another Chairman, and act without him.* Some need of this Resolution was expressed, on the ground that parties present had not succeeded in the attempts they had made to force Ministers to put to meetings resolutions opposed to the essential principles of Wesleyan Methodism.

14. The next Resolution was, *that memorials should be sought from the Circuits to the Conference, expressing their adhesion to the principles set forth by the Meeting of undelegated Delegates.* This was felt by the revolutionists to be desirable, on the ground that, being so few comparatively, they were “ marked men,” and needed more companions to render them less conspicuous in their unprincipled proceedings. Mr. Reay, of Newcastle, reported something concerning “ a sharp chap, a lawyer,” who had given advice to him and to his friends in the north; and said he believed that, “ with such a Resolution as proposed, from two to three hundred thousand signatures would be obtained before the sittings of the coming Conference.” With this and other recommendations, the Resolution passed.

15. At this period a very delicate proposal had to be made, which required some introductory remarks from the Chairman and Mr. Gandy to secure its reception: it was, *that Messrs. Harrison, Child, Gandy, Kaye, Archbutt, Williams, and J. Harrison, all of London, who have power to add to their number, with some few country members, should be the Committee to revise the Rules of the Wesleyan-Methodist Societies, and guard the privileges of the people.* This was passed: so that Wesleyan Methodism, the growth of more than one hundred years, is now to be patched and perfected in a week or two by a few secular men, scarcely known in the Connexion until they banded themselves together to subvert its principles and overthrow its institutions:

while Messrs. Kaye and Harrison are to live by the admiring reports which are to be given in their journal of what is doing from week to week! Poor Methodism! it has fallen on strange times, and into strange hands! It is well that it is not to be left there; or it would soon sink into ruin, and be numbered among the things that have passed away!

16. A still more delicate proposal had now to be made by the Managing Committee,—that *of money to expend in their exertions to obtain Wesleyan Reform*. This was declared to be necessary by Mr. Hunt, and by others of the Corresponding Committee. On hearing this, some others thought they might as well have a portion of the funds to be supplied; and Mr. Blyton, from a village in Lincolnshire, suggested, “that as it was more than probable that many of the Delegates would be expelled on their return home, those of them who were expelled should be employed as Wesleyan Reform Lecturers.” This suggestion was not supported by the London Committee, and so the Meeting passed on to other business.

17. A Resolution was now proposed, *expressing the obligations of the Meeting to the newspaper press* for its advocacy of Wesleyan Reform; and especial mention was made of Mr. Kaye’s “Times,” and of Dr. Campbell. Mr. J. Harrison, of course, acknowledged the compliment—praised himself and his paper—and spoke what *he* must have known is untrue, when he said, “There is no religious journal in the country, the progress of which has been so rapid, or the circulation so extensive,” as that of his own newspaper. We happen to know something of the numbers of that paper printed, sold, and circulated; and we know of returns, in loads, through the Post-Office, from parties to whom copies were sent without orders. We were surprised when we learned the small number of papers sold from Mr. Kaye’s office, after all the boasting of extensive circulation. Another newspaper we could name would well bear comparison with it in this respect; one which has, of late, *really* increased in circulation, and at no inconsiderable rate. Unsold copies of Mr. Kaye’s “Times,” and of Mr. Dunn’s “Banner,” go far to stock the premises on the south side of Fleet-street. And yet, notwithstanding this fact, so different from what Mr. Harrison declared, he said, when lamenting the verdict of the Islington Leaders’ Meeting before the professed Delegates, “I am not to be branded as a liar. I am not to be called the patron of falsehood!” Well, we leave the case, stating it as it is; and time must show the truth.

18. Other Resolutions were passed concerning a *Reform Fund*,—the *preparation of a Declaration by the Managing Committee* of the Reform principles agreed upon,—and the expression of *sympathy with Mr. Bromley*. Mr. Colman showed the need of a Reform Fund, from his own case; having lately been very inconveniently served with an injunction from the Lord Chancellor, when going to hold an illegal meeting in a Wesleyan chapel in Norfolk: and he also declared, with his accustomed truthfulness, that no pledge had been given by Mr. Bromley to the Conference for the peaceful prosecution of his ministerial duties

in his Circuit. The *Managing* Committee recommended that Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith should continue until Conference the same course of agitation which they have pursued since their expulsion; and that the Fund raised for them should "*lie open* till the Delegates met again." These recommendations were approved by the Meeting: so that the triumvirate, as well as the Methodist Reformers in the provinces, are now fully in the hands of the LONDON *Managing* COMMITTEE.

What can now be said of the Meeting of pretended Delegates? Mr. Harrison says, "It is a great fact." We have shown that it is a great falsehood; and we may also add, IT IS A GREAT FAILURE. It has exhibited a ruinous division among the reformers themselves. Many of them have renounced the expelled, and have separated their cause wholly from them. Lay-Delegation is acknowledged to be legally impossible. Methodist trust-property cannot be obtained, even by fraud. And as for the election of officers by the whole body of the church, and two laymen to one Minister in a District-Meeting, these are not what can be hoped for even by the disaffected, as some of them declared. To think such a Committee as has been appointed to revise all the rules of the Methodist societies, and to perfect its code of laws, can improve Methodism, is preposterous. The Committee is already the laughing-stock of all unprejudiced Wesleyans. The Meeting in Albion chapel has been ruinous to the cause it was designed to promote; and as we know, from their own declarations, the intention of the parties who composed it,—to prepare for a division by the Conference,—timely notice is now given to render their departure as little detrimental to the Wesleyan societies as possible. Let every watchman give warning to his people who may be in danger of being betrayed into separation; and let every Pastor tend and guard the flock he has in charge from injury and destruction by designing men.

A WORD OF COUNSEL TO ANY MEMBER OF THE
WESLEYAN-METHODIST SOCIETIES, WHO MAY BE
IN DANGER OF BEING MISLED BY THE PROFESSED
REFORMERS.

It is evident, from the proposals made at the late Meeting in Albion chapel, that the reform of alleged abuses in Wesleyan Methodism is not the real object of the agitators, but the destruction of essential and distinctive principles. Were these proposals to be practically carried out, the "*Connexion*" of Methodism would be dissolved, and the "*united societies*" separated into independent churches. Can such proposals be listened to by Ministers of the Gospel, who have conscientiously given themselves to the *Wesleyan* system of united church-government; who have received it as a sacred trust for Christ; and who have solemnly pledged themselves to preserve it

unimpaired? Can you desire them to do that which their consciences and vows will not allow them to approve, and which would sacrifice to a small minority the principles held firmly by a vast majority of the people of their charge? Will you unite yourself with men who demand so unreasonable a sacrifice to be made to them? Their own reports of the professed Delegate-Meeting show, that they represent a comparatively small number of Wesleyans. The Reports of the Missionary Society, and of other institutions in Methodism, lately assailed so fiercely, show that there is not sufficient hostile influence to reduce the pecuniary supplies annually required. The demands are such as *cannot* be complied with; and, knowing this, the parties are already preparing for separation. It is evidently arranged, that the same course of ungodly agitation shall be pursued until the next Conference; and then, if they cannot have what they demand, that they will separate themselves, and, with as many as they can induce to unite with them, become a distinct and an independent body. Are you prepared to support and accompany them in such proceedings? Can you reconcile with the teaching of the word of God, on the essential principle of the Christian religion, such as you find set forth in 1 Cor. xiii., the "wrath and bitterness" manifested by the leading agitators for Wesleyan reform? Are you willing to leave the hundreds of thousands of Methodists with whom you are now associated, among whom you have obtained salvation, and with many of whom you have enjoyed the happiest hours of your lives, for the uncertain results that may follow if you unite yourselves with mere adventurers in some new form of church-government? We say to you, in a familiar proverb, "Look, before you leap!" Consider the "shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience" made by many who have, under similar circumstances, forsaken Wesleyan Methodism. Think of the unhappy results that may be found in your own families, should you forsake it. Remember, some of the most active in the present agitations are men who formerly forsook Wesleyan Methodism, united themselves to other Christian communities, and have left them and returned to it. Are the ends proposed—such as another mode of electing an officer for the society, and another mode of managing its funds—deserving of the great sacrifice which you will be called to make, if you should ally yourselves with reformers? Separation from Wesleyan Methodism is inevitable with those who pursue the agitating and divisive course commenced. *Ponder these things*; take counsel with devout and spiritually-minded brethren of age and experience, who can give you information on such matters as have been presented to you under the name of "grievances in Methodism;" and, at least, wait and see what provision is made for you in the improved system of church-government, before you give any encouragement to professed Wesleyan reformers to suppose that, if they should be separated from Methodism, you will accompany them.

No. VI.

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THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

JUNE, 1850.

THE REAL QUESTIONS AT ISSUE BETWEEN PRO-
FESSED WESLEYAN REFORMERS AND CONSTITU-
TIONAL METHODISTS.

By this time it must be seen, by every observant person, that something more than dissatisfaction with the proceedings of the last Conference influences the parties so clamorous for Wesleyan Reform. Some months ago, the only ground of complaint put forth against the Conference was, the expulsion of three of its Ministers; and, by various false and exaggerated statements respecting that act, considerable prejudice was excited in some minds. But these statements having been fully refuted, and the opinion having been generally entertained, that the Conference could do no other than expel from its ministry men who contumaciously refused to submit to laws which, on their admission to that ministry, they had solemnly engaged to obey and enforce,—the ground of attack has been changed; and, avowedly separating themselves from the case of the excluded Ministers, whose professed wrongs they undertook to redress, the dissatisfied and complaining party now seek to revolutionize the entire system of Wesleyan Methodism; and this they do under the specious cry of “Methodist Reform.”

Such inconsistency, strange as it may appear to some persons, is not in the least surprising to those, who for years past have been acquainted with the character and conduct of the chief promoters of the present disturbances in Methodism. It was well known, at the first, that their professed advocacy of the cause of Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith, was a mere pretence, under which they might vent forth their

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deeply-seated and long-cherished disaffection towards the Wesleyan system of church order and government. Some of them were the partisans of Dr. Warren in his agitation and division ; but, after having incited others to separation from the body, they remained in it themselves. Others have been united to the Association-Methodists ; but, not satisfied in that connexion, they left it, joined other Christian communities, and, after migrating from one section of the church of Christ to another, they, at length, returned to the people with whom they had been originally associated. But, dissatisfied in their very nature, they have been restless since their return ; and now, as might be expected, they avail themselves of what seems to them a favourable opportunity for assailing the system of Wesleyan Methodism, and seek to re-model it according to their own views. They, and most of the leading " Reformers," as they call themselves, have evidently imbibed much of the revolutionary spirit of the age ; and are earnestly endeavouring to overthrow the government long established among us, and to put up in its place an ecclesiastical democracy. Many of them are in the church, what the Red Republicans have shown themselves to be in France ;—they are Terrorists, who, by a system of threatening, seek a revolution. The masked writers of the " slanderous and wicked ' Fly-Sheets'" were of this class. In that un-English publication, issued without so much as a printer's name, nearly every man of office and influence in Methodism was maliciously assailed ; while warnings were repeatedly given, that much greater evils than those falsely ascribed to them would be exposed before the public. Since then, if an individual has spoken or written in favour of Constitutional Methodism, he has been personally attacked in the weekly journal of the party,—he has had the most servile and unworthy motives ascribed to him, and the most contemptuous epithets that could possibly be selected heaped upon him. That choice column of " Notices to" pretended " Correspondents," by the Editor has been evidently set up for the purpose of threatening, and is well worthy of being collected from each week's paper, and of being issued in a separate form, as successive Numbers of the " Fly-Sheets." Mr. Dunn's Letters to Mr. Smith, of Camborne, and to Mrs. Young, of Penzance ; Mr. Griffith's call upon Mr. Harding, at St. Just ; Messrs. Gibbons's, Grosjean's, and Rabbit's conduct at Exeter-Hall, and other public Meetings ; are all of the same character, as are also the threatening declarations against the Conference, hawked about and published by Messrs. Gandy, Chipchase, Hunt, and Kay : they are all parts of a system of threat and terror, employed to effect a revolution.

The loud and violent outcry raised by this party against the administrative proceedings in the body, have led some unsuspecting individuals to suppose that, if there is not anything essentially wrong in Wesleyan Methodism, yet some slight changes or modifications might be safely made, which would pacify the complainants, and restore unity and peace to the Connexion. They who suppose this, would on

no account sacrifice the essential principles of our ecclesiastical constitution; but they inquire, if an alteration of some minor circumstances of the administration might not be made, so as to conciliate and soothe the present disturbing spirits now so loud in their cry for Wesleyan Reform.

Let this inquiry be answered; for it is made by some of the true friends of Methodism; and let it be seen if what the Reformers propose is a mere modification of the established system of ecclesiastical government among us, and whether the changes demanded can, in consistency and faithfulness, be conceded. Some of the proposed changes, if viewed separately, may seem of little importance; but let them be considered in their bearings, and it will appear that they strike at fundamental principles. For instance, it is proposed,

I. *To break up and destroy the connexional principle, by which the several societies of Wesleyan Methodism have been united from the beginning, and to constitute each society an independent and a self-governing church.*

This assertion may somewhat startle the well-meaning conciliators with whom we are now treating: therefore proof must be adduced of its truth. We take, first, the document formally delivered to the President by Messrs. Kay, Chipchase, Bussell, and Nicholls, at the Special District-Meeting lately held on the case of the Spitalfields Circuit. It contains the following declaration:—"We utterly deny all right, power, or authority in the Methodist Conference, or in any District-Meeting, to interfere in the Local affairs of this Circuit, or to try, suspend, or expel any Local Officer or Member of Society." Most assuredly this is a rejection of the connexional principle, on which Wesleyan Methodism has been framed; and it is separating every society into a local court, that shall be independent in its own course of proceedings. If the local affairs of a Circuit or a society in Methodism are not to be interfered with, so as to secure conformity to general laws and usages, then every Quarterly-Meeting, yea, every Leaders'-Meeting, even in the smallest village, may have laws and regulations of its own; and, if so, the societies would be independent churches. They might retain the present name of "Wesleyan-Methodist Societies;" but they would be no longer, what Mr. Wesley intended they should be, "The *United Societies.*"

Other proofs than the one drawn from the leading Reformers' own Declaration, may be given for the truth of the assertion we have made respecting the real bearing of their proposals. The Resolutions passed at the Meeting of pretended Delegates, if practically carried out, would issue in the same results. In fact, it has been plainly declared, in the weekly journal of the Reformers, that the primitive form of Wesleyan Methodism is not suited to the present advanced times; that Mr. Wesley would, if living, alter it; and that the laws and regulations agreed to in 1797 are not satisfactory, and would require considerable alterations, to be taken as the basis of agreement between the Confer-

ence and the complainants. Thus it is obvious that it is not a mere modification of minor circumstances that is sought, but a change in the system itself.

II. Another object of the Reformers is, *to wrest from Wesleyan Ministers the authority which they have received to govern the churches over which they have been placed, and to make them mere teachers in those churches.*

It has always been a principle in Methodism, that Ministers of the Gospel have the charge of spiritual rule and oversight in the societies. Mr. Wesley avowedly commenced his course on this principle; and he acted upon it to the end of his life. Before he died he was careful to secure it by legal settlement to his successors in the ministry. The administrative acts of the Conference are based upon it; as are, also, the acts of individual Ministers in their Circuits and societies. It is on this ground that a Wesleyan Minister is the appointed Chairman of all constitutional meetings in Methodism; and that the proposal of subordinate officers in the church is with him. He is appointed, like Timothy, to "take care of the church of God." Like the angel of the Asiatic church, he is answerable for the separation of unworthy members; and, like the Apostle Paul, he has to watch for the souls committed to his charge, as one that must give an account.

It is not necessary, at present, to give the Scripture warrant for this principle of pastoral rule and authority recognised in the Methodist economy. It is sufficient to our present purpose to show, that it is a recognised principle, and that it has been so from the beginning. The Scripture warrant for it may be readily found in St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus. It is true that some Protestant Christians draw other conclusions from what is there written, than Mr. Wesley and those who succeeded him have done; but it is this difference of interpretation of the Scriptures, as to their teaching concerning ecclesiastical government, that really constitutes the difference between Wesleyan Methodism and other sections of the church of Christ. In their undoubted right, as Protestants, to interpret the Scriptures according to their private judgment, Wesleyan Methodists have so interpreted them, as to believe that Christian Ministers have committed to them the charge of ruling, as well as of teaching, in the church of Christ; not despotically, not tyrannically, not according to their own will, and for themselves; but in obedience to the laws of the Gospel, and for their Divine Master.

The proposals of Wesleyan Reformers for changes in the nomination and appointment of Leaders and Stewards, and in the constitution and proceedings of District-Meetings and the Conference, are designed to undermine and to supersede the scriptural authority of Wesleyan Ministers in the societies, and to reduce them to mere teachers of the people. The systematic writing in Mr. Kaye's "Times," on what is described as "the local *ministry*," goes to this. Its object is to claim for the Local Preachers an equal *status*, in every respect, with the

Ministers wholly set apart to "the care of the church." Some of the Reformers have already acted on their own opinions, and have taken upon themselves to administer the sacraments to those who would receive them at their hands. The nomination of Leaders before the entire society, for choice or rejection by them, has the same object. To say nothing of the necessary consequences of angry contentions, strifes, and divisions which would be occasioned by the discussion of the comparative excellences of rival nominees, and which, in the working of Methodism, would inevitably be frequent, the obvious design and tendency of such a proposal is to weaken the authority of Ministers in the nomination and appointment of Class-Leaders. So the proposal, that the sentence, as well as the verdict, concerning an accused member shall be with the Leaders'-Meeting. It is to deprive the Minister of the power committed to him, and to render him a powerless member of the meeting; for, if in the chair, yet he could only act as the Meeting should direct. The proposal of Lay-Delegation, so urgently put forth at one time, but since abandoned, because of its legal impracticability, was for the same end. Indeed, nearly all the proposals made by Methodist Reformers have as their ultimate object,—to deprive Wesleyan Ministers of the authority committed to them by Christ and his church; and for which they hold themselves responsible until the day of judgment. How, then, can the changes proposed in faithfulness be conceded? If to do so would, for a time, secure peace to the Connexion, it would be at the sacrifice of truth and righteousness. Better would it be that Ministers, who have solemnly made vows before God and his people, to diligently preach the doctrines, and faithfully enforce the discipline, of Wesleyan Methodism, should be abandoned by their friends, and be left without pecuniary support, than break the vows they have made, corrupt their consciences, and be eternally condemned. Then, let not Wesleyan Ministers be denounced as too tenacious of their own interests, or as obstinately unyielding, because they accede not to the proposals of the Reformers. They *cannot* do so, with their conscientious views of what relates to the ministerial office; and, rather than betray the trust they have received, they are prepared, if it should be necessary, to go into the streets, unprovided for by man, and there proclaim their principles. But, happily, this is not likely to be necessary. The most enlightened, most spiritual, the most influential, and by far the great majority, of the people are resolutely determined to uphold, unimpaired, Wesleyan Methodism, and will be found equally faithful with their Ministers.

Such being the real questions at issue between professed Reformers and constitutional Methodists, let the advocates for concessions consider, and say what ought to be the decision of the Conference respecting the changes proposed.

1. Let them say if they are prepared to renounce the connexional principle of Methodism, and to break up the Wesleyan societies into separate and independent churches? They will be told that

this is not the object contemplated ; but a thoughtful and candid mind will perceive that such must be the inevitable result. And, if so, then it would be better for Wesleyan Methodists at once to dissolve their union, and class themselves with Congregationalists, than exist, in name only, as a separate sect. But they are not prepared to make this sacrifice. They have, by choice, attached themselves to "the United Societies of the people called Methodists ;" and they have seen too much of the efficient working of the Wesleyan system hastily to abandon it. They know well its pervading character, and have learned the great advantages of united action for the cause of Christ. They have seen how, by it, the larger Circuits in Methodism assist the smaller, and the strong sustain the weak. By it religion has been extended over neglected districts of ignorance and sin at home, and over regions of Heathenism abroad. The great Missionary work of Methodism owes much of its efficiency to the combined efforts of its promoters. And, with these and other ascertained advantages of the connexional principle of Methodism, it will not be abandoned to satisfy clamorous and violent assailants.

2. Nor are true Wesleyans prepared to renounce the principle of ministerial rule and authority in the church of Christ. Having voluntarily associated themselves with a Christian community holding this principle, they will be faithful to maintain it ; and will consider that their Ministers, who vowed fidelity to the principles of Methodism, have consciences to be consulted, as well as the party to be conciliated by concessions. In fact, the great majority of Wesleyan Methodists desire no such changes of their ecclesiastical system as are now proposed ; and most explicitly declare their determination not to submit to them, even if their Ministers were to prove unfaithful, and allow them. They see, plainly, that what are called "modifications" and "conciliatory measures" would subvert the very foundations of Methodism.

There is one proof of the efficient working of the Wesleyan system, which should never be lost sight of ; and which, to a practical mind, is worth a thousand arguments, theoretically set forth ; namely, *the actual results as they have been found by ourselves*. We judge of the quality of a tree by the fruit which it bears, and of the character of machinery by that which it produces. Let the system under consideration be judged by the same rule. What have been its fruit and produce ? To say nothing at present of the numerous conversions through the agency of Methodism—of the many spiritual Christians who have been sustained and preserved by it ; or of the many happy and triumphant deaths found in it ;—to speak only of questions now more immediately presented to us. Have we found Wesleyan Ministers arbitrary, tyrannical, and despotic in their conduct ? Have we known them forward to push their own will against the will of the societies committed to their charge ? Have they proposed, in numerous instances, unsuitable men for Leaders and Stewards ? Are more eligible persons likely to

be appointed to those offices, should the nomination to them be left open for the whole society, and be the subject of canvass and discussion for weeks before the appointment shall be made by formal vote? Are Christian unity and peace likely to be promoted by debates on the comparative qualifications of rival candidates, named at the will of any party in the Quarterly and Leaders' Meetings? Have the Wesleyan Ministers, generally, been forward to take up charges against members of society, and eager to expel them? What answers should be given to these and such-like questions, from our own observation and experience? Let correct answers be given, and then let us consider if the measures proposed under the cry of "Wesleyan Reform" are likely to be improvements in the practical working of Methodism. Nearly all the statements made by complainants rest on the ground of *supposed* inconveniences and improprieties which *may* arise, and not upon what has actually occurred. A preliminary consideration to proposed reform should be, the existence of a real grievance. This has not been found; and judicious Wesleyan Methodists will not abandon a system which has *proved* itself to be good by its efficiency, for a mere theory on church-government which is unknown by practical results.

HINDE-STREET CIRCUIT PROTEST.

EVER since the appointment of District-Committees by the Conference, it has invested them with very ample powers. In the Minutes of 1791, when these Committees were first appointed, it is said, "The Assistant of a Circuit shall have authority to summon the Preachers of his District, who are in full connexion, on any critical case, which, according to the best of his judgment, merits such an interference;" that is, say the advocates of Conference, even when that "critical case" and that "interference" may involve the misconduct, and consequent trial and censure, of laymen as well as of Ministers.

While the Rules of 1797 gave to the Leaders'-Meetings the right of deciding on the guilt or innocence of an accused member, in the first instance, they at the same time assumed the principle, that the authority of the law was to be paramount and permanent. Of course, whenever a Leaders'-Meeting refused to execute the law, other parties were authorized to do it for them. "The Chairman of each District, in conjunction with his brethren of the Committee, shall be responsible to the Conference for the execution of the laws, as far as his District is concerned." It was also then further enacted, "And he shall have a right, if written to by any who are concerned, to visit any Circuit, and to inquire into their affairs with respect to Methodism; and, in union with the District-Committee, redress any grievance." "That no Chairman may have cause to complain of the want of power" to do all this, by further regulations that officer was invested with ample ability to uphold the discipline of the Connexion, "and settle everything till the Conference." By one party in the Con-

nexion it has all along been maintained that these regulations empowered the District-Committee to interfere in local affairs, and even to place private members on their trial whenever that, "according to the judgment" of the Chairman, is necessary "for the execution of the laws" of the Connexion. Another party in the Connexion has contended, that, according to these Rules, the powers of a District-Committee are confined exclusively to Ministers, and have nothing to do, under any circumstances, with either merely local Circuit affairs or private members. An elaborate defence of these views and feelings was put forth some years ago in the well-known "Southwark Address."

It was for the purpose of testing the comparative soundness of these and other interpretations of Methodist law, that Dr. Warren was so assisted in his appeal to the Court of Chancery. We have all heard of Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst's judgment on the entire case. Much has been said respecting the "uncertainty of law;" but, assuredly, if words have any fixed and definite meaning, that judgment was an emphatic and unmistakable settlement of the points in dispute, in favour of the Conference interpretations.

Those who now declare themselves dissatisfied with that judgment, are certainly at liberty to seek another by an appeal to the same Court; but, until they do that, seeing the only Chancery decision we have on the meaning of Methodist law was the one sought and obtained by the agitators themselves, the Conference and its friends are bound to assume its correctness. That, indeed, has been done, both in the regulations of 1835, and in the entire subsequent practice of the Connexion. But these friends at Hinde-street, or rather their guides from other Circuits, with a tenacity worthy of a better cause, continue to assert and re-assert what all the Lawyers employed by Dr. Warren were utterly unable to prove, and in all respects to act just as if the case had never been in Chancery, never argued by able Counsel, and never decided by the highest legal authority. They say, "We utterly deny any right, power, or authority in a District-Meeting, whether specially called or otherwise, by the laws of Wesleyan Methodism, to interfere with the local affairs of the Third London Circuit, or any other Circuit and society." They add, "And we further solemnly engage and pledge ourselves to oppose and resist any attempts that may be made to enforce any such illegal and unconstitutional disciplinary acts, by every means in our power." Previously to the famous "Chancery suit," some degree of litigation and difference of opinion was perhaps a thing to be tolerated even among religious people. Since then, such a liberty has degenerated into an unmingled nuisance, and become a dishonour to the Methodist community. There is a mode of scolding which sometimes prevails among illiterate and angry people, and which consists in alternately affirming and denying,—one party saying, "It is," and the other, "It is not,"—until they have wearied as well as disgraced themselves.

Unless the Conference is willing to become a party in a prolonged altercation so undignified and disreputable, it must take these Hinde-street people at their word, and either separate itself from those who have so distinctly declined its own terms of communion, or settle the matter in some other way. As this protest has been both sent directly to the President, and also given to the world in a newspaper, it is impossible for the Conference to overlook the defiance it involves. A challenge so given must be accepted. Either the Conference must surrender this right it has so long asserted and declared to be a solemn duty to exercise and maintain, or it must propose to these protesters the alternative of separation or submission.

By this movement, these friends in Hinde-street, with the advice of their guides elsewhere, have at once proved their Circuit to be in a very unsatisfactory condition, and invited the Conference to come and effect a better arrangement of its affairs. We hope the opportunity will not be lost, and that to this very proper call there will be an unmistakable response. A competent Deputation sent to meet these protesters, might hear what they had to say in defence of their own document; ascertain whether or not, on second thoughts, they really will "oppose and resist" a Conference interference in cases where local courts, instead of upholding the law, have chosen to trample it under their feet; and either negotiate an honourable peace, or end the present disgraceful contest by a separation.

AGITATION, INTENSE SELFISHNESS.

MR. EVERETT has condescended to defend his conduct in the Newcastle case in a small pamphlet, to which a reply has been published by the Ministers of the Circuit, and inserted in the "Watchman." Here is the case, according to Mr. Everett's own showing. His pamphlet consists chiefly of "an abstract" of a manuscript of his own, which he thought had perished, but which luckily still exists. In this manuscript proof is given that, in many circumstances, his own case and the subject of the Newcastle "inquiry," differed from each other; which nobody ever denied or doubted. Parties "present" are enumerated, but there is no mention of *witnesses*; so that it seems there were none. If so, then the "brotherly examination" must have consisted in a conversation between the judges and the supposed offender, and most likely included questions and answers. It is also added, the party arraigned "earnestly requests" this mode of proceeding, and that the more "official form" "may, if possible, be avoided." In his opinion, therefore, this course had nothing to do with "thumb-screws," and the other horrors of the "Inquisition." Nay, we are told he acknowledges certain misdoings which had probably been put before him in the form of questions, to which he had given candid replies. Moreover, Mr. Everett says, "The years 1777 and 1835 are not to be found in the minutes of the Meeting." But in respect to 1835, he is

expressly contradicted by several witnesses who have examined the record. Yet, taking the case as stated by himself, if there was no reference to any particular law, it must have been because all parties knew they were acting in accordance with "common law," or general usage, in Methodism. To our understanding, the conclusion is, that Mr. Everett was an acting party in conducting a "brotherly examination," or a trial without witnesses, and that he did not discover the "iniquity" of the process until used in his own case; which happening not to be a very good one, the result was damaging, and of course he is very angry. Agitators are intensely concerned about themselves. This will further appear in the subjoined paper furnished by a correspondent, and which he calls "Dunn on Schism."

Volumes have been written to define the sin of schism; and the spirit of unity has been seriously affected by the controversies which have been maintained on the subject. The writers of the Church of Rome have declared it to be a separation from their community, and have charged all Protestants with being schismatics. Following in their wake on this point, the Protestant Church of England has charged with the same crime those who have gone forth from her pale. This conclusion is at variance with the clear statement of the sin given by St. Paul, in his directions to the Corinthian church. His words are, "That there should be no schism *in the body*;" and, from the whole of his reasonings, it is evident that he considered schism to be a want of unity in the church,—her members divided against each other, and not a separation from the church. So it was understood by the venerable Wesley, as stated in his Notes on the New Testament, and Sermon on the subject. This sin is deserving of the strongest condemnation, as inconsistent with, and opposed to, the genuine spirit of Christianity; for, where love is absent, the most dangerous evils are sure to be present. Of all sins, those of the professing church are the most offensive, and laden with the darkest guilt, and ought to be most carefully avoided. That this sin is now awfully prevalent in Methodism is deeply to be deplored; the fact is mourned over by thousands of its pious members; and it must be removed, or it will destroy and bring down on Methodism the terrible displeasure of the great Head of the church. For by schism (a sin of which the church only can be guilty) God is dishonoured, the spirit of Christ is lost, peace is destroyed, prosperity is prevented, the salvation of souls is perilled, and there is reason to fear that through it many have been eternally lost to happiness and to God. So abominable, baneful, and destructive is this sin, that the authors of it have a fearful responsibility, sufficient to make the thoughtful mind shudder and tremble, when daring to reflect. What then must be the culpability of those who spend their time and talents to spread it in the churches of Christ? We cannot conceive a conduct more closely allied to the employment of that fallen angel, who, in the true character of Abaddon, "walketh about seeking whom he may devour;" and few, if any, of his devices have been more fatal to the real interest and glory of Christianity, than the pernicious device of schism. Only a few months ago this sin was estimated to be so wicked, and personally so dangerous, by the Rev. Samuel Dunn, that he declared in the Committee at Manchester, "If he were expelled he would agitate from one end of the land to the other; but if not expelled, he dare not do so, for that would be the sin of schism."

Although this announcement assumes the correctness of Mr. Wesley's definition, yet the agitators are continually saying to the Methodists, "Do not leave the Society, but if you are put away, continue to meet in class," and so on; or, in other words, Let member contend

with member, and people with Pastors; which, if the "Notes on the New Testament" be right, is to urge and incite members of his churches to the commission of the sin of schism itself. Had not Mr. Dunn regarded this course as wicked and dangerous, why did he appear to shrink from it? Will he excite others to do that which he says he dare not do himself? Can the instigator to sin be safe when the sinner himself is in danger?

Both to the tempter and the tempted our correspondent proceeds to offer very appropriate advice, which we should gladly insert, could we believe it possible for men in their frenzied state of mind to admit into their moral system so salutary an aliment. It is abundantly evident that agitators care very little about the sin of schism, or any thing else which stands in the way of their projects; and that an intense selfishness is the pivot on which all their thoughts and feelings habitually turn. Right and wrong are treated as qualities not inhering in things themselves, but as depending upon the temper and circumstances of the man who happens to be thinking and talking about them. A thing may be perfectly right, as long as a man has his own way; but, the moment he comes to be effectually contradicted, the self-same thing becomes altogether wrong. Now that Mr. Everett is out of the Connexion, a certain form of trial applied to himself he calls a "thumb-screw." When he was in the Connexion, the self-same form of trial, applied by himself to another, was justice mingled with mercy. His colleague says, "If I am expelled, I will agitate from one end of the land to the other;" we suppose for the purpose of securing the rights and liberties of the people; but, "if I am not expelled, to agitate would be schism;" and, in that case, the people must either look after their own liberties, or live and die in their chains. Professed sympathizers have expressly declared that they are mainly concerned about themselves; and that it is chiefly for the sake of obtaining certain ends of their own that they have espoused the cause of the three sufferers. "It must needs be that offences come;" and it is no wonder, if within the limits of Methodism, in the course of numerous years, both with and without cause, many have been offended. Candidates for the ministry have tendered their services, and their offer has been declined. Brethren have been excluded from pulpits, which they deemed themselves competent to fill very acceptably to the congregations. Some have thought themselves very eligible for certain vacant offices, which others, however, have been selected to fill. Persons who, in their own opinion, are very competent judges, think it would be much better if the Methodist Societies were more like Independent churches. Many who do not choose to avow any scheme of ecclesiastical government, yet are quite sure the supreme authority ought not to be where it now is. From one gentleman's speech, delivered at an agitation meeting, it appears he had been displeased about laying the foundation-stone of a new chapel. All these, and many others, are irritated in their temper, and dissatisfied with

their position ; and, of course, according to the great agitation law, which determines what is right and what is otherwise, everything is wrong throughout the Connexion. For a redress of grievances there exists a common desire ; but each man is specially concerned about his own case. How far the various complainers will agree in their demands, remains to be seen. But if so many elements of discord were to combine and take their flight, it would be a great relief to those who wish to be quiet in the land ; and if they could also originate a far better form of Methodism than is now to be found, it would be a mighty blessing to mankind.

A VOICE FROM THE MISSION-FIELD, TO AGITATORS AND FRIENDS.

MR. VINDICATOR,—The Wesleyan Missionaries are as deeply engaged as ever in prosecuting the great objects for which their constituents sent them out into the Mission-field,—the dissemination of Gospel truth, and the salvation of immortal souls. They are also looking with intense interest towards home ; they are watching the progress of that conflict in which you are so ardently and vigorously engaged ; and they rejoice at every advantage which you gain over your adversaries. You are doing your work well ; and, not long hence, will have to sheathe your sword, and pursue those peaceful and peaceable vocations which, I know, are so much more congenial to your habits and tastes.

I am desirous, Mr. Vindicator, of sending my voice across the waters, and to have it heard once more in England, where it has been often heard before, in praise and prayer and appeal. Hence, from the Mission-field would I “cry aloud,” to every enemy and to every friend ; to the former in strains of warning, to the latter in tones of encouragement.

“But who are you,” it will probably be demanded, “that come to us in this confident and somewhat authoritative manner ?” A very proper question, Sir, which I will frankly answer. I am a plain, unobtrusive, working Missionary. I am a man who would rather be a Missionary than a King ; whose whole soul is bound up in and with the Missionary work ; who is never happy but when he is engaged in that work ; who has three several times left his fatherland for a Mission-station, and is willing to leave it a fourth time ; who has spent twelve months on the deep in Missionary service ; who has suffered shipwreck in Missionary service ; who has employed four or five living languages in Missionary service ; who has buried children in Missionary service ; and who has himself become emaciated in Missionary service. This is my answer ; and I appeal to you for the faithfulness of the description. And, surely, seeing that “many glory after the flesh,”—glory in their journeyings, and preachings, and writings, and attainments,—“I” may “glory also,” and may lay claim

to be heard as well as they. I shall be very plain, Sir, and very brief.

To the agitators, then, I would say, Be warned! You are seeking to overturn and to destroy the work of God; and remember, that although you cannot accomplish your purposes in this respect, the same amount of guilt will yet accumulate upon your heads, as though you did accomplish them; as though you starved every Missionary and every Missionary's family; as though you razed to the ground every Missionary chapel; as though you destroyed every Mission-press; as though you succeeded in withdrawing every Missionary Schoolmaster from his post, and every Missionary Pastor from his flock, and in scattering the infant Missionary churches as sheep without a shepherd. I charge you, solemnly, in the fear and sight of God, with this heavy crime. You perhaps shrink from the charge, and deny its validity. I repeat it, without fear of successful contradiction. Out of your own mouth will I condemn you. You *know* that if your exhortations were heeded by every constituent of the Missionary Society, (and you certainly desire that they should be,) that if your present plans succeeded, (and no one that knows you doubts for a moment that you are labouring for this,)—you *know*, I repeat, that you would empty the Missionary coffers, that you would stop our vast Missionary machinery, and that you would rob Methodism of its brightest ornament,—THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY. Do I fear for the safety and stability of our Missionary Society? No! It did not rise by *your* influence, and it will never fall by it. But I tremble for the safety of your souls, because you are found fighting against God!

Let me tell you, too, once for all, that your attempts to tamper with me and with my brethren are vain; ay, and will be vain. You cannot corrupt the Missionaries. You may send your "Fly-Sheets" and your Kaye's "Times," free of charge; but, be assured, they are more frequently burned than read. I purchased the latter for a short time, and read it, until its chicanery and its falsehoods disgusted me, and provoked me to cast it from me, as I have often done a serpent or a scorpion. The Missionaries are loyal to Methodism, and they are loyal to Christ; and they will pursue their labours, despite the efforts which you are employing to stop the supplies, and to rob them of their daily bread: not that we expect to be driven to this extremity; but we are ready for it, if it should arrive.

And now one word more: Instead of *agitating*, PRAY for the pardon of your sins; instead of crying, "*Stop the supplies*," cry, "THY KINGDOM COME!"

Noble friends, who heed not the call of agitation, but who rather fly with more than your wonted eagerness to the help of the Lord and of the Missionary cause, will you allow one of your most unworthy, yet most ardent, representatives, to offer to you a word of encouragement. This is not the first trial which you have been called to endure, nor the first conflict in which you have been called to engage.

Remember the years '34 and '35, and the signal manner in which you were brought so triumphantly through. There are now four hundred voices of Missionaries calling out to you, "Courage!" and a hundred thousand praying hearts calling upon God for your success. I have no expectation that the present attempts will diminish your Missionary income; but should it come even to this, your Missionaries will stand by their work, they will still preach Christ, they will still lead sinners to his cross; and thus, while slanderous and wicked men at home are crying, "Stop the supplies," your Missionaries abroad will be "converting sinners from the error of their ways," and "saving souls from death."

Αποστολος.

Mission-field, March, 1850.

THE CONTINGENT FUND,

ITS FRIENDS AND ITS ADVERSARIES.

A GOOD man will not seek to accomplish a great good by even a little evil. Some men will seek to accomplish what, even on their own showing, is a small good, by means of gigantic evil. Very melancholy instances of this have arisen in the course of the present agitation. The ruin of the CONTINGENT FUND would involve the disorganization of all the feebler Circuits in the three kingdoms, the abandonment of many preaching-places, the withdrawal of many Ministers from their sphere of labour, and the reducing of many others to a condition of actual starvation. Yet men are found to seek all this positive and crying evil, in order to accomplish what they take to be the good of coercing the Connexion into their own terms. Where the good is so doubtful, and the evil so vast, we must leave those who would do the one, that the other may come, to the judgment of Him who will take account of us all.

"Overcome evil with good," is the Christian word of warfare. Of this a fine example occurred in the late sittings of the London District-Meeting. A few Circuits in the District had, unhappily, so far adopted evil counsels, that their usual contributions to the CONTINGENT FUND were considerably short. The whole deficiency was about £100; and of that sum nearly one-third was in one Circuit,—the Hindestreet. The question at once arose, whether the weak Circuits were to suffer, and those who had aimed at them left to triumph. No sooner did the question come before that Meeting, than everywhere burst forth the evidence that heart enough was there to shield from injury the weak who had been exposed. Layman after layman, mildly towards those who had menaced our work, loyally and affectionately towards that work and all its interests, testified their resolution that, come what might, the work should not be allowed to suffer. From every side contributions were announced, and contributions conceived

on a scale showing that merely to cover the deficiency was not the motive at work, but to testify love to the good old cause. It was pleasing to see brethren from some of the poorer Circuits, where there had been no deficiency, come bravely forward to cast their portion into the common treasury. The Preachers, too, gladly took up the work, giving according to their ability ; yea, and beyond their ability. In a short time, not only had the deficiency been covered, but some £150 more were forthcoming for the general necessity of the Connexion.

Thus it is that assaults on a good system, strong in the affections of good people, only elicit proofs of its strength, and afford its friends an opportunity of overcoming evil with good. By the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush, Methodism will not only sustain, not only survive, the fires through which it is now called to pass, but,

“ Like Moses' bush, will mount the higher,
And flourish unconsumed in fire.”

COLMAN'S LAMENTATIONS.

(As set forth in a Handbill, printed at Holt.)

THIS enslaved gentleman says, “ The Local Preachers, the Leaders, and the whole bulk of private members,—the soul and body of the Society,—are not *represented in the Conference.*” Certainly not, and for a very good reason : they are capable of managing their own affairs. Minors, idiots, lunatics, sick men, and helpless women, cannot conduct their own business, and are therefore obliged to employ representatives. If Mr. Colman thinks his business will be better managed by a system of representation, he is at liberty to try it ; but sane people will choose personally to direct their own concerns.

“ But we have a House of Commons, to which we send representatives, and that is an admirable arrangement ; and why should we not have a Parliament in Methodism ?” Political governments cannot go on without money, and that money cannot be raised for their use without compulsory taxation ; and therefore it is necessary that the people of England should come together every year, to hear the “ estimates,” and vote the “ supplies,” which just means authorizing the tax-gatherers to come and take the money out of their pockets. It is impossible for them to do this in person, and therefore they send their representatives to do it for them. This system, however, fails to give entire and universal satisfaction ; and we have heard of Parliaments needing to be reformed as well as Methodism. It has been thought that representatives take more care of themselves than of their constituents ; and therefore, as in the case of humbler people, it is necessary to look after them. Indeed, the entire newspaper system of the country has been much fostered by a feeling of jealousy towards these representatives. People wished to know for themselves what the Government proposed, and how the matter was discussed and decided, that they might be sure their own interests were not neglected. Yet, while the whole tendency of the popular mind of the age is towards the point of every man minding his own business, Mr. Colman wishes the Methodists to advance backwards, to the old and clumsy system of representation. But the Wesleyans are not going to submit to a system of compulsory taxation ; and as to their voluntary contributions, they are well able themselves, when a case comes before them, to judge whether it be a bad or a good one, and how much or how little it will be proper for them to give ; and therefore have no need of representatives.

“But it is a great grievance that the Conference should sit with closed doors, and the people have no representative there to know what is going on.” Nor have Mr. Colman’s customers any representative in his office, to know what passes between himself and the merchants of whom he is accustomed to purchase ; and therefore are unable to judge as to the amount of his profits. It does not appear that they have any business to know either the one or the other. It is enough for them to know, that, if they do not like his shop they can go to another, and that he will not sell unless his customers choose to buy. Any attempt to prevent private communications between Methodist Preachers, or any other sort of people, is ridiculous and impossible. Suppose they do sit with closed doors, and closed windows, too, whatever they discuss, and however they may decide, the secret must eventually transpire ; for the people will never give their money, to carry out any measure, until they know just as much as they wish to know about the matter.

According to Mr. Colman, the members of the Methodist Society have already the means of redressing their own grievances ; for he adds, “The people *have* the law, the power, and the principle of right in their own hands ;” and says, further, if they will but do what they *can*, “All the vapouring and violence at head quarters will subside, as a balloon collapses with departing gas.” If they *have* all this power, they had better keep it, and try to make a right use of it ; for most assuredly it is more than they will ever possess under any system of representation.

NOTICE OF PUBLICATIONS.

The Present Agitation of the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion, viewed in the Light of the Religion taught in Holy Scripture : being an Expostulatory Address to those whom it may concern. “Come and see.” By Henry Fish, M.A. London : John Mason.—A very able pamphlet, strong in argument, and affectionate in manner. It forcibly exhibits the unscriptural character of the existing agitation, and its desecrating effects on the minds of those who are engaged in it ; and contains some most appropriate and convincing quotations, concerning the iniquity of such a course, from Mr. Everett’s early communications to the Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, and from other sources. A more suitable present than this, to a poor incipient agitator, could not be made by those who are both affluent and benevolent.

The Delegates tested, &c. With a Tabular Statement, &c. Pp. 24. Sold by John Mason, &c.—In many respects this pamphlet resembles the one entitled, “The Salt of Methodism.” Its author says, “It will be, however, perceived that there is some difference between the tables ; and therefore both may be useful, and co-operate in accomplishing the same end.” Like its predecessor, it bears hardly on the “Delegates ;” and the author has not merely “designed to show,” as it actually does, “the feebleness, absurdity, and folly of their movement.”

The City in the Wilderness. An Allegory. By a Citizen. Sold by John Mason, 66, Paternoster-Row.—This is a very pleasing and instructive book on the subjects at present discussed in Methodism. We especially recommend it to the youth of Wesleyan families.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

AN AGED OBSERVER.—Thanks ; but the communication is not suited to our periodical.

Witney.—Too light in its spirit.

Guisborough.—Thanks for the reference.

THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
 AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
 AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

JULY, 1850.

RESOLUTIONS OF DELEGATES.

A SOLILOQUY ABOUT SIGNING.

(*To the Editors of the Wesleyan Vindicator.*)

GENTLEMEN,—Certain papers having been lately circulated very industriously, and somewhat cautiously, in my neighbourhood, with a request that every member of Society will sign one of them, I have been led to meditate upon their contents, and now send you my soliloquy thereupon: which, though, as its name implies, it is only, in the first place, a bit of talk with myself, I have no objection to turn into a bit of writing for your readers.

I am, Gentlemen,

A CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

I.—WHO ARE THE PARTIES THAT REQUEST ME TO SIGN?

I confess that in all such matters as these I am very much influenced by names; not exactly as to the way in which I decide to *act*, but as to the manner in which I entertain such proposals. Now, in such a very grave and serious affair as this purports to be, one would like to see names of men well known and long tried as the friends and supporters of Methodism, and of the interests of religion generally; but the eye wanders in vain down the paper for any such vouchers of its authenticity. It is true there is a reference to a certain "Corresponding Committee" at the bottom, and these Resolutions are said to have been passed at an Aggregate Meeting of Wesleyan Delegates; but this does not go a great way to recommend them to me. For, if I remember rightly, these last-named persons did not pretend to come from all

the Circuits in the Connexion, nor even from one-third of the entire number ; and, according to the various advertisements and statements published in the "Watchman," the greater part of them have been repudiated by the Circuits they professed to represent.

It appears too, if one may believe the statements in a certain pamphlet, entitled, "The Salt of Methodism, or the Delegates tested," these persons had by no means distinguished themselves by their zealous support of the cause of God amongst us, so as to entitle them to use, with any great emphasis, the words, "our beloved Methodism." And, if I am not mistaken, these Resolutions were not, in any important sense, the resolutions of the Delegates, such as they were ; but, being prepared by a small number of persons called "the Committee up stairs," were submitted to them with a request, that, for the sake of unanimity and effect out of doors, they would be pleased to pass them. Notwithstanding this, many of them were vehemently contested and opposed ; and very angry debates fill the columns of that weekly newspaper which, being patronised by the Corresponding Committee, gave a full report of the proceedings. These facts have all been so fully and powerfully exposed in the "Vindicator," No. V., that it is unnecessary to enlarge upon them here, further than to say, that the best arguments and protests against the chief Resolutions of the Delegate-Meeting are to be found in the reported speeches of the pretended Delegates themselves. It is to be hoped that some benevolent persons who reside in neighbourhoods where these documents are most industriously circulated, will be at the expense and trouble of distributing, gratuitously, the excellent Number containing the exposure of the proceedings of the pretended Delegate-Meeting, which would furnish the best antidote to their pernicious influence.

I confess, that if the absence of names, in the first place, excites a disagreeable suspicion and mistrust of the whole business, the analysis of the Delegates and their doings is well enough adapted to explain why anybody might be ashamed of putting his name to a document, which, perhaps, no individual concerned could endorse in its totality, and about which nothing that deserves the name of unanimity exists amongst its originators.

At this stage of the inquiry, I say to myself, "It will be time for any member to sign when every Delegate has signed ; and in all reason the names of the Aggregated Delegates should have been there *first*." There must be some concealed end in seeking the signatures of members to documents not even signed by the men who are said to have put them in circulation ; besides, I am assured that the parties, said to have charge of them, are not faithful and true respecting them. Several Leaders and Local Preachers in the Spitalfields Circuit, it seems, have openly declared that their names were surreptitiously obtained to the protest that has been published against the proceedings of the Special District-Meeting. The same declaration has been made by parties in other Circuits, whose names have appeared on similar protests ; and I

have been told of a case in which an individual, busying himself to obtain such signatures as are now sought from me and others in this neighbourhood, has confessed to the forgery of several names in the returns he had made. I also find, that the documents in question are clandestinely circulated. If a Leader is desirous that the members should sign them, he does not bring them into his class openly, nor does he request the signatures himself; but he allows a member to remain behind with the class, when he has somewhat hastily gone away; or, as is more frequently the case, the signatures are sought privately. This excites suspicion in my mind, that the procedure is irregular and un-Methodistical; and, if so, I cannot but think that it is dishonourable for members of a voluntary Society, based on certain principles, which were known when they entered it, thus to act.

But, I ask myself again,

II.—WHAT IS IT I AM REQUESTED TO SIGN?

On examining these Resolutions, the first thing that strikes a constitutional Methodist is the fact, that *they are founded on false statements and assumptions.*

For, 1. The Conference has not constituted itself the sole legislative body of the Connexion. If it were so, in fact, it could not be said to have constituted *itself*; for John Wesley constituted it such as it was, and delegated to it such power as he possessed and exercised by an undisputed right. But it has associated the people with it in its legislative acts, so far as the people are concerned by them. It has given the people the power to originate suggestions, touching its legislative enactments, to suspend provisionally, and ultimately to exercise the power of a veto upon connexional laws.

2. It is not true that the enactments of Conference have been of an “oppressive character and injurious tendency;” nor that the Declaratory Resolutions of 1835 infringe upon the liberties of the people. With regard to the latter point, my mind has been quite settled by a very able pamphlet, entitled, “Second Letter to J. B., on the law of 1835, on Memorials to Conference considered:” which I recommend to all your readers for their own attentive perusal, and for gratuitous distribution to all such Methodists as, without being at the trouble to read for themselves, have been simple enough to believe what has been said against these laws of 1835, so called.

3. It is not true, as intimated in Resolution XII., that Messrs. Dunn and Griffith were subject to infliction, or penalty, without the production of evidence,—the former having been condemned upon trial, and the latter having openly admitted his participation in the proceedings in respect of which Mr. Dunn was found guilty; and both these facts being so notorious, that none but the most ignorant could be expected to sign such a glaring misrepresentation.

4. It is a false assumption, and a begging of the whole question, to insinuate, that there are laws and usages in the Methodist body which

are unscriptural ; and that its constitution and laws need to be made, because they are not so already, conformable to New-Testament principles. This is the very matter in dispute ; and until these self-styled Reformers show more intelligence in their exposition of scriptural principles, and more practical conformity in their course of action to the moral precepts of the Bible, plain and pious Methodists may well believe that the Founders and Fathers of Methodism understood, and revered, and followed the Scriptures, at least as well as these very suspicious personages who presume to call them in question. When the time shall come for it, constitutional Methodists will be prepared for the defence of their institutions on Bible principles ; that is, when the Connexion shall have been relieved from the din of Bristol rioters and Ripley chartists ; and when Norfolk shall have completed its *beau ideal* of a church without a regular ministry, and made proof of the efficacy of sermons and sacraments solely in the hands of laymen ; then it may, perhaps, be made to appear to the satisfaction of the more intelligent and reflecting portion of the disaffected, that they are not likely to approximate the scriptural standard a whit more by leaving the Wesleyan-Methodist Society. So much for the foundation : now for the superstructure. What are the reforms they contemplate ?

They are completely revolutionary in their character.—Nothing that a constitutional Methodist has been accustomed to consider essential to the system is left standing. Leaders'-Meetings, Quarterly-Meetings, District-Meetings, Conferences, are all re-modelled so as to retain little or nothing of their former character. Whatever may be thought of the comparative excellencies of the two systems, they are as widely different in their constitution as high Church and low Dissent. The Papal Methodism of these Reformers is a totally different thing from the practical Methodism of the last hundred years. The one is a monarchy, self-created, absolute, and irresponsible, in the first instance, but gradually, in its descent, limited, guarded, and defined by mutual compact and concession ; in which, however, all the power and privilege that the people possess is given them by those who existed, in their corporate capacity, before them, and rank in their official *status* above them. The other is a democracy, in which all this order is reversed ; in which the people talk of giving to the Conference this power and the other, or rather, they specify what they will not give them ; in which the people make the Leaders, and the Local Preachers, and the Quarterly-Meeting, and the District-Meetings. Everything here is on the principle of universal suffrage. Men, women, and children, by show of hands, admit into, and expel from, the church. This democracy, gravely offered to the acceptance of the Methodist Societies, or rather, crammed down their throats by threat of Bristol riots, Ripley mobs, and Norfolk Local Preachers, is all the more odious because it is founded on a revolution. It is not a raw colony occupying waste lands and setting up a new state in a virgin soil ; but it is an insurgent mob trampling on the rights of property,

effacing old-established distinctions in society, and proclaiming universal anarchy in a well-ordered community. Such a revolution as this would do such violence to all the habits, tastes, and prejudices of the old Methodists, that it would take more than a generation to make it sit easy and work naturally. As it was, the stomachs of many of the Delegates were not strong enough to bear the very idea of it; and they fought manfully against it, and got reproached for their pains by their ultra-radical friends for being too much under the influence of Preachers and old prejudices.

The only thing left standing is the power secured to the Conference by the Deed-Poll, which stood out against their levelling attempts like a jutting rock on the sea-coast, against which the waves dash and war in vain, and seem, in their impotent rage, to froth and foam with disappointment.

But another characteristic of these Resolutions is, that *they degrade the ministry*.—Ample evidence of this design was supplied by the discussions at the Delegate-Meeting. Many of these boasting Reformers evidently do not believe in the Christian ministry as a distinct office in the Christian church. Others of them seemed to regard the Minister as a beast of prey that should have his teeth drawn, and his claws pared down, and withal be enclosed in an iron cage, in order to secure the safety of the religious public. Mr. Howard, of Sheffield, not content with degrading them by external force, would, by a peculiar refinement in cruelty, make them the instruments of their own dishonour. Speaking of the resolution to reduce the Conference to the number of members specified in the Deed-Poll, he says, “I for one feel inclined to give the Conference the opportunity of reducing itself to that number of men, and thus be the means of their own degradation; for a degradation it would really be, inasmuch as there is a cause for this condition.”

This is undoubtedly the drift of the Resolutions, which go to strip the office of all its scriptural prerogatives, and to make the man a mere tool in the hands of an imperious and rampant majority. This is not a question only for Ministers, though it is for them one of vital moment. If they believe the Christian ministry to be a divine institute, a trust and a duty which they have received, “not of men, neither by man,” but from Christ himself, they must learn from His word alone what are the obligations connected therewith. If the members of the church place them in such a position, that, with all the responsibilities and obligations of the office, they are unable efficiently to discharge its functions, their course will become clear, and their duty imperative. Either they must go to a people who will acknowledge their scriptural rights, or they must raise up a new race of believers, who, owing their existence as Christian believers to their ministry, must and will cheerfully obey them in the Lord. But the influence and *status* of the ministry is a question for the people to look at. If they degrade the office, so as to impair its efficiency, they will

drive honourable and conscientious men out of it ; they will prevent persons of respectability, in point of talent, and character, and social position, from entering it ; they will alienate their children from the church, by diminishing their respect for its Pastors ; and increase their own burdens, by impairing the aggressive power of their own institutions. A depressed ministry can never be a successful ministry. Men of God may stand out against any amount of opposition and persecution from the world, and gain ground, if they be supported by the respect and confidence of the people of God ; but when the members of the church refuse them the honour and influence that are due to their office, how can they be expected to wield it effectually for its great spiritual purposes ? Accordingly, we find that the Apostles, though counted by the world as the filth and offscouring of all things, appealed to the fruits of their ministry for honour and obedience, and claimed to govern in the church with an authority that stood out in strange contrast with their worldly condition and circumstances. And, in like manner, the early Methodist Preachers, mobbed and pelted as they were by the unconverted, claimed and received from their own followers an amount of reverence and obedience, which, in the providence of God, was designed to nourish their souls into vigour, and to strengthen them for their work. And, with all their pretended love of Methodism, about which these self-styled Reformers cant so much, no outside opposition would do half so much to paralyze and destroy its usefulness as the measures which they are now proposing, to cripple the power and degrade the office of the ministry. Let all true and constitutional Methodists look to this.

But another fearful tendency of the principle advocated in these Resolutions would be *to debauch and corrupt the people*.—It is a favourite maxim with the political school to which these ecclesiastical anarchists belong, that all power corrupts its possessors. This is more true of popular power, that is, of power in the hands of the people, than of any other mode in which it may be exercised. Give a man a vote, and you invest him with a power which is of value to some one else, if not to himself ; he becomes an object of importance to rival parties ; he is canvassed, cajoled, pandered to in his weaknesses, if not in his vices ; and in proportion to his ignorance or weakness is the danger that he will use his power amiss. Thus universal suffrage is a mischievous maxim in the State, and debauches and demoralizes a population more rapidly than any other form of government whatever. But it is tenfold more mischievous in the church. Picture the Methodist people under its influence. Here is a Leader wanted for a class. Instantly an agitation is commenced in favour of a particular candidate ; but perhaps some one has a grudge against him, and this brings it out : he goes about telling all he knows to the disparagement of the candidate : this provokes the partisans of the said candidate, who retaliate ; and so, when the Society of several hundred members is brought together, they are ready to bite and devour one another.

By and by, we should have clubs formed for the purpose of securing the election of parties representing certain principles of politics or church order, and canvassing-cards, and electioneering squibs, and all the profane paraphernalia of political contests. Meanwhile, what would be the effect of all this on new converts, and persons of weak faith and languid piety? Undoubtedly, to blight and to destroy them. And what ultimately would the world think of all this? Why, it would very soon regard Methodism as a great political club, whose very existence might be dangerous to society; and which it might be necessary to put down by Act of Parliament, as an illegal and mischievous association, like the Orange Lodges in Ireland. The more I examine this document which I am requested to sign, the more I am disgusted with the whole tone and spirit of it; and I must pronounce it a compound of ignorance and arrogance, thinly covered by a pretended regard to scriptural authority and professions of love to Methodism, which look to me very much like transparent *cant*.

III.—OUGHT I THEN TO SIGN?

No: unless I am prepared to exhibit myself to the world as a simpleton, who does what he can neither understand, explain, nor defend, and does it knowing that it will be perfectly useless as a memorial to Conference, which neither can nor ought to take the least notice of *such* a document.

No: unless I am willing to be branded as a dupe and a slave to an arbitrary and despotic influence. The greater part of those who may be coaxed or frightened into signing, will thereby commit themselves blindly to any course that their leaders may subsequently agree upon, without knowing where it is to land them, or by what chart they are to steer their way. They say, indeed, that constitutional Methodists are slaves. Be it so. They know at least what they are enslaved to, and they may be allowed to comfort themselves with the reflection that their tyrants carry a respectable name in the world. Better, say I, be a slave to well-known Ministers of Christ's Gospel, than to a band of anonymous assailants, whose names may turn out, on a scrutiny, to be nothing better than Gandy, Hunt, and Chipchase.

Lastly, I say, No: unless I am content to endorse the whole system of fraud, imposture, and hypocrisy, of which this movement forms a part, and to signify my approval of all the wickedness which has characterized it from the beginning, and forms an inseparable adjunct of it at this day. It is impossible to evade this responsibility, if I sign the Resolutions now submitted to me; for at the top is the title of that great imposture, the "Aggregate Meeting of Delegates;" and if I put my name to it, I admit, as a fact, what every one knows to be falsehood; and at the bottom is the imprimatur of the "London Corresponding Committee," by acknowledging which I commit myself to men with whom no man who has a character, or wishes to have one, should identify himself.

A PAGE FROM THE HISTORY OF AGITATION.

(*To the Editors of the Wesleyan Vindicator.*)

GENTLEMEN,—There are some portions of the Wesleyan family which seem to have the common sense to learn from the past; and, looking at Methodism as it was, and Methodism as it is, as pretty much the same, they are disposed to make as little noise as may be in their way to heaven, and to try, by working its increased means and agencies for the salvation of souls, to do all kinds of good on the way. In some places, however, it is otherwise, especially with our younger friends; and to them I wish to read a page from the history of agitation; especially to the Reformers of Nottingham and Huddersfield. I do not know that the present agitators claim the honour of originality in principle, if principle they have, for their onslaught on the Old Connexion; and of all the people in the church or the world, the people of those two places are the most inexcusable for what they have done, or may attempt. If they want to do anything which has not been done, and the doing of which has not been a failure, they have yet to develop their plan. Those of them who are old enough, have lived in the very light of the reformation they are wishing to introduce amongst us, for the last fifty or sixty years; and for them to profess to be attempting anything new, is only to lay themselves open to the charge of the folly of self-deception, or the wickedness of attempting to deceive others. Ever since the days of Kilham, their professed principles have been worked at their very doors, to their utter condemnation; and if they have closed their eyes on this fact, it is time to open the eyes of others, whom they may be the means of leading into error, by a reference to the history of the two Connexions in those two towns. In both places the chapels were carried off by the Kilhamites, and the “Old Connexion” was left to quit the field, or commence anew, as best they could. The Wesleyan Conference took up their cases; and, to use the language of the Minutes of 1798, the Preachers “subscribed something handsome themselves, and then divided the kingdom between those two places, and made collections in all the chapels” in their favour. In Nottingham, the secessions were very numerous; and some of the best Ministers that Methodism ever raised up, or the world ever knew, were mobbed in the streets, as the enemies of God and man. But they assembled, with as many as were like-minded, to give themselves unto prayer; and, especially on one occasion, to pray for Divine direction and interference, in reference to a site for a chapel. This was a time to be remembered; and an aged saint, believing that an answer had arrived, left his companions on their knees, and went direct to the lord of the manor, and succeeded in his application. On the laying of the foundation-stone, the Lord appeared in their behalf; a revival of religion commenced; and in the year 1800 their numbers were 2,200. Thus

were the waste places of Zion repaired! The two rival systems have ever since been worked side by side, in Nottingham, a town, the population of which has afforded scope for both; the political prejudices of the people have always been in favour of reform, which gave an advantage to the "New Connexion;" and what has been the result? Why, this new body has with difficulty maintained a feeble existence, while the old body has prospered; so that there are now two Circuits, with two of the largest chapels in the Connexion, which have cost about £15,000; and they have six Ministers in the two Circuits, with 3,431 members of Society! And yet here are hundreds mad for another reform, and not a few who are offering every insult and indignity to that Conference, and those Ministers, whose care and labours have thus been owned of God.

In Huddersfield the wreck was all but complete. Only eight members remained, with not a single officer to lead them. The following paragraph from the Memoir of Mr. Joseph Thornton, (by his worthy son, the Rev. W. L. Thornton,) is worthy of deep, serious, and prayerful consideration:—

The doctrinal views of my dear father had been happily established; and in the period immediately preceding these melancholy ebullitions of discord, he was hesitating on the verge of re-union with the Society. Now he saw the justice and excellence of the cause of old Methodism: he deplored the secession which had occurred; and when the ancient standard was almost universally abandoned,—when, to all human appearance, the cause was virtually annihilated in the town,—he instantly joined the eight individuals constituting the old Society. As no Leader remained, and as he was highly esteemed for piety and integrity by all parties, notwithstanding his temporary separation from the Methodist body, he was immediately appointed the Leader of this little company. The honoured individuals who firmly adhered to the cause through the instrumentality of which they had been brought to God, were expelled from their chapel; and the venerable John Barber (a Minister who twice sustained the office of President of the Conference) preached to the injured flock from a tombstone in the small cemetery adjoining, while my excellent father stood before him, in order to furnish some slight support in the absence of a pulpit. Indeed the few remaining members were distinguished by stability, and by cordial affection to "the messengers of the churches," in the midst of these agitations.*

And the history of both the New and the Old Connexion is the same here as in Nottingham. The Old Connexion recovered their chapel some thirty-five years ago; and this was the occasion of great sympathy in favour of the New, and an elegant chapel was built during the excitement. Some thought the old body wrecked a second time in public estimation; but this recovered chapel has been pulled down, and replaced by one of our most beautiful chapels, and it has become the head of a second Circuit; the original Circuit having nearly the largest and most elegant chapel in the Connexion. In the two Circuits there are five Ministers, and 2,827 members of Society. I have never heard that the "New Connexion" has done anything for the church or the world like this, or worthy of one hundredth part of

* Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, 1833, p. 634.

the noise they have made about reform. If the conversion of souls constitute reform,—and so Wesley would argue,—I believe the less of the other kind the better; and I cannot account for the rage for reform *versus* conversion, which exists in the two Circuits to which I have here referred, on any other principle than that the Wesleyans living in the same towns with these Reformers, allow themselves to be argued, or dragooned, in every time of excitement, into an idolatrous regard to their system; which, like other idols, has neither eyes to see, nor hands to save. All that has been done in this way by the New Connexion, I believe, has been effected by those means which are common to both, and rather in spite of its church polity, than by its assistance; and certainly, if we are to believe such men as Joseph Forsyth, their discipline has not administered to the immaculate purity, any more than to the converting power, of this New Connexion.* It kept its jubilee with under 20,000, while the Old Connexion increased from 166,959, in 1797, to 464,315, in 1847, a lapse of just fifty years.

It will strengthen the argument in regard to both these Circuits, to remark that, while they were thus increasing, they were also being divided, so as to form new Circuits. In 1807, the Mansfield Circuit was divided from Nottingham, with two Preachers, and, at the following Conference, returned 460 members. In 1809, the Ilkeston Circuit was formed from the Nottingham Circuit, with two Ministers, and in the following year returned 522 members. In 1810, the Holmfirth Circuit was formed from the Huddersfield Circuit, with two Preachers, and, in 1811, reported 510 members. So that what were originally only two Circuits at the time of the Kilhamite division, and by that division were nearly destroyed, now constitute seven Circuits, with no fewer than 8,912 members; and these are the Circuits where the Reformers of Wesleyan Methodism are the most clamorous for the trial of a system which the history of the entire period of its existence and operation has practically and triumphantly refuted, under their own inspection, especially in contrast with the system which they wish thus to reform!

I make these remarks, partly in justice and truth, and partly in indignation, to see that two of the last meetings of the expelled have been held in "New Connexion chapels, kindly lent for the occasions."

I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,

June 7th, 1850.

A REAL WESLEYAN REFORMER.

YOU HAVE POWER, HOW HAS IT BEEN USED?

THOSE who have paid any attention to the Resolutions adopted by the Delegates, know very well, that their sum and substance is a demand for more power. Many proposals are made to the Confer-

* See Turner's Essay, p. 182, note.

ence, the plain English of which is, "Give us of your power; for you have too much, and we have too little." This demand, however, is made exclusively by the Delegates and their adherents; for the peaceable Methodists, who are an overwhelming majority, say nothing on the subject, and are silently using the power they have to their own honour and the great advantage of Methodism. Gentlemen accustomed to make demands, on finding there is no power which can resist their will, generally pass from words to deeds, and simply take what they wish to obtain; and were the Wesleyan Ministers and their friends found to be utterly prostrate and helpless, the Reformers would desist from mere talk, and at once place things on what they conceive to be a right footing. But as matters at present are not precisely in that state, these parties not merely confine themselves to the simple use of words, but their language sometimes is moderate and even respectful. They "hope" that by "timely concessions," the actual payment of the twenty thousand pounds, which are to be promised, will not be necessary; and that, no doubt, will be a great convenience. When a son not of thrifty habits applies to his father, and "hopes" for the "timely concession" of another guinea, if the old man has any power or spirit remaining, he will perhaps ask the applicant how he expended the last. Already the Reformers have demonstrated, to the entire satisfaction of the country, that they are in possession of some power; and how that has been employed, is a question which the Conference may very properly ask before it proceed to make any "concessions," whether "timely" or otherwise. It is now a notorious fact, that the last Conference attempted to find out the authors of the "Fly-Sheets," and to put an end to that nefarious system which had existed in Methodism for some years; and it is equally notorious, that, in this attempt, it was stoutly resisted, first by some of its own members, who refused to say what they knew on the subject, and then by those who now call themselves "the people," and demand an increase of power. Provided the Wesleyan Ministers are fully satisfied in their own minds that the "Fly-Sheet" system was a good thing,—that to print and circulate personal charges, and then, when challenged by the accused, refuse to meet them, and never even attempt to substantiate in their presence the allegations which have been made, is the part of an honest and honourable man, and that they have done quite wrong in attempting to break up this system of mingled meanness and wickedness,—then they undoubtedly ought, by "timely concessions," to give more power to the protectors of this notable contrivance, and thereby enable them to accomplish their purpose, and make the practice of printed and anonymous accusations a part of Methodism through all future generations.

Conference need not inquire, for they already know that the Delegates have been engaged in the work of agitation. A "Banner," and a newspaper, with pamphlets innumerable, have been issued, and all sorts of public meetings have been held, from the great gatherings in

Exeter-Hall, down to the place in which the orators refused to meet the auditors, because they were so juvenile and few : these have been all used as the instruments of agitation. This, we are told, is not merely a harmless, but a very profitable, state of things ; for as there are political Tories, Whigs, and Radicals, who talk one against another,—and this is a great country,—so, if the Methodists would but allow the same freedom, they would become a numerous people. Yet it may be a question, how far such freedom is compatible with the maintenance of the Wesleyan discipline, and the ends of their existence as a religious community. Two men might meet in class, and converse on the subject of spiritual religion ; and one of them, on the following day, might sally forth, and prove, to the entire satisfaction of a miscellaneous assembly, that his class-mate was an unprincipled and worthless man : but, after this, they would scarcely meet in class again on the following week. Agitators may prove, in their own way, that Wesleyan Ministers are the reverse of all that is implied in being a gentleman ; and then when the parties come together, to renew their Quarterly Tickets, the giver of these tokens of Christian fellowship may be told by the receiver, that he is a “tyrant,” a “Jesuit,” a “liar,” and so forth,—and that arrangements have been made for mending him by starvation. But yet we are told, this state of things must go on ; for should a Preacher dare to withhold a Reformer’s ticket, even under these circumstances, the account will be sent to the organ of the party, which will represent him as a mercenary man, who cares about nothing but money,—or he will be brought before a sympathizing Meeting of Leaders, who understand the Rules, and will teach him his duty. Now, it is certain the Conference may make “timely concessions,” and enable these people to play this game with still more efficiency and success ; and it is equally certain, that, by so doing, it will not raise the credit of its own servants ; for a Minister who goes on giving tickets, and talking about spiritual religion, to a people who can so speak and so act, must have very little of either principle or character left, and will inevitably be scorned by others,—and, which is still worse, be despised by himself.

During the present agitation, it is well known that large and promiscuous assemblies of people, displaying all the characteristics of a rude and violent mob, have been collected both within and at the doors of our chapels and vestries ; and these have been summoned, often by the Delegates, to come to their assistance, as they appeared to be in danger, by being put upon their trial. Conference is now called upon, by “timely concessions,” to give these conveners more power, that they may perfect their plans, and render these assemblies still more frequent and formidable. No doubt it can oblige them by a compliance with their wishes ; but it is not under any obligation to do this : for Methodism has been sufficiently dishonoured by what has occurred at Bristol, York, and other places ; and it is not at all necessary that peaceable people, who have no connexion with our Society,

should be compelled again to request the interference of the Civil Magistrate, to protect them from the unendurable turbulence of their Wesleyan neighbours.

However disposed to make "timely concessions," there is one form of power which has been exercised, which the Conference is unable to increase. In the case of several notorious agitators, who have been put upon their trial, several Leaders'-Meetings have solemnly decided that an allegation was not proved, when, in fact, at the very same time, themselves, and all other people, believed it to be true, and have also maintained that, in so doing, they have not at all dishonoured themselves, as the act itself was perfectly right. People who can make such a deed as that to be "perfectly right" have undoubtedly a power which the Conference never did, and never will, possess, and therefore never can concede.

There is a great, and primary, and kind, and Christian duty, which the Conference owes to the agitators themselves; and that is something very different from "timely concessions." For many years these people, it seems, had power, but failed to use it, and they were then quite as happy, as useful, and as respectable as they are ever likely to be again. By now putting forth their strength, they have produced a great disturbance, and will doubtless effect a division. Assuredly they will pursue their own course; but for the Conference to concede power, to be employed in this way, is to commit an act of suicide. What the Conference owes to the vast body of loyal and contented Methodists, who wish to be quiet in the land, and mind the high ends for which they joined the Society, is formally to declare, what is indubitably the fact, that Methodism is in a state of civil war; that the Corresponding Committee is openly up in arms against the Conference; and that, since they have taken the field, they must be met and encountered there, and let the Lord do what seemeth Him good; that therefore, its Superintendent Ministers, who choose to retain their standing and their office, for Christ's sake, be authorized, in connexion with their District-Committees, to deal with all agitators patiently and kindly, but on this principle, until a settlement has been effected, and we know the extent of our loss.

AMERICAN JUDGMENT ON THE WRITERS OF THE "FLY-SHEETS."

THE following quotation, from an able leading article of the "Christian Advocate" newspaper, of New-York, published April 25th, we give to our readers. It contains, we think, an apt and common-sense illustration of the case of the three complaining Ministers, Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith, who have gone about, since the last Conference, proclaiming the wrongs they have received. The article is in answer to something which had been written by an English correspondent to the "Independent" newspaper, under the signature of

“Agricola;” and which is so strongly characteristic of deep-seated prejudice, and so vulgar and abusive in its language, that the writer in the “Christian Advocate” supposes it must be from the pen of the Editor of the “British Banner.” Referring to a former article, commented upon in the “Independent,” the writer says:—

We assumed that “the expelled” were “guilty;” but our friend insists “that there is no proof of their guilt.” Our ground is this: that there is now a strong and conclusive proof of the guilt of the expelled, and, consequently, whatever informality there might have been in their expulsion, it is sufficiently evident that no *injustice* was done them,—that they are unfit for the communion of the Wesleyan Church, and, consequently, ought to be separated from it. This being the case, they are not entitled to the sympathies of Christian communities, either as confessors and martyrs, or as men who suffer wrongfully. Here we may be asked for the evidence we have of their guilt. To say nothing of certain developments which have been made, we have evidence amounting to a strong presumption in their published speeches and newspaper articles. Here our eyes have seen, and have grieved to see, *every allegation of the “Fly-Sheets” re-affirmed*. We have seen published, again and again, language from “the expelled” as utterly destitute of the Christian spirit, and as far from truth, as slanderous and injurious to the Christian character of leading Wesleyan Ministers, as language could express. Now we think it not unreasonable to conclude, that what these men are doing every day, they did “once upon a time,” as circumstances indicated. Take a case. A drunkard, in a state of intoxication, staggers into brother Dwight’s office, and, in tones of bitterness, says, “I want you to chastise the Methodists in your paper; for they turned me out of the Church for drinking rum, and they could not prove a bit of it.” “Ah!” responds brother Dwight, “and they convicted you of the crime, I suppose.” “No,” answers the expelled, “they just asked me if I had not been drunk, and I told them it was none of their business, and then they turned me out.” “My dear fellow,” answers brother Dwight, “from present indications, I judge that, however informal may have been your trial, you have not been *innocently* punished.” In this case, the strong probability of guilt would be likely to foreclose the door of sympathy, and leave the complainant to suffer unvindicated.

REFORM NOT FOUND BUT MADE NECESSARY.

WE fully agree with the writer of the following communication in the opinion, that, up to this time, the agitators have had but little success in their attempts to make out, as they have announced, the urgent necessity of a reform in Methodism. Unquestionably they have done their best, and must have been acquainted with nearly all the faults in the Connexion; since, for some years, it has been their business and pleasure to collect and record them; while their decided inclination has been to reveal fictions, rather than to conceal facts. That we as a people ought to be humble for the past, and watchful in the future, is perfectly clear; and it is equally clear that Methodism, after all, is not so bad, but that, without the plans of our would-be Reformers, and even without their presence, it could still go on, and effect a vast amount of good, for very many years to come. We thank a “Local Preacher” for the following communication.—EDIT.

EVERY constitutional Methodist may now be perfectly easy about the expenditure of his money, and the integrity of Wesleyan Ministers. Undoubtedly Messrs.

Everett, Dunn, and Griffith were connected with the Wesleyan ministry long enough to discover any hidden mysteries that were behind the curtain, if there were any to discover; for, being so long Ministers themselves, they must know of the selfishness of our leading men, if there was any to know of; and, being so often in assemblies of Ministers, where various matters were discussed, they must be aware of the disposition in the Preachers to rob the people of their rights, if the Preachers showed any such disposition. In a word, whatever injustice, misrule, or despotism might have existed in the Wesleyan ministry, Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith (considering the watchfulness which they have constantly exercised) must have been acquainted with it. According to these views, and taking into consideration the great bluster and swagger of the party when expelled, it was thought that we were going to hear such an exposure as never was made before. Indeed, exposure after exposure, following in quick succession, was eagerly expected; and misrule, favouritism and extravagance were to be dragged, without mercy, into open day. I have relied, with the greatest possible confidence, upon the three agitators, that they would thoroughly expose every abuse connected with Wesleyan Methodism, and fully disclose all the cabinet secrets with which they were acquainted; being convinced and persuaded that they were so greatly chagrined and enraged, by being expelled, that nothing which would have for its tendency the disgrace of Methodist Preachers would be allowed to escape. Their own friends and sympathizers, thinking what a great deal of experience the trio had in the dark designs and doings of the inquisitors in Conference assembled, and having seen so much of their inhuman cruelty, they would, most assuredly, now

“A tale unfold,
Whose lightest word would harrow up our souls,
Freeze our warm blood, and make our eyes,
Like stars, start from their spheres;
Our knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair stand on an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.”

But their sympathizers have been woefully deluded; for the “tale” of horror has not been unfolded; and the expected, perhaps I may say, the desired, exposures have not been made. How is this? Surely they did not want inclination to do the business; for they manifestly came red-hot out of the hands of the Conference; and it is clear, from the bitterness of spirit which they have shown in their speeches and writings, that, if the three martyrs knew anything that was bad concerning Wesleyan Ministers, they would tell all they knew,—they would have taken infinite delight in lifting up the curtain to let us peep in. Yea, nothing can be more certain than this, that they did not want inclination; for they have manifested a disposition to *create* a few abuses, when they could not find any. Why, then, have not some exposures been given? Why have they not brought to light the hidden things of dishonesty? Mr. Dunn was told, by one of the Committee, to tell us all he knew; and both he and his fellow-sufferers have had sufficient time to expose all abuses, and more than sufficient, it seems, since they can give speeches, and retail even sarcasm *verbatim* to different assemblies. Why, then, I ask again, have they not given us the expected exposure of Conference doings? Why? for the best of all reasons,—no exposure was possible. Their silence is a plain proof to me that Wesleyan Ministers have nothing to be ashamed of, and that investigation will make manifest their integrity. The very fact, indeed, of the Conference expelling three of its members might have demonstrated, to any reflecting mind, that it did not dread any exposure. Inquisitors never expel any of their number. The very act, I say, clearly showed that Conference had nothing to be ashamed of, if brought before the notice of the public. But we have now the matter fairly before us. We have now heard all that the expelled have to say *for* themselves and *against* their former brethren. They have emptied their quivers; and venom and spleen are nearly exhausted.

We know all that they can tell us ; and what an *all* it is ! We must, however, give them credit for striving to enlighten us in various matters. For instance, with regard to Mission-House management. But they had much better have left *that* alone ; for never were men more completely foiled than our revolutionists were in Mission-House matters. They were handled by Mr. Scott and others in a way that they little expected ; and their continued attacks only led them farther into the mire, and increased the difficulty and dishonour attendant upon their defeat. Napoleon went too far into Russia ; and his retreat was thus rendered inconceivably mortifying and disgraceful. As it was with the discoveries in Bishopsgate-street, so it has been with others. They have been brought into the world, cherished and nursed, have just lived long enough to disgrace their parents, and have then died ! This course has been pursued now for a good while, and it may still be followed ; but no doubt there will always be found some hand to nip these pretty flowers as fast as they will grow, though it be upon the fertile soil of agitation.

JUNIO.

A NEW "PLAN OF PACIFICATION."

A PAMPHLET has appeared with the above title, in the form of a letter to Dr. Bunting, by W. Harriss, whose "Plan" is based on the following discovery, which will be very convenient, if it only turn out to be true :—"If there be two parties, though the truth may be more on one side than on the other, it is more frequently found to lie between them." When our Judges have "two parties" before them, they sometimes find "truth" on one side, and sometimes on the other, and sometimes a little on both sides ; and even Solomon knew so little of the "whereabouts" of truth, that he advised people to imitate miners, and "seek for her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures ;" but Mr. Harriss thinks himself in California, where people go straight to the "diggings," and evidently approves the vulgar maxim, that where there are "two parties," the gold of truth is "found to lie between them." There are "two parties" in a great dispute, one saying our Redeemer is the Creator, and the other that he is a creature ; and even Mr. Harriss has not found the truth "to lie between them."

In the great political dispute between Sennacherib and the King of Judah, men of Mr. Harriss's school would have found the truth to "lie between them," and awarded to the Assyrian, not the whole of Judea, but a part of it, of which he would have known the use. But there was One who thought the truth was altogether on the side of Hezekiah ; that the flourishing speech of Rabshakeh was a stale trick ; and accordingly we read respecting his master, "By the way that he came by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord."

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

No. VIII. of our Periodical may be expected on the 1st of August. Should it be deemed necessary, or expedient, we shall issue extra Numbers during the sittings of the ensuing Conference.

PRICE $\frac{1}{2}d.$

FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY NUMBER
OF THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

SECOND EDITION.

JULY, 1850.

WHAT CAN THE NEXT CONFERENCE DO ?

THIS question has lately been pondered by many Wesleyan Methodists, and has been proposed by some of them to one another in friendly and familiar conversations. We do not presume to judge and determine beforehand for the Ministers, who shall in a few days meet in London to confer together, and who will give their own answer to the question ; but we may give expression to our own thoughts respecting it, and say both what we think the Conference *cannot* do, and what we think it *can* do.

1. *It cannot notice, except for condemnation, the public and promiscuous Meetings, called and addressed within the last year by Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith, and their professed friends ; nor receive for consideration the strange and inconsistent Resolutions passed at those Meetings.*

Those Meetings were unconstitutional and illegal, if held by Wesleyan Methodists, as they were said to be ; one very important and

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salutary law of Methodism, which was passed in the year 1796, and which has remained to the present time unrepealed, being, "that no man, or number of men, in our Connexion shall, on any account or occasion, be allowed to circulate letters, or call Meetings, for the purpose of stirring up our people to divisive and innovating agitations." The Meetings held for the expelled Ministers were known, in many instances, to be composed chiefly of parties unfriendly to the *Wesleyan* system of church government. Many of them were held in the chapels of Congregationalists, and of sects who had, at the periods of former agitations, broken off from Wesleyan Methodism, and formed themselves into separate communities; and other Meetings were held in public rooms, open to *all* persons, who could possibly be gathered at the political cry of "Wesleyan Reform." Not unfrequently, the Meetings were mainly composed of notably wicked and ungodly men, and men of extreme and revolutionary political sentiments. One of the complainants was reported to be a Republican, and to have close sympathy with the revolutionary Chartists; and this circumstance, with the eagerness of corrupt human nature for the exposure of the reported faults of Christians, drew numbers of the "lower classes" to the Meetings which were held. In these Meetings the most contemptuous epithets that vulgar ridicule could possibly invent were applied to holy and venerable men in Methodism; and, after the promiscuous assembly had been excited by misrepresentations, falsehoods, and buffoonery, Resolutions against the acts of the Wesleyan Conference were proposed; and, no denials of false statements nor proposals of amendments being allowed, were carried *unanimously*. The Resolutions of such illegal, promiscuous, ungodly, and illiberal Meetings cannot be noticed by the Conference, except for the very strongest condemnation.

2. *It cannot recognise the Meeting of the self-appointed Delegates, nor entertain their proposals.*

This Meeting, like the Meetings for the expelled, was known by the parties composing it to be illegal. They were disowned in their professed representative character, and condemned for their anti-Wesleyan conduct, by the Quarterly-Meetings of most of the Circuits from which they came. Their own report of the Meeting shows it to have been disgraced by "wrath and bitterness," calumny and revilings, such as were dishonourable to the parties concerned, as men, to say nothing of their professed Christian character. One of their avowed objects is to *degrade* the Christian ministry; and the whole tenor of their proceedings manifests their desire to break down and destroy the Wesleyan system, which, under God, has wrought so much good to the souls of men for more than a hundred years past. Some of the parties

thus conducting themselves knew that the Conference would not hold intercourse with them : for they had learned this in the year 1835, when they acted a similar part in connexion with Dr. Warren ; and when the Rev. R. Reece, who was then President of the Conference, perceiving the unrighteousness of the course pursued, and the evil tendency of the proposals made, peremptorily refused to have any interview with the self-appointed Delegates. The assembly in Moorgate did not expect that the President at Richmond would receive any memorial from them, but deputed persons to wait upon him, avowedly to strengthen their own case with the misguided, on the ground of his refusal ; and the whole proceedings were *managed* by men who, for years past, have given unmistakable proof of their disaffection towards Methodism. Such a Meeting *cannot* be recognised, nor can its proposals be entertained by the Wesleyan Conference.

3. *It cannot countenance the unconstitutional proceedings of the "Corresponding Committee," nor yield to the demands which that Committee has directed and urged to be made upon it.*

The formation of such a Committee cannot be allowed in Methodism. This Committee is formed of men unworthy of a place within its community, and totally unfit to legislate for it. Some of them have been expelled from the Society ; and others, if sheltered for a time, are condemned by the general voice of the Connexion. The Meetings they hold are in *defiance* of Wesleyan rule and authority ; and the arrangements they make are for the disturbing and dividing of the Societies, and for the annoyance and injury of Ministers. The language they employ is that of threat and menace ; and the publications they issue are opposed to the established principles of Methodism. Such a Committee, unconstitutional in its appointment, and systematically employing itself to promote "strifes and divisions," cannot be countenanced by the Conference ; nor can the demands made under its direction be admitted.

4. *It cannot receive for consideration any Memorials obtained by unauthorised means.*

Memorials from Quarterly-Meetings, introduced under the published advice of the self-called "Corresponding Committee," in professed contempt for the June Memorial-Meeting, and proposed, and carried, in spite of the Chairman's remonstrances, cannot be received. Nor can Declarations or Resolutions from professed Quarterly-Meetings, from which the Superintendent Minister and his colleagues were, of set purpose, excluded, or which were clandestinely held after the constitutional Quarterly-Meetings of the Circuits were declared to be concluded. To receive for consideration Memorials, or Resolutions, from such illegal Meetings, would be, virtually, to renounce the established

authority and order of the Connexion ; and, in practice, to set aside its laws and regulations before they had been repealed. Documents proceeding from such sources, whatever may be their contents, cannot but be rejected.

5. *It cannot be coerced into changes by the dishonourable measures of the leaders in agitation, who, after the manner of worldly politicians, have set themselves to obtain thousands of signatures to what they call "The People's Declaration."*

Christian truth is not a subject to be decided upon by majorities, and is not to be determined by vote or signature. It is established by Christ, and must remain unaltered, whether it be supported by many or few ; so that if the many thousand signatures sought to the document put forth should be obtained, they would be no proof that the disciplinary government of Wesleyan Methodism is unscriptural and false. The possibility of obtaining many signatures to any document, where men systematically employ themselves to obtain them, is well known in this country. One man that will do so, can sign many times over ; and already it is known that more than a few names have been appended without authority from the individuals they represent. The common modes of obtaining these signatures are such as to prevent all reasonable confidence respecting them. In most instances, where application is individually made, a mere *general* statement is given of the contents and object of the "Declaration ;" so that when the parties who are said to have signed are afterwards fully informed on what they have done, they express their surprise and indignation concerning the deception practised upon them. Where personal applications are not made ; or, rather, *after* all the signatures possible have been obtained by personal application, then general and public announcements are made, that copies of the Declaration are lying for signature in certain localities ; and *all* persons sympathising with Wesleyan Reformers are urged to sign. Are there not more than a few individuals who, though not Wesleyan Methodists, are ready to put their names to such a document, as though they were such ? Have not some members of the "Wesleyan Association" lately shown themselves ready to do this, who, at the end of letters and articles on the Wesleyan system, have appended the names of "A Methodist," and "A Methodist Preacher?" And if Christian professors will do so, what may be expected from men who are opposed to spiritual religion wherever it exists, and who, from political prejudices, are ready to cast down authority and government in the church as in the world ? The means employed for obtaining the signatures to the "People's Declaration" are unworthy of men pro-

fessing themselves Christians ; and the signatures themselves cannot be relied upon as authentic : therefore the Conference can make no changes on the ground of such a document, however numerous it may be signed.

6. *It cannot concede to memorialists even of the authorised Meetings such changes as would interfere with the established principles of the Wesleyan system ; which its Ministers have received as an important trust from their predecessors, and which they have solemnly vowed before God and His people to maintain.*

There are two fundamental principles of Wesleyan Methodism which have been of late violently assailed, and against which the attack of the present time is mainly directed. One is the *Connexional Principle*, which binds together, under one form of ecclesiastical government, all the Wesleyan Societies ; and the other is that of *Ministerial rule and authority* in the church. The independent action sought for every local court, or Meeting, without control or supervision by any other court, or Meeting, would be, practically, an abandonment of the first of these principles. It would make even the smallest village Society a separate church ; and would take away the security, at present possessed by every Wesleyan Methodist, that, remove to whatever part of the kingdom he may, he will find a community in which are taught the same doctrines, and in which is enforced and maintained the same form of ecclesiastical discipline, which he found in the Society to which he was first united. The proposal for Quarterly-Meetings, and for mixed Committees, to revise the pastoral acts of Ministers, is directly opposed to the principle of their rule and authority in the church of God ; a principle they believe to be taught in the Scriptures,—which was held by Mr. Wesley,—with which they conscientiously entered the Wesleyan ministry, and which they have engaged to hold fast and maintain. To say nothing of strifes and divisions that must of necessity be fomented where the disciplinary acts of Ministers should be set aside ; to say nothing of the entire prostration of pastoral authority in times of faction and rebellion ; is it not flagrantly unjust to require Ministers to surrender a principle which, in their consciences, they believe has been committed to them by Christ,—for the use of which they will have to answer to Him,—with which they gave themselves to Methodism ; and which, in the most solemn manner, they vowed they would maintain ? These principles cannot be conceded by the Conference to memorialists, however numerous or earnest they may be, without criminal unfaithfulness to Christ and to Wesleyan Methodism.

7. *It cannot, with justice or propriety, sacrifice the large majority*

who are satisfied with the existing laws and regulations of the Connexion, to the small minority who are clamorous for changes.

By far the greater number of Circuits which have expressed themselves through their Quarterly-Meetings, have declared they are satisfied with "Methodism as it is," and have openly deprecated changes; and very few Circuits, comparatively, have resolved to memorialize the Conference: while, on the other hand, the great body of the tried and most liberal supporters of Methodism declare, they will not submit to the changes proposed; and, if conceded, they must quietly seek another spiritual home than that which they have hitherto possessed and enjoyed. Are not the opinions and declarations of such persons to be respected? Are their counsels and requests to be sacrificed to conciliate a minority, whose proposals and demands are for the subversion of the fundamental principles of Wesleyan Methodism? The Conference cannot, without unfaithfulness to man, as well as to God, make such a sacrifice.

Hitherto we have expressed our judgment negatively, and said what the next Conference *cannot* do; but let us speak positively, and say what we think it *can* do.

1. *It can and ought to require that its Ministers and all its officers faithfully discharge their several duties according to the laws and regulations received in the Connexion.*

It must maintain and exercise the right to exclude from its ministry such as refuse to acknowledge its authority; and to remove from stations of trust those who are unfaithful in the enforcement of its godly discipline. It must provide the means of separating from the church of Christ ungodly and factious persons,—when a Society shall have become so corrupt in its Leaders'-Meeting as to shelter them. In fact, it is a question which has been seriously proposed, and which is worthy of consideration,—whether there ought not to be a more summary mode than now exists in Methodism of separating from its Societies persons who remain avowedly to agitate and divide them. The experience of the past year has also raised another inquiry in the minds of reflecting peaceful Lay-Methodists,—whether a limit should not be fixed to the rejection of Stewards proposed by Ministers in Quarterly and Leaders' Meetings, so that Circuits and Societies may not be left without their proper officers, through the systematic opposition of men who seek only to frustrate the plans of those who endeavour, to the best of their judgment, to uphold and extend the work of God. The *veto* given by the Conference to the members of a Meeting in a Circuit upon the nomination of a Steward

by a Minister, was not intended to be abused as it has been within the past year : and it is now a question for consideration, whether a remedy should not be provided for such an abuse ; and whether, when a Minister's nomination of a Steward has been rejected, say, six successive times, there should not then be another and more effectual mode of appointing to that office, so that it may not be left vacant. In the church of Christ, as in all organized communities, *government* must be maintained ; and the next Conference *can* and ought to maintain it.

2. *The Conference can and must be faithful to Christ in times of trial, and not be coerced into measures which it conscientiously believes are not for the glory of God, whatever may be the consequences that shall ensue.*

Too many persons in the present day speak and write of the church of Christ as if it were an association formed wholly by man, and which may be regulated and governed according to his will. The church is Christ's own church. He formed it : He has given laws for its government. He holds Ministers responsible for that government now, as He did when the seven churches of Asia were in existence. His laws must be enforced in the church, whatever may be the consequences, as to numbers of insubordinate persons being separated from it. He will be "the Judge of all" at the last day, and will acquit no man on the ground of timidity ; but will pronounce His condemnation on unfaithful servants. Ministers have now, as at the beginning, to say, "We ought to obey God rather than men ;" and, whether in their Circuits, or considering memorials in their general assembly, they have to remember and declare their responsibility to Christ, as did the Apostle Paul to the Hebrews, when he wrote, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves : for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." Painful and afflictive as it must be to them, that some go out from the church in which they professed to have found salvation, yet faithfulness to Christ must be maintained at any sacrifice. Eternal life is the powerful motive by which they are governed ; and the approvals of men, their temporal support, and even the happiness of their connexion with prosperous and enlarging Societies, are infinitely inferior to it. The next Conference must be faithful to Christ, or He will be likely to withdraw from Wesleyan Methodism His divine presence and blessing, and leave it a dark and desolate temple, out of which the glory shall have departed.

WHAT DR. DIXON THOUGHT IN JULY, 1835.

“WHAT, then,” it is asked, “is it intended to cast all these good men out? will the Conference *do nothing for us?*” In plain English, this question must mean, if it mean any thing, “Will not Conference consider our union with the body a sufficient equivalent for the admission of our principles and the change of the Constitution?” At once we say, NO! The door of Methodism is now open to all those who, in possessing its privileges, choose to conform to its rules. There is no barrier against those who have been deluded into the Association returning to their old friends. They may enjoy Methodism just on the same conditions as all the rest of the Societies, and on which they themselves always enjoyed it. But if the Association men say, “We wish to belong to your body, for it will be much more congenial with our feelings to remain with you than to form a new society: but it must be conditional; and the conditions shall be, that *all things shall be controlled by the popular voice, local Meetings shall be independent, and Delegates shall be sent to Conference*; these are our terms, and we imagine we give you a sufficient compensation for these sacrifices in condescending to give you the weight of our name and influence, together with our pious labours:”—“Stop a little, good friends of the Association,” no doubt the Conference will say: “we have no personal malice to gratify against you; you are fellow-men and fellow-Christians; we should most gladly see you peacefully united with us; but then, the price to be paid we consider a little too high. *You demand Methodism as the fee simple for yourselves.*”

This is the true question proposed by the Association to the Connexion, and this is the question to be decided at Conference: Shall Methodism remain in its present state, or shall it be given up to secure and preserve the persons composing the Association? Shall Methodism rest on the Poll-Deed, the integrity of Conference, doctrines and discipline legally secured, the well-balanced and reciprocal rights of Preachers and people, the simple and grand design of extending religion through the world; or shall it be moved from this rock and be placed on the right of “*popular control in all things;*” which is no other than the surrender of all the providential safeguards given to the Connexion, and the abandonment of the work of God to the popular will? In one word, the question is, “Shall the Methodist Connexion continue to obey the great Head of the church as He teaches us His will in the Scriptures of truth, or the hydra-headed idol now set up in its place—democracy?” *We know what the reply will be!*

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AND
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EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

AUGUST, 1850.

DR. DIXON'S OPINIONS, AS CONTAINED IN THE
ILLUMINATOR, AND PUBLISHED IN 1835.

VIEWS propounded by this eminent Minister are at all times entitled to attention ; and we deem it a special duty, at present, to place some of these before our readers.

THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE, ITSELF, IS OF DIVINE APPOINTMENT.

The great Head of the church has fixed this office by the exercise of his own legislative prerogative. It is a part of the system of Christianity, and is inherent in its economical provisions. Through all the generations in which it was arranged that the Mosaic law should continue, the office of priesthood remained ; and the system would have lost its identity and peculiar characteristic, had that part of it ceased to be observed. The same is the case in reference to the ministerial office in Christianity. It is not an accident, to be or not to be, as circumstances may occur ; but it belongs to the economy itself, and wherever the one is established, the other, in some of its names and modifications, must co-exist. It is true, that some of the *varieties* of the office have ceased, since primitive times, because they had respect to that which was extraordinary or miraculous. When testimony was to be given to the personal perfections of Christ,—the truth of His doctrines, miracles, death, and resurrection,—it was essential that persons should be employed who had been ear and eye witnesses. Hence, the apostolic office required that they should have seen the Lord, and be *sent* by Him. But, in this case, this was extraordinary.

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The ordinary functions of the ministerial office belonged to them as well. They were Pastors, Elders, Evangelists, as well as Apostles. We behold them not merely bearing testimony to the facts of the Gospel, but planting churches, exercising the pastoral care and office over them, and teaching the whole doctrine of Christ. Whilst the sacred canon was incomplete, it was necessary that the prophetic spirit should be given, at least, to some, that the remaining revelations from God might be received and transmitted, that the evangelical narrative should be finished, and the whole confirmed and established by miracles. Hence, the terms employed to designate the ministerial office, in some of its functions, have relation to these extraordinary events. With the necessity, they have ceased; but the ordinary functions of the ministry remain, as a part of the great evangelical economy, through all ages, in all places, and as an integral part of the Christian church itself. Our proof of this proposition must necessarily be limited to a very few references to the sacred writings.

Scriptural Proof, No. 1.

In St. Paul's beautiful comparison of the church to the human body, we find the ministerial offices enumerated as a part: (see 1 Cor. xii. 12—31 :) "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Whatever position the ministry may hold in the body,—whether the foot, or the hand, or the eye, or the ear,—it is evidently a part. And the language of the Apostle may be addressed to all who murmur and complain: "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him." The point to which we wish to invite attention is the fact, that the ministerial office, in all its varieties, is identified with the body of Christ. It is not an office *ab extra*, existing accidentally, or raised up for extraordinary occasions, like many of the Jewish Prophets, and then passing away, having accomplished its functions. Instead of this being the case, it is represented as belonging to the identity of the body; and wherever it may be placed, it is essential to the unity, beauty, vitality, and working of the whole. Then the proof that the church is to be perpetuated, through all time, will be evidence that the ministry, in its distinctive, isolated, and acknowledged character, is to be perpetuated too. Wherever the body exists, the members composing it must exist, or it is not the body of Christ. It may be some mutilated idol, set up in its place, destitute of the perfections, symmetry, members, senses, and vitality of the body of which Christ is the

head ; and, if so, as lifeless as one of the statues in St. Paul's, or the slumbering mummy of an Egyptian mausoleum.

Scriptural Proof, No. 2.

In the account given by the Apostle of the fruits of the Saviour's perfected work and intercession, we find the gifts essential to the ministry. Hence, the ministerial office, and the grace necessary to its discharge, arise out of the grand mediatorial scheme, and are, consequently, identified with it : "Therefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, Apostles ; and some, Prophets ; and some, Evangelists ; and some, Pastors and Teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ : till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ : that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive ; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ : from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Inferences.

Many valuable and important lessons might be selected from this passage suited to the present circumstances of our Connexion ; but we have selected it for the single purpose of showing, that the ministerial office is here connected with the mediatorial power of Christ, and as one of the "gifts" which result from its exercise. Those "gifts," in other respects, are uniform and perpetual. The Mediator procures for the world of sinners repentance towards God ; for all believers the pardon of sin, the adoption of grace, the sanctification of the Spirit, communion with the Father, succour both in life and death, and then the peace of heaven. As it does not fail in any of these points, there is no reason to conclude that it does so in any other, and that the "gift" of the ministry will continue to be one of the fruits of the Saviour's mediatorial power, "till he shall give up the kingdom to God, even the Father." From this connexion, it is evident that the ministry belongs to the grace which results from the mediation of Christ, for the perpetuity of his church, and the salvation of the world ; that it belongs essentially to the great scheme of love and mercy, in bringing an alienated race into a state of reconciliation ; that as a ministry of the Holy Spirit procured by the atonement and inter-

cession of our Lord, and actually employed to bring man into a state of spiritual probation, enlighten his dark path, excite him to penitence, and, if obeyed, lead him into all the purity and comfort of a converted state ; so also, in subordination to that, the ministry of men set apart for the purpose, and filled with all suitable gifts for the vocation, is equally a provision of the spiritual kingdom of our Redeemer. The ministry of the Spirit is internal, silent, searching, and, in power, always operating on the principles of the evangelical covenant, and flowing in the channel of redemption ; the living ministry is intended to be co-incident with the other, only to be external, suited to the natural state and wants of man, and agreeing to that visible form into which it has pleased God to place his church in this world.

Then, on this principle, the office of the ministry rests on the highest authority, and the most secure arrangement. It is a part of the great and sublime economy which has its centre of operation on the mediatorial throne ; but which extends its exquisite and unalterable arrangements through the church and the world, for the edification of the one, and the salvation of the other. In exact proportion as the mediatorial government of our Lord develops its principles, pours forth its grace, exerts its power, sets up its dominion, gains its true glories, and establishes its peace, purity, and love in these regions of earth and sin,—in that proportion the office of the ministry will be enriched with “ the gifts he received for men ;” and, standing in humble, pure, separated, but honoured and elevated, dignity, in the world, will be hailed as a divine institution, and as intimately associated with the highest grace of God, and the most valuable interests and happiness of man.

Scriptural Proof, No. 3.

We adduce one other proof, from amongst many, of the divinity and intended perpetuity of the ministerial office. When our Lord sent his Apostles to preach the Gospel after his resurrection, he added, “ And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Two things are obvious from this, that the ministry was to continue to the end of the world, and that Christ would be with his faithful servants to encourage them in their duties. Here, again, we perceive that the sacred ministry is made identical with the Christian dispensation. It is the last, and intended to continue to the end of time and the consummation of all things ; and the successors of the Apostles are to remain as long as the dispensation itself. That the declaration cannot be limited to the Apostles personally, is evident from its terms. Our Lord knew that they would not live to the end of the world ; but, like other men, they would serve their generation by the will of God, and then sleep with their fathers. But they were the types and representatives of a race of men, who should remain through all ages, and, as the foremost of the class, they received the promise ; but they received it for their successors as well as themselves, as Adam received the promise of redemption, both for himself and for all his children.

THE DIVINE APPOINTMENT TO THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE HAS OFTEN
BEEN OVERLOOKED.

Let us now examine the principle of the Delegates as affecting this question. They claim "the right of interference of the members of the church, in the regulation of all its affairs." The office of the ministry is one "of the affairs" of the church; and we are certain we do the Delegates no injustice, when we affirm that their main intention is to regulate *this affair*. They assert their *right*, then, to *interfere* with this office. They do not inform us whence they derive this right; or in what particulars, and to what extent, the interference is to be carried. We grant that the members of the church have inalienable rights. They have a right to all the external ordinances, and to the communion and provisions of the church, as long as they walk according to its rules; and if they are raised by the call of God to offices, they have the right freely to exercise their functions, as long as they do it in conformity with the laws. But the proposition of the Delegates sets up an undefined, and, consequently, an absolute, right to interfere, on the part of those who hold no office, in all the affairs of the ministry. Then, according to this, the office is dependent upon them. They claim the right of creating it, shaping its powers, modifying its operations, and, if they choose, altering its structure, or annulling it altogether. We believe we do not overstate the case. On a former occasion, Mr. Gordon, the author of the Resolution, stated his opinion on this subject very clearly. He said, at that time, "I know of no inherent rights of the Preachers of the Gospel. They are given by the people; how can they be otherwise?" "The people choose a man as their Minister." "What the people give they can control; what they can control, they can take away." And, "There are no rights but what you give." This is obviously placing the ministerial office on the will and taste of the people. If our previous remarks on the divine origin and appointment of this office are well-founded, (and we challenge the Delegates to disprove them,) then the assumption of this *radical* right is a profane invasion of the prerogatives of the Deity, the mediatorial glories of the Son of God, and the settled order of his kingdom. The democratical theory that the *people* are the fountain of all power in the state, so delightful to the pride and vanity of the age, is here borne triumphantly from the world into the church, and placed as the *basis* of the new order of things in Christianity. We remind the fond advocates of this principle, that there is such a book as the Bible; that Christians have been in the habit of acknowledging it as divine; and that its lessons of instruction place the church in the hands of its Founder, not theirs; its powers and authority in its Head, not the people; its economical arrangements in its great Bishop and Shepherd, not the variable, fleeting, and self-interested opinions of man; and its ministry as an office *jure divino*, not dependent upon the votes of a human constituency.

Appeal to Facts.

We ask, Is not the ministry first in order in every known instance of the establishment of a church? If so, we should like to know how it originates with the church, which, in fact, it instrumentally creates. Did not the ministry of St. Paul exist before the churches of the Gentiles, which he planted? Did not the ministry of Wesley exist before the Societies which he, in the exercise of his functions, united in church fellowship? At the present moment, does not the ministerial office precede, in the person of some humble Missionary, the existence of the church in any of the destitute Pagan nations? And even in our own country, at this moment, the Independent body are obliged to do good against their own principles; for they send Home-Missionaries to convert sinners and to collect churches in the dark parts of this country; these churches are formed by the ministry, not the ministry by the churches. The attempt of our Reformers is to remove this sacred office from that lofty pedestal of divine appointment on which it is placed by the holy Scriptures, to the pivot of human opinion, where it may be made, like the weather-cock, to turn to every gust of passion and folly, or to be hurled and rolled in the mire, and kicked and cuffed at the caprice of every babbling in religious revolution. They profess to do all this of *right*. We want to know whence they derived their right? We can understand on what authority the ministry is divine. It is so on the ground of a divine origin and appointment, fully and clearly expressed in the New Testament. But how it can be a divine ordinance, and yet a human institution,—liable to the modifications, changes, *interferences*, and even abrogation of the church,—at the same time, we confess we cannot comprehend. One of these claims must be false and ill-founded. If the authority of the great Head of the church to fix the ministry as a permanent provision in the economy of Christianity is valid, then the assumption of the Delegates is a bold and profane invasion of the authority of our Lord; if their claim is legal, then we maintain that the Bible is of no authority; but human opinion is the origin of all power, and natural, not revealed, religion, is that which we are bound to espouse.

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY, AND THE QUALIFICATIONS WHICH PREPARE FOR ITS SUCCESSFUL DISCHARGE, ARE DIRECTLY DIVINE.

We mean by this, that the election, the anointing, the commission, and the gifts which unite to authorize and qualify a Christian to discharge the duties of the ministry, are from God; not remotely, but immediately: that there is a difference between the grace that gives piety, and “the grace to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ:” that the call to “this office and ministry” is super-added to the privileges and purity of personal piety, and none can lawfully enter it, or efficiently discharge its duties, but such as are called of God. The evidence of this is clear. *Called, ordained, made, intrusted, sent forth,*

Ambassadors, Stewards of the mysteries of God, are terms employed to designate the inauguration of Ministers into their office, and the dependent manner in which they hold it. Hence our Lord said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and *ordained* you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." St. Paul designates himself "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, *called* to be an Apostle, *separated* unto the Gospel of God;" and adds, "But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, nor was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." And again, "Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath *made us* able Ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." "Let a man so account of us, as of the *Ministers* of Christ, and *Stewards* of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in *Stewards*, that a man be found faithful." "For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a *dispensation* of the Gospel is *committed* unto me." "According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was *committed* to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, *putting me* into the ministry." Lest it should be thought that these terms are peculiar to the apostolic office, we find St. Paul using similar language respecting those who occupied inferior stations. "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the Elders of the church." When they were in his presence, amongst other things he says to them, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath *made you overseers*, to feed the church of God, which HE hath purchased with His own blood." To Timothy, he says, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the *gift of God*, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. That good thing which was *committed* unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."

This View harmonizes with the Ends of the Gospel.

These passages, which might be greatly multiplied, clearly show that the persons who are really the Ministers of the Gospel are not so by the appointment of any human authority, but by the ordination and call of God. This is in perfect harmony with the nature of the Christian dispensation, and the ends it proposes. It is the bestowment of spiritual blessings, the call of sinners to repentance, and the edification of those who believe in Christ. This represents it as pre-eminently divine. Religion, in its progress through the world, is the work of God, the evolutions of His government, the operations of His grace, the exercise of His pardoning mercy, the display and offer of the Divine atonement, the ministry of His Spirit, and the extension of His kingdom. It is not likely that a work of this purely religious and

spiritual character would be left to the force of human reason, the arts of secular eloquence, and the accident of men choosing the office of the ministry as a matter of mere taste. Besides, from the peculiarly divine nature of religion, this kind of instrumentality could not accomplish it. The end proposed is to bring sinners to God, to humble them in penitence, to invest them with Christian privileges, to regenerate the heart, to raise them to life and joy, to dress them in the robes of righteousness, and to lead them beside the still waters of spiritual consolation. As the end is purely spiritual and religious, the instrumentality employed must agree to the design. Hence, if a person called to this office is previously occupied in secular pursuits, the election to this trust, the elevation of the mind, the tone of piety necessary, the devotion of the soul to these particular duties, and a separation to, and the energetic discharge of, the functions of the office, will give a perfectly new turn to the tastes and tendencies of the soul. The heart cannot be made the depository of this "*heavenly treasure*," and the lips, the channel of conveying it to others, without the person so engaged being in a peculiar manner and degree the Minister, the Ambassador, and the servant of God.

Animus of the Opponents of the Office.

With this prerogative of Deity in the appointment of his ministry, the principle of the Delegates directly interferes. It claims the "right of interference of the members of the church in the regulation of all its affairs;" and, consequently, in this. Explained and elucidated by other parts of these famous speeches, and, indeed, the whole of the proceedings of the Association, we cannot be mistaken as to their bearing on this branch of the question. These levellers have repeatedly stated, both in conversation and in print, that they have no objection against the private character of their Ministers, it is only against their public and ministerial character that they object. As men and as Christians, they allow that they possess an average share of piety, charity, amiability, and virtue. But as *Ministers*, they object to them as knaves, tyrants, usurpers, oppressors; and all the epithets of reproach and scandal which the language can furnish, are selected to hold up—not the man, but—the Minister to the contempt and hatred of the world.

This shows the *animus* of the opposition most fully. It is against that *official* character in which the Head of the church has clothed his Ministers, that the Association levels its maledictions. These gentlemen, of equal rights, do credit to that part of the character of Ministers which is just on a level with their own, their humanity and their Christian graces and virtues; but when they appear clad in robes of office, though they have been placed upon them by the hands of their Lord and Saviour, they at once attempt to tear them to shreds, for the purpose of reducing the wearer to an equality with themselves. Considered in no higher a light than as matter of mere justice, there is

something extremely unfair in this. A Minister is nothing but a Minister; he is placed on an isolated spot in the great social system; he is debarred from commercial speculation and pursuits, and that wealth and consideration which this class of the community often acquire; he is shut out from the walks of science, literature, and the arts, as a profession, and can only engage in these things as an anonymous contributor to the periodicals; he cannot engage in the strife of political debate, and, however talented, raise himself to the station and honour of a legislator: and yet, he is an object of envy; and envy by those who have the world open before them,—all its wealth, its honours, its professions, and its fame. The ways of God are all equal; and when it pleases him to place some official honour, of a religious nature, on Ministers, he exacts an equivalent. They are reduced to a nonentity, in other respects: their office, honours, and persons, are equally despised in the world.

OFFICE NOT TO BE SURRENDERED.

But it is not in this light we consider the subject. Any injustice done to Ministers, as men, merely, is of trifling importance. If they are despised, scorned, lampooned; if they are held up to reproach, contempt, and ridicule; if they are saved the trouble of exercising any will of their own, by taking such things as are prepared for them; if they are made the sport of strife, and rocked in the storm of angry contention; they must make up their minds to endure all this. They are called to recollect who was "*despised and rejected of men,*" and kindle their own love and zeal by meditating on the example of the Apostles, martyrs, and confessors of old. But their office they have no *power* to surrender. If they are weary of bearing the cross, let them settle the matter with their Divine Master; and, if he permit, give up the deposit they received from Him into His own hands again. But they have no *right* to give it into the hands of a greedy, ambitious, and rampant democracy. Like a sandy desert, it is always absorbing, and never satisfied. Whilst a good soil drinks in the dews and rains of heaven, and makes a grateful return of smiling corn, or blooming and fragrant pasturage; the arid wilderness receives the blessings of heaven, but continues thirsty and barren still. So it is with our radicalism; the wisdom, the piety, the gifts, the labours of the true Ministers of God descend like refreshing rain on the simple of heart, the devout, the believing, and the pure; whilst they impart no fertility to those who, instead of receiving the message and the grace with gratitude, imagine that the instrument is too much honoured in his employment; and, refusing to receive God's gifts at his hands, remain in a state of barrenness and misery.

As we have taken leave to tell Ministers that they have no right to surrender their commission into the hands of "*the people,*" so we tell the Association that they have not only no right to demand it, but that the demand itself demonstrates their vanity, assurance, and

unblushing impudence. Pray, gentlemen of the Delegation, did *you* or God put the Wesleyan Ministers into their office? If you, in the exercise of your Association functions, placed this power in the hands of the Preachers, then, according to your orator and lawgiver, you have the right to annul. But if it has been received from a higher, a heavenly source, you have no right to demand it; it does not belong to you, it does not belong to its possessors,—it belongs to God, who gave it. If you object to the directly Divine call of the Wesleyan ministry, and attribute it to a mere human agency, then, we ask, Was that agency yours? Did you, gentlemen of the Association, raise up this ministry, as you require the surrender of its powers into your own hands? No. Instrumentally, it is the ministry trained and raised up by John Wesley; and, since his days, by those who were taught in his school. It is a modest request, most assuredly, made by the Association; namely, that about thirteen hundred Ministers, belonging to the Wesleyan Connexion, who profess to have received their call and commission, in the first degree, from the Head of the church, and, in the second, from the Conference, should humbly surrender their trust to them, and take it up again, under such “interferences” as they shall choose to exercise, and such conditions as they may think well to attach to it. “And pray,” a stranger from another world would ask, “who are these gentlemen? They must be persons of great consideration, great wisdom, great piety, great age, and great numbers.” So every one would imagine from the demand. And who are they, in fact? The airy and floating particles which have exhaled from a body of three hundred and sixty thousand professing Christians; and, being too light for adhesion to the solid and compact body to which they were attached, flew, by an instinctive impulse, to the sound of discord, and united in the Manchester Tabernacle, as a sand-hill, to receive the homage of the nodding Alps. But are they particles compared with the Alpine mountains, when put in contrast with the Wesleyan body? We do not disparage them; and all we choose to say is, It is too much for *such as they are* to demand the surrender of the Wesleyan ministry into their hands.

Indeed, the proposition itself is another proof of the insanity of faction. As if the assembled disaffection of the Connexion had a right to demand that which no set of men have the right to give—the ministry; to be fashioned after their own democratic notions. We beg to tell these gentlemen that their kindness will be dispensed with; that they will be most assuredly saved the trouble of being the conservators of the Wesleyan ministry; and that there is no intention in those who hold the office to submit it to their tempering and modifying capacity. It has been safe hitherto in the hands and under the guidance of its Divine Author. Imbued and animated by His Spirit, it has proved itself vital and powerful. By the blessing which has been upon it, it has been instrumental in leading myriads of lost sinners to Christ, and spreading scriptural religion largely through the

four quarters of the world. We know *what it has been* in the hands of God, we know not *what it would be* in the hands of a democracy ; and we are not prepared to make the exchange.

MINISTERS CALLED TO BE FAITHFUL.

In the mean time, the order of Heaven's law is not altered by the arrogant claims and assumptions of the Manchester Delegates. The true Minister, called of God to his employment, has still the right to preach the unadulterated Gospel, without let or hinderance. He is obliged, on the principles and conditions of his calling, to adhere to the truth, and not to surrender that truth to any class of men on earth. We believe that this is the position in which the Wesleyan Ministers stand at this moment. They are put on their trial, by the circumstances of the times. The current runs against the just rights and great responsibilities of their stewardship. Religion is against the proud, self-sufficient, and levelling spirit of the age ; and no wonder if that spirit is against it. Decency and old prejudices will not allow a direct attack on the doctrines and precepts of the Bible ; and the men who are their prototypes and heralds are singled out for assault. Great consequences hang on this contest, not only as regards this age, but ages to come. The truth never failed to support its firm and inflexible adherents. God never countenanced turn-coats and cowards. The changes going on in this mutable world, in commerce, legislation, and arrangements of power, cannot alter the relations of man to God, the truth of the Bible, the immutable nature of religion, or the obligations of both Pastors and people. That which has been deposited with the Wesleyan ministry from the beginning, is the Gospel of God, our Saviour ; the attempt of this fanaticism is, to wrest this precious boon from their hands, and to make its administration agree to the views and feelings of a ranting and haughty democracy. If it is fashioned to that, it must lose its present character ; and the responsibility is with those who hold the trust. We have no doubt they will be faithful. Personal abuse and calumny, the suspicion of their principles and character, the loss of their temporal support, by the "*stoppage of the supplies,*" nay, their banishment into rude and distant climes, or, if it should please God, imprisonment at home, they can endure ; but let no man touch their *Divine charter*. They hold it on a superhuman tenure ; and that array of party and brutal violence, which, by its numbers, would wrest it out of their hands, is an outrage on the law, economy, and grace of the great Head of the church, who has deposited the Gospel with his servants, not as a subject of party litigation and strife, but to be simply, faithfully, and affectionately dispensed, for the salvation of a lost and ruined world.—*Illuminator*, No. 11.

LETTER FROM THE REV. BARNABAS SHAW, SEN.,
WESLEYAN MISSIONARY IN SOUTH AFRICA, TO
THE REV. THOMAS JACKSON, PRESIDENT OF THE
CONFERENCE, CONCERNING THE "FLY-SHEETS."

Rondebosch, April 12th, 1850.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Fifty years ago, you and I were Yorkshire lads, neither of us far from the banks of the noble river Humber. You told me once of having lost your little dog at Elloughton,—a circumstance I have always remembered. Now God has raised you again to the head of our great Connexion, I congratulate you on this occasion, and pray that our heavenly Father may give you wisdom to direct, and patience to bear every trial you may have to endure.

But to the point in hand,—as Mr. G—— from India will soon leave us. The "Fly-Sheets," so called, have arrived in this colony. I had heard of them before; but now, having seen them, I am convinced that "an enemy hath done this." I see three portraits before me in this pamphlet. Of Mr. Griffith I know nothing: Mr. Everett, when I was last in England, helped me at many Missionary Meetings, and with good effect: Mr. Dunn, a brother Missionary, I knew also, and often took sweet counsel with him. Surely *they* could not write such documents! From what I see of them, no Christian man, much less a Minister of the Gospel, could have any hand in them. Let every man purge himself from this abominable pamphlet, as I, and all my brethren here, can do,—having no lot or part in the so-called "Fly-Sheets," either directly or indirectly, in any way or shape whatever.

The insinuations against the Mission Secretaries are most horrid; but ably answered by Messrs. Farmer, Scott, &c. Now, I have had an opportunity of knowing the Secretaries for many years, as it is thirty-four years this day since I first saw Table-Mountain. In the year 1815 I became acquainted with the Missionary Committee. All the members of that Committee have shown me kindness; yet I could always discern a watchful eye over the Mission Fund, of which I highly approved, so that the Gospel might be more extensively spread.

On my first going to Namacqualand, I built my own dwelling-house with my own hands. I made a table for myself, of excellent granite; and another for Mrs. Shaw, of the same material. After sleeping for some time on the ground, I made a bedstead, of capital poplar; but, having no chairs, we sat on boxes, or anything we could obtain. Yet we never murmured, and never were more happy. Now we have advanced to a more civilized way of life. In the year 1843, on leaving England the third time, the Secretaries allowed me to purchase suitable furniture; so that, in old age, I may have some of the comforts of life. I do not know that any of the lay-members ever found fault with this; but, even now, if they will examine the accounts, by looking back, and think that I have anything superfluous, and let me know

the particulars, I will send them to the first auction after such information, and remit the money to the Chairman.

In those marvellous "Sheets" which have lately arrived here, I see awful insinuations against Dr. Bunting, and even against Dr. Newton. Robert Newton was in the Howden Circuit in 1802: I was then fourteen or fifteen years of age, and heard him once at the old Dissenters' chapel, South Cave. I felt great reverence and love for him then, and it has been increasing ever since that time. I had thought that not a man in the world would ever say anything against him: a man beloved by every true Methodist who ever heard of him, and by thousands upon thousands of individuals belonging to other churches. If our old matrons in Yorkshire, and the thousands of little children who have learnt to lisp the name of Robert Newton, could lay hold of the "Fly-Sheet" writers, I really cannot say what they would do with them: I am sure they would punish them, in one way or other, with the utmost severity. O that I could but hear his voice once more! If all the finest-toned organs in the universe could be brought together, and harmonize their notes, I had rather hear the voice of Robert Newton reading his text, "Come over into Macedonia and help us," than the whole of the musical instruments put together. May our heavenly Father bless him with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus! Please give my love to him when you see him, and tell him I have not forgotten his preaching out of doors at Burton-Agnes, when the chapel was opened, and the old woman responded to him so heartily while thus engaged.

Then, as to Dr. Bunting:—I began to know him in 1815 more than before; and I saw and felt that he was, and would be, one of the best friends of our Missions. There were several of us young men at that time, comparatively raw and inexperienced, in London, about to proceed to different parts of the wide world. Who then paid us any attention, (the other fathers, I think, are all gone,) and kindly took us by the hand? Who took us to his own house as a father would do his children, and gave us advice and encouragement? Who prevailed on good father Benson to give us a most appropriate charge at our ordination? Who went down to Gravesend in the depth of winter to see us on board the ship? Who commended us so affectionately to God, and wept over us at our departure? It was Jabez Bunting.* And can we forget those acts of kindness? No, rather let my right hand forget its cunning. Let me ask further, Who has been labouring since that time (1815) with the greatest assiduity in the cause of our widening Mission field? Who has stood at the helm of our Mission ship for so many years, regardless of every storm? Who shows his affection to Missionaries now, whether young or old, on their arrival in London, in order to embark? Who accompanies them on their departure as far as he can? Who gives them his last

* You well know it shows no disrespect in me to say, as we did formerly, Adam Clarke, Samuel Bradburn, &c., with Jabez and Robert.

and friendly advice? Who offers the last fervent prayer? Who gives the final farewell to the Missionaries, their wives, and children? It is Jabez Bunting; and we all revere, and love, and pray for him, as a beloved Minister and father in Christ Jesus.

Yet these revered men of God, Dr. Bunting and Dr. Newton, are marked out to be shot.* However, I have just thought that there are some Bushmen in England, as well as in Africa. The Bushmen hide themselves in secret places, that they may privately shoot their poisoned arrows. So the "Fly-Sheet" men are afraid to come to the light. They can shoot far, for their arrows have reached the Cape of Good Hope; but as it respects Jabez Bunting and Robert Newton, they fall powerless. In attempting to shoot those men of God, they have missed the mark. Those two soaring eagles are in a region by far too high for any poisoned "Fly-Sheet" arrow. They can say, "God is our refuge and strength: therefore will we not fear."

How widely different the late Daniel Isaac acted when he believed that there were many things in the church highly improper! He wrote the "Ecclesiastical Claims," and sent his work into the world with his own name and profession attached to it. There, though we may not approve of every sentence, yet we see uprightness, integrity, and fearless intrepidity. Daniel Isaac never hid himself under a mask. Let the writers in the dark hear Daniel Isaac in his preface to the work just named: "And what is this Daniel Isaac who volunteers his services in behalf of the Dissenters?" He will anticipate all inquiries by an open avowal. Know, then, that this said Daniel Isaac is an Itinerant Preacher in the Wesleyan Connexion. The author is a Dissenter in principle. He is sensible, however, that many sentiments contained in his book have no place in the creed of a respectable number of his brethren; and as some of them have written him on the subject of publishing opinions which are not generally held by the religious body to which he belongs, under an idea that the public might impute his peculiar notions to all the Preachers, and thus include them in the censure, if censure be incurred, which is due only to himself; he wishes it to be distinctly understood, that in publishing this piece, he is not the organ of his brethren in the ministry, and that the praise or blame which may be awarded belongs to himself alone.

"The liberty pleaded for in these sheets is not a liberty in behalf of individuals to infringe upon the rights of societies. Every member of a society ought to conform to its regulations, or quietly withdraw. Imposition is more hateful in individuals than in communities, as it is more unreasonable for a hundred to yield to one, than for one to yield to a hundred. This is so generally admitted, that factious persons seldom forget to plead that they are acting in behalf of the multitude, and that their wishes are the wishes of the people."

How forcible are right words! If the present agitators are Wes-

* I mention these because of their age and standing in the Connexion. The other Secretary brethren need fear nothing.

leyan Ministers, why did they not come forward in an open, manly, constitutional manner, and state what they had to say before the Conference?

Pardon me, my dear brother, in writing so much in great haste, and on a subject so unpleasant; but I felt it to be a duty to add my testimony to those of others.

Yours truly,

BARNABAS SHAW.

AN AGITATOR AND HIS CHARACTER.

MR. JAMES NICHOLS, an Attorney's clerk, was, in 1835, one of the most violent of Dr. Warren's partisans, and wrote a pamphlet in favour of that new species of ecclesiastical democracy which seemed to be the choice of a few of the dissidents. For the principles which he avowed on that occasion, and for the line of conduct which he then pursued, he was expelled from the Old Connexion, in which he had been a Local Preacher. When Mr. Eckett had completed the platform of his new "Association," Mr. Nichols became a member of it, and was promoted to office. But he soon made it manifest, that the "Association" was too young to endure the presence, at the same time, of two such ardent spirits as Messrs. Eckett and Nichols, both of whom "loved to have the pre-eminence;" and the contention between them issued in the summary expulsion of the latter gentleman.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Nichols sought to be associated with his former religious friends in the Second London Circuit; and, having evinced mildness of spirit and gentleness of demeanour, he was allowed to become a private member of Society. Believing himself to be possessed of talents that might be rendered profitable to some portion of the church, after a season he asked and obtained leave to be again employed as a Local Preacher. Having lately made himself prominent among the leading agitators of Wesleyan Methodism, he has publicly declared that, on his re-admission to Society, he gave no pledge of his future peaceable conduct; and has denounced our periodical as false and calumnious, because it stated he had. We therefore deem it just to ourselves, and to him, to print a letter which, in addition to verbal pledges given to the Ministers of the Queen-Street Circuit, Mr. Nichols, when seeking re-admission to the office of Local Preacher, voluntarily sent to the Rev. Joseph Fowler, the Superintendent. If Mr. Nichols's public declaration was based on the mere quibble that the pledge we previously stated he gave was false, because it was given, not *at the time* of his re-admission to the Society, but on his re-admission to the office of Local Preacher, then we leave it to our readers to judge, whether a positive denial of having given a pledge, without any explanation whatever, was ingenuous and honest. In our judgment, it accords more with Mr. Grosjean's standard of truth, than with that which the holy Scriptures supply.

" VITTORIA PLACE, ST. PANCRAS NEW CHURCH,
" December 20th, 1842.

" SIR,—I am sorry again to have to obtrude on your attention the subject of our interview of this morning ; but you will, I trust, excuse me for being a little anxious to satisfy you, and the friends who stand officially connected with the Circuit, in some respects as to the past, but specially in reference to the future. I cannot help feeling that my expulsion from the *Association, as well as* from the Old Connexion, places me in an unfavourable light with those who know little or nothing of the circumstances of the *latter* transaction ; but I am quite satisfied that, on a hearing of the whole case, you, or any other impartial person, would not regard that as a proper ground of objection to my coming on the Plan, or holding any office in this Circuit. I should be glad, however, to satisfy you, and everybody else in the Circuit, as to my present views and feelings in regard to the discipline and government of this Connexion ; and I have no hesitation in stating that, in *becoming again a member of Society*, I feel myself bound by the laws and usages of the Connexion, as promulged or explained by the Minutes of 1835 ; and further, that I shall, as far as possible, abstain from any interference in matters of church-government, and studiously avoid anything, and everything, which would be in the least inimical to the peace and prosperity of Methodism.

" I have never, hitherto, *sought* any appointment to office in the church, nor do I now desire office for the sake of office ; but feeling, strongly, that I am called to preach the Gospel, I deem it imperative upon me to offer myself to this Circuit. I make no terms, I have no right to seek to make any ; but shall be content to be placed upon trial, or otherwise, as you and the brethren may deem proper. I believe that several of the friends where I have formerly preached in the Circuit would be glad to see me again : and I do trust that I should be found to be, by the Divine blessing, a help, rather than a hinderance, to the work of God in the Circuit.

" Apologising for taking up so much of your time,

" I am, Sir,

" Your most obedient servant,

" JAMES NICHOLS."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COLCHESTER.—For us to insert lengthy articles is generally inconvenient, as our space is small ; and in this case it is scarcely necessary, as the " Expelled " are exposing both themselves and their party.

T. HONEYCOMB.—Since the man's " character " has ceased to be of public importance,

" Nor further seek his merits to disclose,
Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode."

No. IX.

PRICE 1½d.

THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

SEPTEMBER, 1850.

THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST CONFERENCE OF 1850,
AND ITS DECISIONS.

THE Conference of this year has for some months past been looked to with considerable interest by all parties connected with Wesleyan Methodism. The disaffected have professed to look forward to it for obtaining, by compulsive means, the revolutionary changes they are seeking; and the firmly-attached friends and supporters of Constitutional Methodism have thought of it as their defence and security against continued annoyance and disturbance from violent agitators. The Conference has been held, and its decisions declared; and we deem it right to express our views of the character of the Conference, and of the decisions which it has adopted. Before we do this, however, we have a word or two to say on the Meetings of the Connexional Committees.

THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEES.

These Committees are composed, as is well known, of Ministers and Laymen, in about equal numbers; and this year the attendance of influential Lay-gentlemen from different parts of the kingdom at the Meetings of these Committees was more numerous than in almost any preceding year. This was occasioned by their resolute determination to uphold the system of ecclesiastical government and evangelical agency which they have espoused, and to resist any attempt which may be made to invade and overthrow that system by the unchristian proceedings of pretended Reformers. The spirit manifested in all the Meetings was most satisfactory and encouraging. Almost every Report

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presented by the several Institutions and departments in Methodism indicated progress and success. Not only had the Connexional Funds generally been sustained in undiminished amounts, amidst the systematic efforts made by the disaffected to reduce and extinguish them, but some of them had been considerably augmented; and so far from there being any apprehension of inability to sustain them in future, the strongest confidence in the true-hearted in Methodism to do so was expressed. Nay, more, new and additional Funds were instituted, and commenced with a liberality scarcely paralleled in Methodism, except in the Centenary year of its existence. When, in the Meeting of the Contingent Fund Committee, for instance, cases for relief were presented from Circuits in which unfaithful Stewards had withheld from Ministers pecuniary supplies, that they might starve them into agreement with themselves, and force them to violate the pledges they had given before God and man, a SPECIAL FUND was immediately proposed for the relief of such cases; and though considerable sums had been previously contributed at the District-Meetings by several of the gentlemen present, for the upholding of the ordinary Contingent Fund, yet at this Meeting they urged the commencement of a Special Fund, and most promptly and generously gave their £100, £50, £20, £10, and £5, towards such Special Fund.

At the Meeting of the EDUCATION COMMITTEE, held on the premises of the Normal and Practising Schools at Westminster, it was reported, that to carry out with efficiency the plans agreed upon, £4,000 would be required in addition to the amount already provided, when doubts respecting the sufficiency of the sum said to be required were expressed, and calculations were entered into by a generous Lay-gentleman, to show that £10,000 would be necessary; and towards that amount £1,500 were contributed by three individuals.

MORE CHAPELS had been built and enlarged during the past year than in any preceding year, and with less proportion of debts remaining upon them; and more WESLEYAN PUBLICATIONS had been sold. NEW KINGSWOOD SCHOOL had obtained subscriptions to the amount of more than £3,000. The MISSIONARY INCOME for the year had been increased more than £7,000. The Meeting for the COMMITTEE of REVIEW presented such a scene of assembled Ministers and Laymen, as has seldom, if ever, been equalled in Methodism, or in any other Christian community. The groundless and unprincipled accusations brought against the Executive of the Missionary Society by dissatisfied parties were fearlessly met, and their errors and falsehoods so fully exposed, that, notwithstanding the attempts made by one or two individuals in the Meeting to produce the opposite result, the vast crowd in the large room of the Centenary Hall passed a vote of unqualified confidence in the Executive, against which not a single hand was raised in opposition.

The disturbers of Methodism have endeavoured to produce distrust in the minds of the people by misrepresentations of the *exclusive* power

of its Ministers over its agency and funds ; and, on this ground, have publicly demanded Lay-Delegation to the Conference, and Lay-Officers exclusively for all the funds of the Connexion ; but an unbiassed attendant at the preparatory Committees would perceive, that in all that really relates locally to the people, and in all pecuniary transactions, the laity have as much practical authority and power as the Ministers ; and that, with the exception of the investigation of the character of Ministers, and their appointments to Circuits, (and in these the voice of the people is not disregarded,) the Conference has little left for it to do on its exclusive authority. The Lay-gentlemen were active and attentive in the preliminary meetings of Committees, and in all there were unmistakeable signs of the presence of God with his servants. In fact, they will long be memorable in Methodism as seasons of spiritual refreshing and enjoyment.

THE CONFERENCE.

The Conference opened, as usual, on the last Wednesday in July, and was more numerously attended than any preceding Conference. The deep interest felt in the questions raised, and the means which had been employed to disturb the societies through the past year, produced in the minds of many Ministers the earnest desire to attend the Conference, and rendered it expedient that as many should assemble together for counsel as practicable. More than six hundred, we understand, were present at the sittings, and were parties to the proceedings. The first act of the Conference, after the devotional services of singing, reading the Scriptures, and prayer, is to fill up the vacancies that have occurred in what is usually described as the "Legal Hundred." This is done partly by election on the ground of seniority, and partly by nomination and election from amongst those who have travelled fourteen years. It is in the latter cases that the spirit of the Conference is most early manifested. This year the individuals elected were well known to be firm constitutional Wesleyan Ministers ; and the sentiments they expressed on fidelity to Methodism, at their election, were responded to with a heartiness, and to an extent, that at once made known the unanimity of the Ministers assembled in their views of the subjects which were likely to come before them. Of this unanimity we had no doubt before the Conference declared it by votes. It had been demonstrated by the disciplinary acts of the previous Conference. Before then, we had some doubts in our minds whether, through the insidious and malignant conduct of men, who had endeavoured to sow the seeds of envy and discontent in the minds of brethren, there would not appear difficulties and dissensions that would prevent harmonious co-operation for the maintenance and extension of the work of God ; but the almost unanimous proceedings of the Conference of 1849, and the ready and decisive Declaration of the principles and intended conduct of nearly the whole body of Ministers, since issued, removed from our minds

all doubts and fears as to any disunion among Wesleyan Ministers. And with regard to their union in fidelity to Christ, to Methodism, and to one another, we are free to acknowledge, we looked forward to the Conference of this year with greater confidence than we did towards that of the former year. Had the Ministers of the Connexion shown themselves to be disunited in such times of agitations and disturbances in the Societies as we have lately passed, the result would have been most disastrous. But let the Ministry be united in its principles, and in its conduct, and, under the blessing of God, the cause they live to promote will certainly prosper. The unity so apparent at the former Conference has been continued, strengthened, and established at this. It was seen in the election of the President, and in every important decision which followed. On no question was the Conference materially divided in its votes. There were differences in opinion freely expressed; and those opinions were earnestly discussed and advocated; but "the God who maketh men to be of one mind in a house" so directed and overruled the minds of the assembly, that the minority readily yielded to the majority; and, after full discussion on the subjects proposed, both parties were found united in their votes.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS.

One of the first Questions proposed in the Conference, respecting every Minister in the Connexion, after the election and appointment of officers for the year, and after the inquiries respecting candidates for the ministry, and the deaths that have occurred in it, is, "*Are there any objections to Brother —— as to his moral and religious character, belief, and teaching of Wesleyan doctrines, and as to the observance and enforcement of our discipline?*" This question, it will be seen, is vital in its connexion with the purity of the ministry; and, if faithfully answered, will bring out the character and conduct of every Wesleyan Minister. And, on these accounts, numerous and most unreasonable objections have been urged against it. The Conference has been denounced as the "Inquisition," and an individual Minister prosecuting inquiries as a "grand inquisitor;" and parties in danger of being detected through it have pronounced condemnation upon it, as "un-English," "anti-Wesleyan," and "unscriptural." But, surely, free and friendly inquiry with a ministerial brotherhood is more Protestant-like, more English, and more scriptural, when assembled for the avowed purpose of mutual oversight, and one of that brotherhood is not "of good report," than unexpressed suspicion, though no formal and specific charge may have been preferred against him. The Conference—a synod of Presbyters, in ecclesiastical form—has pursued the mode of fraternal inquiry from the beginning, and must continue to do so, if it would maintain its own purity, and, through itself, the purity of the Connexion.

On the proposal of the above question by this year's Conference,

objections were named against some of the Brethren, for their violation of promise, and for infidelity with respect to Wesleyan discipline. Upon those of a private nature, and which involve private interests only, and the obvious rules of morality, we shall not dwell; but some of them are intimately associated with the ecclesiastical discipline of the Connexion, and have already been made public by parties misrepresenting and denouncing the acts of the Conference; and these we feel called upon to notice.

One of the first of such cases that arose, was that of the Rev. THOMAS ROWLAND, of Yarmouth. He, having been chosen to take part in the proceedings of a Minor District-Meeting, had put in at the Meeting a document, alleging reasons why he could not concur with his brethren, which document contained severe and unwarrantable reflections on the principles and administration of the Conference, and which had immediately afterwards been published and extensively circulated, to the serious injury of the work of God in Norfolk. The following is a copy of the reasons contained in the document, as it was read to the Conference:—

I cannot concur in an act which will lead to the expulsion of these Christian gentlemen, from the following reasons: Because,

1. I believe Jesus Christ himself would not expel such persons.
2. Because the appeal to a Minor District-Meeting was not made by their own Pastor, who must be the best judge as to whether they deserved expulsion.
3. Because they were unanimously acquitted by their own juries.
4. Because, if the seventeen Trustees and Leaders who tried them were all wrong in their judgment, we five may be so.
5. Because the work of God would be seriously injured, and many precious souls probably perish, through such expulsions,—souls for whom Christ died.
6. Because their expulsion may lead to the most awful consequences in my own Circuit and other Circuits.
7. Because Wesley, though he condemned and agitated the Established Church, remained in it; and, when he expelled any one from the Methodist Society, he did it only in accordance with Methodist rules.
8. Because the wrong-doings of brethren prominent in the agitation have been occasioned, I believe, by the expulsion of Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith; and, at the proper time and place, I am prepared to show that, in our zeal to put down the “Fly-Sheet” evils, we unintentionally violated the laws by which we are governed; so that every Minister among us, concerned in the matter, *ought to do the penitent!*
9. Because, in regard to what may be erroneously promoting the agitation among us, *as it began among ourselves*, we ought at least to regard our Saviour’s injunction respecting the tares and the wheat, to “let both grow together till the harvest.”

It appeared in evidence, that Mr. Rowland was not only present at the former Conference, but also acquiesced, by vote and otherwise, in the acts of discipline named in the document; that it was drawn up *before* the commencement of the sittings of the Minor District-Meeting, whose decisions it prejudices and condemns; and that it had almost immediately afterwards been published, at length, both in Mr. Kaye’s “Times” and in a separate form, to the injury of Methodism in Yarmouth, and the neighbouring Circuits. And, though it was stated

that some of the professed Reformers of Methodism were dishonourably secreted in a room adjoining that in which the Minor District-Meeting was held, to hear by stealth what was said and done, yet it is very difficult to believe, that they could in such a situation be able to supply a copy of the reasons, in the order, and at the length, in which they were issued from the press.* Without, however, dwelling upon the inconsistent and suspicious circumstances of the past, the Conference inquired if the sentiments expressed in the document were now held by Mr. Rowland ; or whether he had since seen that he was in error ; or was now prepared to show that the Conference had, as he had stated, violated its own laws? Mr. Rowland declared he held the principles expressed in the document which had been read, and, with the exception of the phraseology at the close of the eighth reason, he felt no regret for what he had written. The Conference, to give him time for reflection, postponed the consideration of his case for some days : when, after another and an extended hearing of it, from himself and from others, it was proposed that he should apologise to the Conference for the manner in which he had reflected upon its disciplinary acts,—be removed from the Norfolk District, where his conduct had been so mischievous,—that he should be declared incapable of taking the superintendency of a Circuit whilst he retained his present views,—that he should be admonished from the Chair, and not be allowed to take any part, as a member, in a Minor District-Meeting, for the present. After this proposal, further time was given to Mr. Rowland, and his personal friends were advised to converse with him upon his conduct and position ; but he resisted all friendly counsel ; and, when called upon again to answer, he perseveringly declared he had no apology to offer, except what he had previously made. When requested to repeat *that*, so that the Conference might judge whether it was sufficient, he obstinately refused to do so, stating, as a reason, some unexplained circumstances which had since then transpired. He was remonstrated with on this refusal ; and it was urged that what was right for him to do in this respect some days before must be right for him to do now ; but it was evident that he had previously determined on the course he would pursue ; and so, on his refusal to apologise, or retract, the former proposal was repeated, with the addition that for the next year he be made a Supernumerary. A resolution embodying the proposal was passed unanimously, with one exception, by the Conference. Mr. Rowland was admonished from the Chair, and was made a Supernu-

* There is, also, as it will be seen, at the close of the 8th reason, a phrase borrowed from a slanderous and malignant article in a certain weekly journal, on the speech of a venerable and beloved Minister, in which were ascribed to him the words, " I hope to *do* the penitent before I die," but which he never uttered ; and following the reasons, it was stated, by way of bringing into derision the President's pamphlet, that it was by the reading of it he had been led to entertain the views expressed in them.

merary. Mr. Rowland and his friends have since denounced this act of discipline as unjustly severe, and have endeavoured to represent the requirement of his removal from Norfolk as arbitrary and oppressive ; but it must be remembered that Mr. Rowland is still a Wesleyan Minister,—that he is supported from the funds of the Connexion ; and that it would be most unreasonable and inconsistent for him to be supported in a county where, not only now, but also at a former period of disturbance, he has been the instrument of great injury to Methodism, and where his presence and influence would be likely to aid the unchristian efforts of those who employ themselves to promote strifes and divisions in the Societies.

Another case which has been falsely set forth, and which has required the exercise of Conference discipline, is that of the REV. JAMES BROMLEY, of Bath. It is well known that in former periods of disturbance, he was found placing himself in hostility to the Conference, and publicly condemning its Laws and Regulations. He was the voluntary advocate and avowed defender of Dr. Warren,—he intruded himself into the District-Meeting at Manchester, contrary to known law and usage, and has so conducted himself on several occasions as to incur the expressed and recorded censure of the Conference, as the following quotation from its journal for the year 1835 will show.

JAMES BROMLEY.—Complaints from various quarters having been preferred against Mr. Bromley, in reference to numerous alleged instances of his rash and injurious connexion, by words and acts, with the agitations of the past year : after a long and careful inquiry, the following facts appear to the Conference either as admitted or proved by sufficient evidence, viz. :—His refusal of help to the Missionary cause in his own Circuit for a whole year, on the ground, too, of his personal disapprobation of an appointment which the previous Conference had deliberately made, thus indirectly abetting the efforts of the agitators to “stop the supplies :” his improper and unconstitutional conduct in going, without the previous consent of the Manchester District-Committee, to its Special Meeting on Dr. Warren’s case, with the intention of acting as his counsel : his violent and mischievous printed letter to Mr. Newton, in which he did not confine himself to *self-defence*, but introduced general matters of a highly-inflammatory and injurious tendency : his proceedings in the Leaders’-Meeting and Quarterly-Meeting of the York Circuit, in a manner highly inconsistent with his duty as a Methodist Preacher, and especially with the duty of a Helper : his having acted in such a manner as to give encouragement to a considerable extent to the proceedings of Dr. Warren, and the Grand Central Association : his tacitly allowing members of the York Society, and various other persons, to take as partisans what they considered *his* cause, and apparently to resist the properly-constituted authorities of that Circuit : the occasional indiscretion of his conversations in certain companies, and the violence of some of his observations on the matters in dispute during the year.

In these instances the Conference judges that the conduct of Mr. Bromley has been highly rash and culpable, and that such conduct is calculated to promote discord and disaffection among our people, and to injure the work of God. The Conference has, however, heard, with a considerable degree of satisfaction, Mr. Bromley’s acknowledgment of misconduct and imprudence, his avowal of altered opinions and feelings in reference to some of the above transactions, and his solemn promise

that, in future, his brethren shall not have cause to distrust or censure him. Yet the Conference further requires that Mr. Bromley shall *engage* that he will abstain from all acts and expressions of opposition to the Conference, or to the constitution of our community; that he will cordially unite with us in a firm and faithful support of the decisions of the Conference and the existing system of Methodism; that he will refrain from such intercourse with the members of the Grand Central Association as might be fairly construed by our people into a want of unreserved and cordial attachment to the principles, institutions, and interests of the Connexion; and that he do now explicitly declare, in the presence of the Conference, his unhesitating recognition, not only of the supreme jurisdiction of the Conference over all the Preachers in connexion with it, but also the *authority of District-Committees of Preachers to call any Preacher to account in the intervals of the Conference, and to decide upon his case until the next meeting of that body.* It is resolved, finally, that, on Mr. Bromley entering into these engagements, the Conference will rejoice to continue him among us as a fellow-labourer; that these decisions on his case be read to Mr. Bromley in his place in the Conference, accompanied by such friendly advice and counsel as the President may deem it suitable to administer.

Upon these resolutions having been read to Mr. Bromley in his place in the Conference, *he entered into the required engagements* in a manner perfectly satisfactory to the Conference.

The above quotation also makes known what were the engagements made with the Conference of 1835 by Mr. Bromley; but, notwithstanding these, he still made manifest his hostility to the Conference, and so conducted himself as to excite general suspicion, in the minds of his brethren, of his participation in the false and anonymous writings published against the Conference and its members; which rendered it necessary that he should be sent for to the Conference at Manchester. In the Conference he objected to that portion of the Declaratory Resolutions of 1835 under which his conduct was to be inquired into, and requested that an opportunity might be given him to state at length his objections. His request was complied with, and many of the oldest and most influential Ministers were appointed to hear his statement, and to report thereon to the Conference. They did so; and, after having heard him fully, reasoned, and expostulated with him on the erroneous views he had entertained; and after having received his declaration that he had no *willing* connexion with the authors of the "Fly-Sheets," and his apparently grateful acknowledgments of the patience and candour with which he had been treated by them,—and also his voluntary promise that, having now relieved his conscience, he would no more do anything that would be likely to disturb the Societies,—it was recommended to the Conference, that no further proceedings should be pursued in his case. The Conference gladly received the proposal, and Mr. Bromley was returned without censure or reproof to the Bath Circuit. And so satisfied was he with the proceedings in his case, that he wrote letters to the President, avowedly repeating the promise he had given to the Committee to cease to agitate the subject, and engaging to devote himself wholly to his work in his Circuit as a Wesleyan Minister. The following extracts are given in support of these statements:—

Extract from a Letter addressed by the Rev. James Bromley to the President of the Conference, dated Ashton-under-Lyne, August 12th, 1849.

HAPPY should I be should anything advanced in the Committee have impressed the respectable men composing it with the necessity for repealing the rule in question; but, should this not be the case, and should the Conference still retain in its Statute-Book this rule, I now REPEAT what I *promised in the Committee*, that I will cease to *agitate* the subject; retaining, however, the following privileges, as not surrendered by this promise:—

1. That should the Conference, at any future period, call me to its counsels, with a view to the repeal or alteration of this rule, nothing I now say shall be understood as disqualifying me for such deliberation. And,

2. That should any *instanter* judicial proceedings,—proceedings without notice, without warning,—take place in any District-Meeting or Conference of which I am a member, I shall be at liberty, pursuant to the instructions given in Grindrod's "Digest," to institute stringent inquiries as to the reasons for a departure, in that particular case, from our accustomed judicial procedure.

These limitations to the word "agitate" I understand the Committee cordially to approve.....

I think it due to myself to add, *that this bonâ fide PLEDGE is given under the expectation and confidence that I be returned to the peaceful duties of the ministry, with my status in the body unimpaired.*

Extract from the Journal of the Conference, recording its Resolutions on the Case of the Rev. J. Bromley.

That it is very gratifying to the Conference to be assured that Mr. Bromley disclaims all connexion with the "Fly-Sheets;" and asserts that he never corresponded with the real or supposed authors of them, except in one instance, when he remonstrated against the spirit of the said publications, and expostulated with the persons to whom he was then writing. He further declares that, whatever expressions of his may have been inserted in the "Fly-Sheets Vindicated," have been inserted without his knowledge, consent, or participation.

That, in the last letter which Mr. Bromley has addressed to the President, he engages that, after having had the opportunity of so fully declaring his sentiments to the members of the Conference appointed to hear him, he will not again agitate the questions on the "Declaratory Resolutions" of 1835, appending one or two limitations, on which the Conference does not deem it necessary more particularly to dwell.

Letter to the President of the Conference from the Rev. J. Bromley, dated Chester-Place, Ashton-under-Lyne, August 14th, 1849.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,—I beg to acknowledge your communication, announcing the decision of the Conference in certain proceedings in which I have unhappily been involved.

I think the decision wise and good, and receive it as another and singular example of that care of Heaven which began its attention with my being,—which has never tired, and never will.

I was so reduced on Monday as not to be able to leave Mr. Metcalf's: I am better to-day. To-morrow I leave for Bath, there, in the zealous prosecution of my ministerial duties, to evince that the confidence yet reposed in me is not misplaced.

I am, dear Mr. President,

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

JAMES BROMLEY.

Soon after his return, it was found that, in his private intercourse with the families in his Circuit, he was exercising an influence

injurious to the cause he had engaged to promote ; and that his representations of the Conference, and of the leading members of it, were incorrect and abusive. Afterwards he published, in the newspaper of the city, letters denouncing the Conference and that very law concerning which he had promised not to agitate, in language the most bitterly vindictive ; and he gathered around him a party in support of himself, and for resistance to the established rules and authority of the Connexion. Hereupon a charge was preferred against him, and he was summoned to answer for his conduct before his brethren of the District. He refused to do so ; and himself presided at a meeting held to induce the Trustees of Walcot Chapel to prefer an accusation against him, that he might demand a trial in a mixed assembly, composed more of laymen than of Ministers. But some of the Trustees, when made acquainted with the purpose of the meeting, indignantly refused to be parties in such a "trick," (as one of them expressed himself,) and Mr. Bromley was left to take his trial before his peers. This he insultingly rejected ; and, on the professed plea of a law referring wholly to another and a different case, (as he himself well knew, from the decisions by the Vice-Chancellor and by the Lord Chancellor in 1835,*) continued to demand a trial in an assembly composed mainly of laymen. After using unavailing pleas and remonstrances with Mr. Bromley, the District-Meeting, summoned to consider the charge preferred against him, suspended him from ministerial exercises until the Conference,—the Meeting being required to do so by the acknowledged laws of the Body. Mr. Bromley openly disregarded this act of the District-Meeting ; and, in known violation of rule, when under suspension, conducted services in Wesleyan chapels, where the Trustees were found so unfaithful as to invite him to do so. He travelled up and down through the kingdom to publish his complaints against his brethren, and avowedly set at defiance the acts of the District-Meeting. He refused to make an appeal against the sentence of his suspension to the General District-Meeting in May,—which is the appointed Meeting for the first appeal from an aggrieved Wesleyan Minister,—and, after having allied himself with the public agitators of the Connexion, by addressing counsel to them in their meeting of pretended Delegates, and otherwise, he appealed to the Conference, and requested to be heard in self-justification and in defence of his contumacious and disorderly conduct. The Conference felt that it could not admit his appeal under such circumstances, and maintain the respect due to itself ; and on this part of his case passed a Resolution, declaring that, by the course he had pursued in refusing to take his trial at the District-Meeting, by treating its decision with contempt, and by pursuing a course of agitation while under suspension, he had deprived himself of the right of appeal to the Conference.

A Committee was afterwards appointed to examine the records of

* See Wesleyan Magazine for 1835, pp. 295–313.

the case, and to advise the Conference on the course to be pursued ; and the Committee recommended that he should have permission to appear before it, to say anything in the way of extenuation, apology, or retraction. At the time appointed to hear him a letter was sent by Mr. Bromley, declaring, in the most offensive and insulting manner, that he had nothing to offer in extenuation, apology, or retraction, in reference to his conduct, and repeating his former protests against some of the Laws and Regulations of the Connexion. The following is a copy of Mr. Bromley's letter :—

TO THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE NOW ASSEMBLED.

MEN AND BRETHREN,—I have nothing to say in “extenuation, apology, or retraction.” In DEFENCE, I have a great deal to say, which you, disregarding all the claims of justice, and all the dictates of humanity, have refused to hear !

What unintelligent and hideous domination is this, which has “*condemned me unheard,*” and then asks me for “extenuation, apology, or retraction ?”

I denounce the District-Meeting which assembled in Bath on Wednesday, February 13th last, as an illegal assembly, and the sentence of suspension which it passed upon me as “*intensely illegal.*” Its meeting and its sentence were an immediate contravention of the fifth Article under the head, “Conference Discipline,” in the Articles of Pacification ; which Article enacts expressly, “That no Preacher shall be suspended or removed from his Circuit by ANY District-Committee, except he has the PRIVILEGE of the trial before-mentioned ;” that is, a trial by a *mixed* court, which privilege I claimed.

The expurgation, *ex officio* ; the propounding of questions for the purpose of self-crimination or of self-exculpation, *under penalty* ; the production, in Conferences, District-Meetings, or any other courts, of charges in the form of interrogatories ; the production of those charges without previous personal complaint and social expostulation, as authorised by the law at page 112 of the Minutes for 1835, and as now maintained and practised by the Conference ; I religiously regard as an infidel and impudent rejection of the authority of the Son of God ! and that a more obvious contravention of our standard writings could not be. And, furthermore, I seriously and prayerfully believe that the men who originated and who maintain this *innovation* upon our ancient discipline, are, in this part of their conduct, *enemies of the cross of Christ.*

I am of opinion that if the Conference, instead of seeking its own aggrandisement and power, would seek the glory of God and the good of his people, it would, with the least possible delay, repeal the execrable enactment at page 112 of the Minutes for 1835, and find some other remedy for the evils which threaten its existence, than wide-spread, untiring, and unrelenting *excision* !

The evidence of my sincerity in the testimony I thus bear, is, my willingness to suffer any penalty the Conference has it in its power to inflict, rather than pollute my conscience and dishonour my name by tendering “extenuation, apology, or retraction” at a time and in a case where the ceaseless, heartless injury and oppression I have so long, in connexion with this subject, endured, call for mingled astonishment, indignation, and grief !

I am,

Men and Brethren,

Your faithful and affectionate, but deeply-injured, Brother,

JAMES BROMLEY.

*Palatine House, Stoke-Newington,
London, August 15th, 1835. (For 1830, obviously a mistake.)*

On receiving this letter, the Committee felt that it had nothing left for it to recommend to the Conference, but that Mr. Bromley should be separated from it as a Minister. This recommendation of the Committee was adopted by the entire Conference, with the exception of two dissentients, and it was then officially declared from the Chair that Mr. Bromley was no longer a Wesleyan Minister. The following is the RECORD of the CONFERENCE on Mr. Bromley's case:—

The Report of a Special Meeting of the Bath District Committee was read, from which it appeared,—

I. That Mr. Bromley had been summoned to attend that Meeting to answer certain charges affecting his ministerial character; namely,—

1. "That he had, by certain recent proceedings, violated the great principle of our Connexional union; namely, that when any question has been discussed and decided by the Conference, the minority shall quietly submit to the majority, or peaceably retire from the Body.

2. "That he had made himself the public apologist of, and had openly abetted, the slanderers of his brother-Ministers.

3. "That he had himself grossly aspersed the public acts and principles of his ministerial brethren.

4. "That he had openly and distinctly broken the pledges given by himself to the last Conference,—pledges, in consideration of which the judicial proceedings in his case were arrested."

II. The Report of the Special District-Meeting further showed,—

1. That Mr. Bromley, to whom a copy of the above charges had been sent, with due notice of the Meeting aforesaid, refused to attend, and sent in a formal written protest, in which he denied the jurisdiction of the District-Meeting in his case, and demanded to be tried by a Mixed Meeting,—a claim which the District-Meeting held to be inadmissible, because the circumstances for which alone that form of trial was provided did not exist in Mr. Bromley's case. He declared that he should "regard any sentence of approval or justification on the one hand, or of censure or suspension on the other, by any District-Committee constituted otherwise than according to this demand, as wholly illegal and unjust, as a contravention of the fundamental laws of our body, and as a sentence to be treated (by him) as entirely null and void."

2. That Mr. Bromley, having contumaciously refused to attend the Special District-Meeting, was consequently suspended from the exercise of his ministerial duties until the Conference; the charges having been first duly inquired into and clearly substantiated. The evidence, the findings, and the sentence, are contained in the following extract from the Minutes of the Special District-Meeting; namely,

"The Meeting proceeded to hear the charges, and the evidence adduced in support of them, as supplied from the published papers of Mr. Bromley, and from his correspondence with the President during the last Conference. (See pp. 148, 149.)

"The Meeting regarded all the charges as fully substantiated; but previously to recording its judgment in the case, they appointed a deputation, consisting of Messrs. Goodwin, Jennings, Smeeth, and Harvard, to wait upon Mr. Bromley, to ascertain whether he might yet be prevailed upon to attend; and, they having reported that Mr. Bromley's determination was unaltered, the Meeting came unanimously to the following Resolutions:—

"1. That by the publication in one of the journals of this city of certain papers, in which Mr. Bromley has denounced in strong and extremely offensive terms some portion of our laws—has most injuriously misrepresented certain disciplinary acts

of the late Conference—and addressed appeals to the Ministers and Societies of Methodism tending to excite hostility against the general administration and constituted authorities of the Body; Mr. Bromley has plainly violated the great principle of our Connexional union, which requires every Minister, so long as he is in connexion with the Conference, quietly to submit to its decisions.

“2. That Mr. Bromley, while bearing the character of a Wesleyan Minister, has countenanced the unrighteous agitation which is now carried on in our Connexion, thereby promoting jealousy, discord, and strife in our Societies, confirming the prejudices and strengthening the hands of the enemies of Methodism in general.

“3. That Mr. Bromley has been guilty of casting the grossest aspersions upon the public acts and principles of his brother Ministers,—aspersions calculated to alienate from them the affection and confidence of the people of their charge.

“4. That by agitating through the press the question of the Declaratory Resolutions of 1835, Mr. Bromley has plainly violated his promise solemnly made to the last Conference, in the faith of which the Conference continued to him the functions and responsibilities of a Wesleyan Minister.

“5. That, taking into consideration the grave character of the delinquencies which have been proved against Mr. Bromley, together with his contumacious refusal to attend the District-Committee, and his opposition to its authority, this Meeting feels itself necessitated to come to the painful conclusion, that Mr. Bromley be suspended from the exercise of his ministerial duties until the Conference and he is hereby accordingly suspended.

“Mr. Bromley’s case having been disposed of, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

“1. That this Meeting tenders its sincere sympathies to its esteemed Chairman, the Rev. John Rigg, in the painfully trying circumstances in which he has been placed, and expresses its high opinion as to the prudence, moderation, and kindness which he has displayed in this distressing affair; and, further, this Meeting cannot separate without expressing its earnest hope that the present agitations which are occupying the attention of our beloved people may be speedily brought to a close, so that they may be led to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”

“2. That this Meeting tenders its heartfelt thanks to the Rev. Thomas Jackson, the President of the Conference, for his great kindness in visiting them upon this painful occasion, and for the valuable help and counsel which he has afforded them.”

III. Mr. Bromley’s notice of Appeal, delivered at the Regular Annual Meeting of the Bath District-Committee, and his Letter to the late President,—repeating his notice of Appeal,—were also read.

IV. The Conference thereupon decided,—

That, as Mr. Bromley refused to attend the Special Meeting of the Bath District-Committee, when legally convened on his case, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 13th and 14th of February last; and as, since the time when that Special Meeting was held, he has *avowedly* “treated” the sentence of suspension by that Meeting “with utter disregard;” and—contrary to the promise which he expressly made to the last Conference, not only by word of mouth, but also in letters addressed to the late President—has pursued a course adverse to the peace of the Connexion, and directly tending to subvert the ends of divisive agitation; and as Mr. Bromley’s original notice of Appeal entirely passed by the constitutional jurisdiction of the District-Committee at its Annual Meeting, Mr. Bromley has forfeited all right of Appeal to the Conference; and that the Appeal which he now makes cannot be entertained.

A Committee was afterwards appointed to examine the records of the case, and to advise the Conference respecting any disciplinary proceedings which the character of the facts established against Mr. Bromley might appear to require.

This Committee brought in the following Report:—

“ The Minutes of the Special District-Meeting, summoned on the case of Mr. Bromley, were read to the Committee, and carefully considered.

“ And the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted :—

“ 1. That the facts which were adduced in evidence before the Special District-Meeting, and substantiated beyond the possibility of contradiction by letters from Mr. Bromley to the President of the last Conference,* and by publications bearing his signature, were, in the judgment of the Committee, such as amply to support the findings, and justify the sentence, of that Meeting.

“ 2. That, independently of the production of any criminating evidence, Mr. Bromley having refused to take his trial before the Special District, that Meeting was laid under the necessity of pronouncing the said sentence, by the following Resolution of the Conference of 1835, declaratory of the long-established usage of the Connexion; namely,—

“ ‘ That any Preacher who refuses to submit to the friendly examination of the Chairman (of a District) and other brethren, or to take his trial, regularly and formally, before the Preachers, either of an ordinary or a Special District-Committee, when duly required so to do, shall be considered as, *ipso facto*, incurring the sentence of suspension, until the ensuing Conference.’

“ 3. That, on these grounds, the Committee recommends to the Conference, that the Report of the proceedings of the Special District-Meeting be received and confirmed.

“ 4. That, previously to any definite recommendation, on the part of this Committee, as to ulterior disciplinary proceedings in the case, the Conference be requested to authorise and direct the Committee to hear anything which Mr. Bromley may have to say, in the way of extenuation, apology, or retraction.”

This Report of the Committee having been received and confirmed by the Conference, a letter was addressed to Mr. Bromley, in pursuance of the *fourth* Resolution, inviting him to meet that Committee, for the purpose therein mentioned. Mr. Bromley did not accept the invitation, but, instead of meeting the Committee, addressed to the President and to the Committee the following letter. (See page 151.)

“ This Letter having been read to the Committee, on its re-assembling, all the circumstances were carefully reviewed; and, on the whole case, considering,

“ 1. That, by contumaciously denying, and refusing to submit to, the jurisdiction of the Special District-Meeting, (a jurisdiction which, in 1835, he expressly and solemnly acknowledged, and bound himself for the future to respect and maintain,†) and by persisting in his claim to be tried by another kind of Meeting, to which in the circumstances of his case he was not entitled, Mr. Bromley has been guilty of a direct and open defiance of the settled discipline of the Connexion.

“ 2. That he has deliberately, and in repeated instances, violated the distinct and solemn pledges which he gave to the last Conference,—by continuing to agitate publicly questions in regard to certain points of Connexional discipline, on which those pledges bound him to be silent; and has greatly aggravated his unfaithfulness in this respect, both before and since the Special District-Meeting, by the opprobrious and injurious terms which he has employed to designate some of the established principles and Rules of the Connexion, and the proceedings of the Conference.

“ 3. That he has altogether declined the opportunity afforded to him by the Conference, of meeting this Committee, for the purpose of stating anything which he might have to say, by way of extenuation, apology, or retraction.

“ And, finally,

“ 4. Considering the tone and spirit of the Letter, in which Mr. Bromley has expressed to the President and the Committee his determination to decline such Meeting,—the anti-Wesleyan principles and views which that Letter avows, and the

* See Mr. Bromley's letters, p. 149.

† See page 148.

offensive and hostile phraseology in which some of those principles and views are expressed,—the Committee is unanimously of opinion,

“That neither the ends of justice, nor the claims of brotherly kindness, require any further delay in the disciplinary procedure of the Conference; and that Mr. Bromley’s ministerial connexion with the Conference must now, of necessity, be terminated.”

The above Report of the Committee having been received and considered by the Conference, it was, with only two dissentients, resolved,—

That the Report of the Committee be adopted and confirmed.

It was then officially declared from the Chair, that James Bromley is no longer a member of our Body.

Another case of disciplinary inquiry by the Conference was that of an appeal from Mr. SAVAGE, of Bradford, against his Superintendent, for expulsion from the Society, by withholding his ticket, and not granting him a trial before the Leaders’ Meeting when he demanded it. This appeal had been first made to a Minor District-Meeting, which decided in favour of a trial before the Leaders’ Meeting; but the trial not having taken place, through fear of the repetition of disorderly and riotous conduct on the part of those who were the abettors of Mr. Savage, an appeal was made to the Conference, when—after hearing the case, and expressing its strongest condemnation of the wicked and disorderly proceedings of parties assembling in the streets and on the chapel premises to vent forth their execrations against Ministers and Leaders who are faithful in the enforcement of discipline—the Conference expressed its regret that the Superintendent had not complied with the advice of the District-Meeting, and directed that a trial before the Leaders’ Meeting should be granted, according to the declaratory Resolutions of 1835.

This is one of *several* cases in which the Conference has declared in favour of an appeal from the people against the conduct of their Ministers, on the ground of the Laws of 1795 and 1797, and which were more fully explained by the Conference of 1835, in order to prevent “clandestine expulsions.” And this case is a practical contradiction of the falsehoods published against the Conference as an opponent of the people’s rights. It has always been the advocate and defender of them; and has ever shown a readiness to interpret, in the most liberal manner, the Laws relating to them; and whenever it saw their rights or privileges in the least infringed, it has granted immediate redress. It was so in this case; and that where circumstances were the least inviting to do so. Mr. Savage has been notorious in his disorderly and revolutionary proceedings, he has avowedly acted in defiance of the laws he engaged to observe. The Superintendent is greatly respected and beloved by his brethren; he is known to be a firm supporter of constitutional Methodism; and yet the Conference refused to sanction what he had done, because he had not in the letter, as well as in the spirit, carried out its regulations, and given to an accused member a trial before a Leaders’ Meeting when he demanded it.

There were two other cases inquired into before the Conference, which have been made public; but which, notwithstanding the gross misrepresentations made concerning them, we shall forbear to dwell upon at length, at present. The cases were those of Superintendent Ministers, who had not faithfully exercised the discipline of the Connexion on two notorious offenders against the common laws of Christianity and the peace and order of the Connexion. In one of these instances, although a justification was attempted, the Conference felt compelled to declare that the neglect complained of merited censure; but, on the unequivocal declaration of his purpose to enforce scriptural and Wesleyan discipline in future, he was re-appointed the Superintendent of the Circuit in which he had been for the last two years. The other gave proof that he had rebuked and admonished the offender for his sinful participation in, and support of, a weekly newspaper, mainly devoted to the publication of slanders and calumnies upon Christians and their Ministers; and, though individual members of the Conference animadverted on what they considered an undue forbearance in a case so flagrant and notorious, yet he was fully acquitted from intentional collusion with the guilty party; and made such a frank declaration of his approval of the Wesleyan system entire, and of his determination to support it fully in the future, as proved him to be worthy of the confidence of his brethren. All these cases of Conference inquiry and discipline evinced ministerial fidelity to Christ and his church, mingled with all justifiable forbearance.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES; EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES; AND THEIR
ORDINATION TO THE OFFICE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

The religious services of the Conference were numerous attended, and more than an ordinary measure of divine power and blessing was vouchsafed both to the Ministers and their congregations. City-road chapel, notwithstanding the additional large and commodious Wesleyan chapels lately erected in neighbouring localities, still retained its original character, as chief among the Wesleyan chapels of the metropolis, and was still found to be the most attractive place of worship to the Methodists from the country attendant on Conference services. In addition to its being "the Conference chapel," it is more intimately associated with the name and labours of Mr. Wesley than any other chapel whatever. It was built by him; he preached "the word of life" in it to a newly-gathered people; he and several of his most eminent sons in the Gospel and successors in the ministry sleep in solemn sepulture in the graveyard behind. Their tablets and memorials stud the recess, and almost line the walls, of the large and venerable building. These, and other subjects of deep and thrilling interest with earnest and loyal Methodists, render City-road chapel their most attractive house for worship at the time of the Conference. It was manifestly so this year; and there were occasions when the aisles, as well as the seats, were crowded even up to the doors.

The OFFICIAL SERMONS preached before the Conference were distinguished by clearness, power, and forcible application. The sermon of the newly-elected President on the Sabbath morning, was a lucid and evangelical exposition of Colossians i. 12—14; and in the conclusion was made to bear with great power and force on the consciences of the unregenerate.

The Ex-President's sermon—strictly speaking, *the* official sermon—was most suitable, in its subject, to the circumstances of the present times. It was that of the Christian Pastorate, as ordained and established by Christ with regard to His church, and was founded upon the first four verses of the fifth chapter in the First Epistle of St. Peter. It has of late been the unwearied effort of the leaders in Methodist agitation to degrade the office of the Christian ministry, and thus to weaken, if possible, the hold of the Wesleyan Pastorate upon the Societies. The divine call, and the separated appointment to the ministerial office, have been most wantonly assailed, and most positively denied. The rule and authority intrusted to them by their Lord, and for which He holds them responsible, has been set forth as a selfish and criminal usurpation; and it has been publicly proclaimed throughout the kingdom that Ministers are the mere servants of the people; that they derived their appointment and office from them; and must exercise it at their will, and under their direction. Such sentiments and teaching are directly opposed to the doctrine of holy Scripture, as the Rev. Thomas Jackson, in his official sermon, has plainly shown. He has truthfully and devoutly expounded the New-Testament doctrine respecting the Christian Pastorate,—not in the turbulent spirit of ecclesiastical controversy, but in a meek, perspicuous, and powerful exhibition of the truth as it may be readily found in the oracles of God. The sermon has since been printed and published, at the earnest request of the Conference; and we doubt not it will be extensively read, and be found a most seasonable corrective of the erroneous and false teaching concerning the subject of which it treats.*

The EXAMINATION and ORDINATION of the CANDIDATES for the Wesleyan Ministry, were, as usual, most interesting and religiously beneficial services. There were thirty-two Candidates, who publicly gave testimony, before many witnesses, of their conversion to God, their call to the Christian ministry, and of their approval of Wesleyan doctrine and discipline. Some of the recitals of religious experience, and of mental struggles with regard to the work in which they had engaged, were most affecting; and we doubt not that some of the young men, this year received into the Wesleyan ministry, will, if faithful to the trust confided to them, rise to distinguished eminence

* The following is the title of this excellent discourse: "Christian Presbyters: their Office, Duties, and Reward. A Sermon preached before the Wesleyan Conference, in the City-Road Chapel, London, on Monday, August 5th, 1850. Published at the Request of that Body. By Thomas Jackson. London: John Mason."

among their brethren. The ORDINATION SERVICE was held in Spitalfields chapel; and though early in the day, and in a locality where the greatest efforts have been employed to disseminate false and unscriptural notions respecting the appointment and office of the Christian Pastorate, yet that large and venerable chapel was crowded, as soon as the doors were opened, almost to suffocation, by most earnest and devout worshippers. The chapel was originally built by the French Protestant Refugees, who fled to England for protection from Popish persecution. It is a vast, massive structure, fitted up with large pews and with a huge pulpit of oak. There is a sombre repose in its appearance within, which leaves the minds of the worshippers undisturbed; and when filled, as it was at the Ordination Service, with five or six hundred Ministers in the body below, and with the pressing multitude of Christian worshippers and lovers of good men, both on the floor and in the gallery, it was to us, in connexion with the important engagements around the communion-table, an awfully solemn and imposing scene. The words spoken by the President to each candidate, on behalf of the entire presbytery of Wesleyan Ministers, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and to administer the holy Sacraments in the congregation," fell on our ears like words spoken from heaven; and when the commission was ratified by the united "Amen!" of the Ministers, we felt that it was, indeed, a most solemn and responsible thing to have part in that ministry. The EX-PRESIDENT'S CHARGE to the newly-ordained Ministers was most faithful and earnest. It was founded on God's charge to Joshua, when he was called to be the successor of Moses in the government of Israel, and in leading them to the promised land. (Joshua i. 8, 9.) It set forth the duty and benefit of a devout and diligent study of the holy Scriptures by Christian Ministers, and the reasons for unflinching courage in their arduous and responsible work, as supplied to them in the promise of the constant presence of their Lord. Like the official sermon he had delivered two days before, the Ex-President's charge to the newly-ordained Ministers was most appropriate in its topics, and was manifestly delivered under the descending and inspiring unction of the Holy Ghost. The fragrance of it, like the poured-out precious ointment from Mary's broken box, rose and filled the house; and memorable in the minds of thousands will it be, through time, and in eternity.

UNCONSTITUTIONAL DEMANDS MADE UPON THE CONFERENCE.

Early in the period of the sittings of the Conference, a written communication from a pretended Committee of Wesleyan Privileges, and signed R. S. STANLEY, and JOSEPH MASSINGHAM, was announced from the Chair. It stated, that the parties making it were appointed members of the Committee at the Delegate-Meeting, held in London in May last; that they were ready to meet the Conference, or a Committee appointed by it, on the subject of certain Resolutions respect-

ing the Laws of Methodism; and they desired to know if the Conference would receive certain Memorials intrusted to their care for presentation. Such requests from an illegal and lawless confederacy could not be granted, as the parties making them well knew. They have since said they did not expect the Conference would grant them. They knew from what the President said to them at Richmond, in May last, and from the rejection of such-like parties in 1835, that their requests would not be granted. But it is convenient for men devoting themselves to the unholy purposes of agitation and strife, to have the refusal of the Conference to unconstitutional demands, in order to confound them with the legitimate and authorised memorials of the Societies, and thus represent Wesleyan Ministers as indifferent and unyielding to the voice of their people. But thoughtful and unprejudiced persons will know how to approve the distinction made by the Conference between the two parties addressing them. The one party—despising law, trampling it contemptuously on the ground, and breaking it into pieces to serve their own will—is altogether in a different position from the other, who, respecting authority, and obedient to law, prefer their requests in the manner agreed upon and appointed. Both parties cannot be treated alike, if the distinctions between right and wrong, legal and illegal, are to be preserved. The principle which leads to the ready reception of the one will require the prompt and decided rejection of the other. Men who have banded themselves together, and done all they could to pledge the unwary in the Societies to coerce their Ministers, and to compel them to disown and renounce the laws of Christ and of his church, are not to be treated and communicated with, as if they were worthy of being taken into counsels for ecclesiastical government. Justice and charity to the faithful and obedient requires the repudiation of their claims. This the Conference felt, and, after due deliberation, returned to the communication of Messrs. Stanley and Massingham the following unequivocal answer:—

Wesleyan Conference, August 3d, 1850.

GENTLEMEN,—On behalf of the Conference, we beg to acknowledge the receipt of your communication, addressed “to the President, Secretary, and Members of the Conference,” and purporting to be a communication from a “Committee of Privileges, appointed by the Eleventh Resolution of a Meeting of Delegates from the Wesleyan Societies, assembled in Albion Chapel, Moorfields, on the 12th of March last, and following days,” to the effect that the members of the said “Committee” are “prepared to meet with the Conference, or a Committee appointed by the Conference, agreeably to the terms of the said Resolution;” and that you “will be glad to be informed when the Conference will be prepared to receive certain memorials,” stated by you to be “intrusted to the said Committee for presentation to the Conference.” In reply to that communication, we are directed by the Conference to remind you that the Conference has been, and is, at all times prepared to receive and consider with respectful attention, any communications, in the way of memorials or otherwise, addressed to it, on matters touching their local or Connexional interests, provided that such memorials, or other communications, proceed from members of Society in their individual capacity, or from meetings duly called and constituted according to our existing rules.

With respect to the communication which you have forwarded, it is scarcely necessary to remind you that the Committee of which you represent yourselves to be the Secretaries was appointed at a meeting which had no authority to make such an appointment, and that the existence and action of a Committee so appointed are a deliberate and flagrant violation of the discipline of Methodism.

The Conference has good reasons for doubting whether any single Society, or Circuit, or body of Trustees, in its *collective* capacity, appointed any individual as a delegate to the meeting held in London on the 12th of March last. And, even supposing all the persons who attended the meeting to have been formally and *bona fide* appointed, as representatives or delegates from the Societies, or Circuits, or Trusts, with which they professed to be respectively connected, still the Conference is solemnly persuaded that such a meeting of confederated delegation, especially considering the circumstances under which it was called, and the objects which it was proposed thereby to accomplish, was totally at variance with the great principles and positive regulations on which we depend, in a great degree, as a Connexion, for the due maintenance of Christian order, and the edification and peace of our Society.

Under these circumstances, the Conference, having regard to the purity and welfare of the Societies under its care, and to its solemn obligations to maintain inviolate the disciplinary system of Wesleyan Methodism, deems itself bound to adhere to the principles stated at large in the Minutes of 1835, and to the resolution then avowed not to hold communication with any association, confederacy, or committee, organised on "divisive and disorderly principles," like those which characterise the proceedings of the parties with whom you are unhappily identified.

The Conference, therefore, respectfully declines to make any appointment for holding a meeting with the Committee which you represent, or for receiving the memorials to which your letter refers as having been intrusted to your care.—We are, Gentlemen, on behalf of the Conference, yours respectfully,

(Signed,)

JOHN BEECHAM, *President,*

JOHN HANNAH, *Secretary.*

To Messrs. R. S. Stanley and Joseph Massingham,
11, Exeter-Hall, Strand.

This answer, as might be expected from the party, has since been severely censured and condemned in a second meeting of the professed Delegates; and it is made the pretext for still more violent and disorderly proceedings. The second Meeting of pretended Delegates was a most humiliating failure to them. Few persons came up from the country to it; and some of them with little or no connexion with Methodism; so the London *Managing* Committee had the proceedings chiefly under their own direction; and, after much disagreement among themselves, and the proposal of amendment after amendment,—and after false representations of Scripture-teaching and Wesleyan requirements, as to the support of the Christian ministry,—a Resolution was passed in favour of stopping *all* pecuniary supplies to the Connexion. What justifiable association they can have with a community confessedly most repugnant to them, and to which they resolve to give no support whatever, we cannot divine; and though talking of the contrary, yet we doubt not "the up-stairs Committee of Management in London" are preparing by this means for raising funds for an early separation from Wesleyan Methodism. Already their agreement in spirit and on ecclesiastical polity with Dr. Campbell and Mr. Eckett has been made manifest. They have formed what they consider it most

convenient to designate "Branch Societies" in York and other places. They eagerly rush into chapels of political Dissenters, of the New Connexion, and of the Association, which are said to be "*kindly* lent for the occasion;" they have resolved to hire rooms and premises in several towns in the kingdom, where services are to be arranged by Mr. Dunn, and where Local Preachers and Leaders are to share in the pastorate of "*our* Ministers," as Messrs. Everett, Dunn, Griffith, and Bromley, are described in the weekly journal of the party.* They have agreed upon holding a bazaar in London next summer, to promote their *Free-Trade* in ecclesiastical order and discipline; and they exhort their friends among Trustees of Methodist chapels to examine their deeds, and ascertain whether they may be transferred to other hands than those for which they were originally intended; and a Committee to direct, aid, and defend them, has been appointed. And, most cruelly unjust, they have clandestinely, and by false pretences, *pledged* many ignorant and unsuspecting members to continue to support them in their proceedings. These, and other circumstances, plainly indicate their intended course; and very soon

* The formal *questioning* of these gentlemen before the self-called Delegates, as to whether they were *really* Reformers or not, was *rather* inconsistent with the outcry they have made against friendly inquiries in the Conference. Messrs. Everett and Dunn evidently did not like such a question, and replied in vague and general terms. The former, who has *taken off* most of the pretended Delegates, much to their discredit and discomfort, in a second volume of "*Takings*," must have winced under the questions from the Chair, when, at the very time of receiving his money, he was provoked to say, "The fact is, I was condemned on suspicion, and they suspect me still." Mr. Dunn condemned the allusions made to their lack of hearty co-operation in the cause of Reform, on the ground of "*flying reports*" of what he and his brethren had privately said. He reminded the Meeting, that the money they were about to receive had been contributed solely as compensation for the sacrifices they had made, and that no condition or pledge was to be annexed to the receiving of it. Mr. Griffith was more ready to pledge himself to their cause, and, as an "*out-and-out* Reformer," will, we doubt not, be more their man than his brethren. Mr. Bromley has yet his compensation-money to obtain, and, therefore, was more likely to express readiness of co-operation with a party devising means to raise it, than if he had been in the position of Messrs. Everett and Dunn; but he hinted something about their not yet having reached the eminence of *principle*, and that they were to look for projects that would shape anew their proceedings. There seems to have been considerable doubt in the minds of the self-elected Delegates of the sincerity and soundness of some of the gentlemen they questioned on their principles, and on their intended course of action; and we cannot but admire their adroitness in fixing upon the very time when they were to receive their compensation-money to inquire of them, individually, "Are you a Reformer?" It is but just to the Chairman to say, that even *he* was so ashamed, by the glaringly inconsistent procedure of questioning men on the ground of mere suspicion, after having denounced the Conference for doing so, that, after having put the question, by the order of the Meeting, to Mr. Everett, and roused his ire thereby, he positively refused to put it to the others; begged that the Meeting would not make it imperative upon him to do so; and, perceiving the dissatisfied spirit of the Meeting, he, more consistently in appearance with his own and his friends' professions, requested the remaining three to deliver each an address on any subject they thought *fit*.

they, and all they can mislead into their camp of rebellion against spiritual and ecclesiastical government, will be separated from Wesleyan Methodism; and we fear to the everlasting ruin of many. Their Resolution, to stop all pecuniary supplies to the Connexion and to its Ministers, is virtually to separate themselves, as they know; unless they would unjustly and dishonestly cast themselves, like able-bodied paupers, upon a laborious community, and, while able to provide for themselves, be supported at the expense of others. The Wesleyan Conference, any more than individual Ministers in their Circuits, cannot be coerced into measures which it deems unscriptural, and which it believes would subvert and demoralise the church of Christ; and if the vain threats of professing *liberals* should be realised, and Ministers be left to starve down to skeletons, they are prepared to make such a sacrifice, rather than become mere *hirelings* among the flock. Ministers know from the declarations of the holy Scriptures, as well as from the history of the church in past ages, that "verily there is a God who judges in the earth;" and that He who provided for Elijah when supposing himself alone in the service of Jehovah, and that He who supplied the wants of Oliver Heywood, when deprived of his "living" by persecution, still rules by His providence, and can, if it be necessary, out of the very spoils of their oppressors, gather sustenance for his servants on earth. But we have no fear of lack to Wesleyan Ministers from the Resolutions of the pretended Delegates. It has been demonstrated that the supplies they have yielded to Methodism have not been very great; and there are latent resources with the faithful in Methodism that will be applied as necessity may appear. It has been so in the past year. A servant-girl, and a Parish Constable in Norfolk, unknown before, have become the supporters and protectors of Ministers deprived of Circuit-supplies, and when surrounded by disorderly congregations. Wesleyan Methodism can raise a "Sustentation Fund," as well as the Free Church of Scotland, when its Ministers for conscience' sake refuse to give up spiritual rule and authority in the church. Already it is commenced; and, should circumstances require it, we doubt not that thousands of pounds would speedily be subscribed for its augmentation.

Closely allied to the disorderly proceedings and unreasonable demands of the professed Delegates, was the intrusion of Mr. Dunn into the Conference. It is said that, to effect his purpose, he had concealed himself opposite the side-door of the chapel, and that, when the door-keeper was off his guard, he slipped into the chapel, and called upon the President to allow him to be heard. His intrusion into an assembly from which he had been expelled was foolish, to say nothing of its being unmanly and dishonourable. A plea has been put forth that it was to offer, for legal purposes, his subscription to the Ministers' Annuitant Society; but Mr. Dunn knows that the President and the Conference never receive subscriptions for that Society; and that, if such were his object, he could as well have offered it to the Treasurer

at his lodgings as in the chapel. It is also said that, on his ejection, like an angry and stubborn boy, he threw his money down upon the ground in the chapel-yard, and on this pettish act has threatened legal proceedings against the Conference for having refused his subscription when it was tendered; but we suppose that six shillings and eightpence expended in legal counsel would satisfy a less self-willed man than Mr. Dunn, that such conduct would not answer in the least as a serviceable plea, either in a court of strict law, or in a court of equity; and that his best plan will be to use to another purpose the money he threw down upon the ground. Poor man! We understand the philosophy of his strange and irrational act. It is the evidence of an unquiet and dissatisfied spirit, reproaching itself for past folly! And we would gladly pass over its acts in silence, were it not that attempts are made, on false and misleading grounds, to justify, or rather to apologise for them.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL MEMORIALS.

In this class we shall include all the Memorials sent from the June or July Memorial-Meetings, though some of them contain unconstitutional requests, and, as such, should not have passed in any Meeting of Methodism. As, however, they were carried in properly-constituted Meetings by the individuals who signed them, and in which the Superintendent Ministers presided, the Conference did not hesitate to receive them, and to consider them as expressive of the wishes of the respective parties from which they were sent. It has been stated, that little or no attention was paid by the Conference to the Memorials, and that the consideration of them was purposely deferred to the last few hours of its sittings. Such a statement is erroneous, and directly at variance with facts. At the termination of the first two days of the Conference business,—by which time all Memorials from the Societies must be presented, so that there may be full opportunity to consider them,—the President of the Conference, in the first instance, read and examined them, that he might be able to give a just and suitable account of them to the Conference; but, on examining them, he found that neither himself nor any Committee that might be appointed to report concerning their character and contents, could do so satisfactorily, until the Memorials had been analysed and classified. It was evident that the mere reading of them would not be sufficient to elicit the agreement or disagreement that existed between them; and that, before any full report could be given, such as would be necessary, as a ground for serious and safe deliberation, they must be examined comparatively, as to their contents, and their subjects arranged accordingly. To accomplish this, the President availed himself of the most efficient help possible, and had schedules drawn out for the use of the Committee that should be appointed to consider the Circuit-Memorials, and report thereon to the Conference. We have copies of these schedules now before us,

occupying several closely-written folio pages. As soon as the schedules were prepared, a Committee—perhaps the largest and most influential ever known in Methodism—was appointed by the Conference; and that Committee sat, on its first time of meeting, from six o'clock in the evening to nearly eleven. It appointed, from its own members, a Sub-Committee, to embody in writing the views it had expressed. The Sub-Committee employed on this considerable time, and met repeatedly. The Committee met again, reviewed its former proceedings, gave further directions to the Sub-Committee, who drew up the Resolutions, gave them to the Committee to read and revise, after which they were proposed to the Conference. Thus it will be evident that, so far from the subject of the Circuit-Memorials being delayed to the close of the Conference, they were, during the whole period of its sittings, under consideration; and it will be seen by every unprejudiced mind that the introduction of them for deliberation by the Conference itself was, of necessity, late. The Committee found that the total number of Memorials sent was small, compared with the number of Circuits; that several of them—and these from the largest and most influential Circuits—were expressive of full and cordial approval of the Conference and of the Laws and Regulations of the Connexion, and seriously deprecated any changes; while the rest were so various and contradictory in their requests, that scarcely any one subject could be selected on which any considerable number of the memorialists agreed; and, therefore, no sufficient claim was made on the Conference, for the serious consideration of the modifications, or supposed improvements. It is true that in one class of Memorials there was more agreement than in any other;—a class framed, more or less, upon the Resolutions of the Meeting of professed Delegates, and which seek the dissolution of the Connexional principle, by the acknowledged independence of local courts; the subversion and overthrow of pastoral rule and authority, by giving the power to a Leaders' Meeting to pronounce a sentence as well as a verdict; and by constituting a District-Meeting, composed of laymen and Ministers, the final court of appeal for an accused member of Society. This class of Memorials is, however, small, and nearly all are from the smaller Circuits. In strict justice and propriety, as we said before, they ought not to have been sent from any Circuit-meetings whatever. The Church of England ought not, on the ground of professed changes and improvements in its administration, to be called upon to renounce Episcopacy. Congregationalists ought not to be required by their supporters to renounce Independency. These are fundamental principles, which lie at the bottom of their ecclesiastical systems, and cannot be disturbed without revolution and destruction; and it is so with Methodism as to the Connexional principle, and with regard to ministerial rule. These lie at the very basis of its system. They were among the first principles laid down for his Societies and Ministers by Mr. Wesley himself; they have remained from his day to the present; and, being funda-

mental, they cannot be removed without injury and destruction to the whole superstructure of *Wesleyan Methodism*.

The comparative investigation of the Circuit-Memorials which we have spoken of brought out the following results:—

The total number of Circuit-Memorials sent to the Conference, out of FOUR HUNDRED and FORTY-THREE Circuits, was *sixty-six*. Of these, nine express, in distinct terms, full and cordial approval of Methodism as at present administered; and four express approval in more general terms; making, together, thirteen to be deducted from the number of Memorials requesting changes; and thus leaving, as the total number of Memorials for changes, *fifty-three*. Of these fifty-three, twenty-two solicit changes in the fundamental principles of Wesleyan Methodism, which cannot, with justice or propriety, be considered. Thus, the number of constitutional Memorials legitimately seeking changes, modifications, and supposed improvements, does not exceed *thirty-one*; and the changes sought in these are so various and contradictory, that scarcely any one can be selected respecting which any considerable number of Memorialists agree.

In these circumstances the Committee and the Conference decided against making any changes at present, except in the mode of appointing lay-gentlemen to the Connexional Committees; and this for the future is to be done from the nomination of each retiring Committee, and not from the nomination of ministerial officials assembled at the Conference.

Thus the Memorials, neither in their character, nor in their contents, called for the serious consideration of the Conference; and, besides the reasons for making no material changes at present, drawn from the small number of the Memorials, and from the conflicting character of their subjects, there were other circumstances to be remembered. There was the large and influential majority of the officers and members of the Societies, satisfied with "Methodism as it is,"—many of whom strongly deprecate any changes, at present, in its principles or administration. There were the numerous Resolutions of satisfaction with the system of Wesleyan Methodism, and of confidence in its efficiency, which have been published since the last Conference; and there was the deliberate consideration of nearly all the proposals now made in the numerous Meeting of laymen and Ministers convened at the Conference held in Sheffield, in the year 1835, when a judgment *adverse* to such proposals was most distinctly and *unanimously* declared; and there was also the opportunity there will be in calmer times, and in future and successive years, to propose, discuss, and make *any* constitutional changes found to be desirable. There is, likewise, the scriptural law of peace and order to be observed. To make changes, at present, would be likely to encourage agitation and coercive proceedings; and, on the whole, to unsettle and disturb more minds in Methodism than now express dissatisfaction; and, with these considerations, the Committee prepared and recommended, and the Conference discussed at

length, and passed *unanimously*, the following DECLARATORY RESOLUTIONS:—

I. *The Conference regards itself as being bound by the principles set forth in the New Testament, and by the sacred trust transmitted to it by Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors, to maintain THE PASTORAL OFFICE in unimpaired integrity; and, consequently, bound to uphold the SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY which is appropriate to that office, and NECESSARY to the execution of the duties which Christ has made imperative on all those who sustain it.*

In accordance with this General Resolution, the Conference hereby declares:—

1. That, with respect to the exercise of discipline on members of Society, through the medium of Leaders'-Meetings,—whilst the Conference is resolved to persevere in acting, in good faith, upon the Rules which give to an accused person the right of trial before such a Meeting, and at the same time give to that Meeting the right of judgment as to the sufficiency or insufficiency of the evidence produced to support the accusation,—and whilst, in all cases, (and especially in cases likely to affect the membership of the accused party,) it would still require its Ministers, previously to their pronouncing sentence, to take time for consideration, and to have due counsel with all proper parties,—it cannot transfer, either altogether or in part, to other hands than those of the Ministers, the ultimate determination of that sentence, without sinning against its own convictions of solemn duty, and abandoning a right essentially connected with the obligations of the Pastorate with which they are intrusted.

2. That the proposal, made in some of the Memorials, to constitute the *Quarterly-Meeting* of each Circuit a Court of *Final Appeal* against a sentence founded on the previous proceedings of a Leaders'-Meeting is altogether inadmissible, not only on the general ground already mentioned, of its being an *interference* with what belongs exclusively to the pastoral office; but also because, if adopted, it would, in its practical results, render the spiritual authority of the Pastor, *as such*, absolutely nugatory.

II. *The Conference solemnly resolves to stand by the CONNEXIONAL PRINCIPLE adopted by Mr. Wesley, and hitherto maintained by his successors, as being that in which—next to the grace and blessing of the Holy Spirit—the great strength of Wesleyan Methodism lies, for the conservation of its internal purity and order, and for the accomplishment of the great spiritual objects, for which the providence of God first brought it into existence, and has hitherto sustained it.*

In the maintenance of this principle, the Conference declares,—

That whilst it freely leaves to the “United Societies” the general right, which they have hitherto enjoyed and exercised, of settling local matters by local authorities, as far as that may be done consistently with what is due to the general interests and laws of the Connexion, it feels itself bound to resist any attempt which may be made to establish—especially as it regards disciplinary matters—*absolute local independency*, either of single Societies, or Circuits, or Districts. On this ground, even though it were free from the objection already stated, the proposal to erect any Local Meetings, however constituted, into Courts of Final Appeal,—amounting, as it does in fact, to a proposal to break up the entire Connexion, and to exchange Wesleyan Methodism for Independency,—is not merely inadmissible, but also, on the supposition of our remaining a Connexion, altogether inconsistent and impracticable.

III. *The Conference farther declares its unalterable resolution to uphold the authority hitherto vested in its District-Committees, as intermediate and subordinate Courts of Inquiry and Appeal, both for the Ministers and for the people; whilst, to all parties duly respecting that authority, it still leaves unfettered the right of an ultimate appeal to the Conference.*

As to the bearing of this Resolution, in regard to the exercise of discipline on local officers and private members of the Society, the Conference very freely admits

that it is not desirable that the authority of an *extraordinary* District-Committee should be interposed, except on very important occasions; and that, in the first instance, all practicable means should be employed, to preclude the necessity of such interposition. But in cases in which the result of the proceedings of a Leaders'-Meeting is seriously unsatisfactory either to the Superintendent on one hand, or to the accused party on the other, there is an obvious occasion and call for the exercise of the appellate jurisdiction of a District-Committee,—as, on the supposition of continued dissatisfaction on either side, there is, farther, an occasion for the appellate jurisdiction of the Conference. And this method of procedure necessarily grows out of the scriptural principles which the Conference has adopted as the basis of its pastoral authority, and the ecclesiastical order which is essential to us as a Connexion, and which have therefore been uniformly acted on. According to these principles and that order, in the first instance, all matters of local grievance or complaint are, if possible, settled by the ordinary local authorities of the Circuit in which they occur, under the direction of the Superintendent. The result of this first attempt at an equitable settlement being, from any circumstances, insufficient or unsatisfactory, the aid of a Minor District-Meeting, or of the *collective Pastorate* of the District, is called in; and, that assistance failing to give satisfaction to either of the parties, the Conference, as the *collective Pastorate* of the Connexion, inquires into the case, and pronounces the ultimate decision. Such has been, and is, our practice as a Connexion. And to this practice the Conference is resolved to adhere, not only as being necessary to the due maintenance of our Connexional discipline, but also as furnishing to the *People* (as well as to the Ministers) one of the strongest and most availing securities they can possess, against the hazard, to which Laymen as well as Ministers may often be exposed, of suffering from the undue pressure of local partialities, or local prejudice and irritation.

IV. The matters referred to in the preceding Resolutions being disposed of, there still remain some other subjects which, though not perhaps equally important with those which have been mentioned, the Conference is unwilling wholly to pass over. With respect to one of them, the annual appointment of certain General Connexional Committees, the Conference has already and spontaneously acted in harmony with some of the suggestions which have been made. The Lay-Members, for instance, of the General Chapel-Fund Committee, and of the General Committee of the Contingent and Children's Funds, have long been elected by *Mixed Meetings*,—that is, either at District-Meetings or at Quarterly-Meetings respectively, as the cases may severally require; in all which Meetings the Lay-Members concerned are present and concurrent. In the General Missionary Committee, also, the Lay-Members for the ensuing year are always publicly nominated at the last Meeting of the expiring year, and their joint and deliberate nomination is that which is forwarded to the succeeding Conference. It has been cheerfully agreed that the same principle of Joint-Nomination by Mixed Committees shall be extended, as far as may be practicable, to other Funds and Departments of our Work; regard being always paid, in such Nominations, to the claims and convenience of persons residing at or near to the Town in which the coming Conference will probably be held, and at which such Committees will have to assemble. With regard to many of the other points referred to in the Memorials, the suggestions are so various and conflicting, that it would be difficult to form any tolerable estimate of what should be regarded as the *prevailing* opinion amongst the Memorialists themselves; and still more difficult to establish ground for the persuasion, that the things suggested are, as to the Connexion at large, very generally, or even very extensively, desired. At all events, it will surely be allowed by the Memorialists, that not any of the points which may be admitted to be open for discussion, nor all of them together, are of sufficient importance, as to any practical *good* which the accomplishment of them would be likely to achieve in Methodism, to justify their

being made an occasion of general debate, or a subject of serious and urgent demand. Much less are they such as to justify, in the slightest degree, the unholy agitation and strife of which designing or misguided parties have made them the occasion. The law of *peace* and *godly order* is infinitely more important than any of the points on which some of the Memorialists would appear to be anxious. Besides, the most important of the changes suggested by the Memorialists are not now for the first time brought under notice, but have been repeatedly discussed: particularly at one of the most numerous Meetings of Ministers and Laymen ever convened on the affairs of the Connexion,—namely, that held at Sheffield immediately before the Conference of 1835,—which unanimously pronounced a judgment adverse to such proposals, and to the principles upon which they appear to rest. And, under all the circumstances of the present case, there seems to be no sufficient reason for disturbing the general conclusions in which that Meeting so cordially concurred.

If there be any other points in the Memorials which have not yet been so discussed, considered, and settled, they will be regarded by the Conference as being still open for consideration,—it being, however, distinctly understood that they are not to be made in the meantime a pretext for general agitation. And whatever may be found in them likely to accomplish any important or useful object, will be readily adopted. Meanwhile, the Conference takes occasion, very respectfully and affectionately, to suggest to the Memorialists a recollection of the higher privileges and duties to which they are called, in connexion with the system of Wesleyan Methodism; and earnestly entreats them hereafter to “follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”

The Conference also expressed, in the following form, its judgment on the character of the present agitations in Methodism, and on the conduct of those persons engaged in promoting them:—

1. The Conference is constrained by a strong sense of duty to express its solemn condemnation of the principles and plans on which that Agitation has proceeded;—as having been founded, in the first instance, on utterly UNSCRIPTURAL, and therefore false, views of the true character and claims of the Christian ministry in general, and especially on grossly-distorted views of the constitution and practical working of our ecclesiastical system; as having been carried on in gross violation, not only of the laws of our Connexion, but also of the laws of the New Testament; as having been, in many instances, characterized, on the part of its public promoters, by a malignity of feeling and a recklessness of action, indicative of a total disregard of truth as well as of charity; and as having been, in its practical results, fraught with incalculable spiritual mischief to the interests, not only of our own Connexion, but of Christianity at large.

2. The Conference expresses its deep regret that so many persons, in various places, should have allowed themselves to be so far moved, as, during the course of this Agitation, they appear to have been, from their steadfastness in charity as well as in their loyalty to Methodism; but it is willing to indulge the hope, that a calm and prayerful consideration of the course of feeling, and perhaps of action too, into which they have unhappily been drawn, will, by God’s blessing, have the effect of recovering them to a happier and more healthful state of mind.

3. The Conference further expresses its determination, on behalf of the Connexion generally, and especially on behalf of its peaceable and loyal members, to enforce the discipline of the Connexion on all such as, *after due expostulation and warning*, shall unhappily persist in actively promoting or abetting the mischief and strife of which the Conference, and the Connexion at large, have so much reason to complain.

4. Considering the obvious similarity between the spirit and object of the present Agitation, and those which characterised the Agitation of 1835, the Conference

determines to publish, *mutatis mutandis*, the following extract from a document on the subject of organised and confederated Agitations, printed in the Minutes of 1835, as being clearly applicable to existing circumstances:—

“ It is therefore hereby declared to be the unanimous judgment of the Conference, That any person who, instead of *peaceably retiring* from our Connexion, if he decidedly disapprove of our system either of doctrine or discipline, and cannot conscientiously even *acquiesce* in them, endeavours to retain and to employ his position among us for the purposes of opposition and strife,—or who continues, after due admonition to be a member of any confederacy formed for the object of systematic agitation,—is guilty of a flagrant transgression of that *morality of the New Testament*, the observance of which was a principal condition of his admission into our Society, and must be considered to have justly forfeited his claim to the privileges of our religious fellowship. In applying to particular cases this righteous general rule, the Conference exhorts all the Superintendents to exercise, in connexion with a holy firmness, the moderation and mercy of the Gospel; bearing long, and dealing tenderly, though faithfully, with the weak, the ill-informed, and the misled: while they do not shrink from the effectual execution of necessary Christian discipline on those who by overt acts of hostility and disturbance identify themselves as the leaders, or open partisans, of disaffection and faction. The sound and satisfied majority of our Societies—a majority happily so immense as to render all comparative calculations unnecessary—have a just claim on us for protection in the quiet enjoyment of their religious privileges; a claim which some of them have most forcibly urged, and which it is our bounden duty to meet with a discreet but decisive enforcement of our discipline on those whom milder methods shall fail to reclaim from their course of disturbance and mischief.”

5. In conclusion, while the Conference renews its determination to maintain intact the great principles of its Connexional Union, its members, individually and collectively, would solemnly renew the consecration of themselves to the service of their Great Master, for the sake of whose name that Union exists, and to whose honour all its Institutions are dedicated. They once more resolve to cherish and maintain that spirit in which alone the Christian ministry can be successfully discharged; to give themselves wholly to the things of God; to cultivate a compassionate concern for the souls of men, even in the administration of needful discipline, combining tenderness with fidelity; and, in times of difficulty and distraction, to enforce, both by precept and example, the duty of following “peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

TRIAL OF MEMBERS.

The past year has been to Wesleyan Ministers one of the most anxious and painful they have experienced, on account of the necessary exercise of discipline on unruly and injurious members of the Societies. Great forbearance has been shown towards offenders, and it has been with considerable reluctance that they have been brought to trial before their respective Leaders'-Meetings. In some instances, where, after pastoral warning and admonition addressed to them, prompt and decided measures were necessary to save the Societies from further injury, through the unchristian conduct of parties pledging themselves to promote agitations and disturbances,—obstructions have been placed in the way of just and righteous dealing with such persons, by their refusing to give *any* answer to the charges preferred against them. And in some cases, where transgressions of the laws of the Connexion were most notorious, and known by the Leaders, yet, through refusing to plead to

the charges in the first instance, and then calling upon the Leaders to give their verdict, not according to their knowledge, or belief, but according to the evidence presented at the trial,—the Leaders'-Meeting being corrupted,—the mischievous parties were acquitted and left to pursue their mischievous plans; and great scandal has been brought, thereby, upon the Societies. Some of the Superintendent Ministers in their Circuits very properly refused to proceed with a charge against an accused member, where he obstinately refused to admit or deny it,—according to the laws of 1797, declared by the Conference of 1835,—namely, that “if the member, so charged, *deny* the allegation of a wilful neglect of our peculiar discipline, as to Class-Meetings, &c., or of a breach of some law of Scripture, or rule of Methodism, and demand a trial, for the proof or disproof thereof, before the Leaders'-Meeting, or before a Committee of Leaders appointed by that Meeting, *then* such trial must, as our law now stands, and has stood ever since 1797, be forthwith conceded.” But as the legality of such refusal to proceed with a charge, where it was neither admitted nor denied, has, during the year, been disputed, and made the subject of contention, the Conference agreed to, and published, the following Declaration:—

It is already decided (Minutes, 1835) that the first ground on which a trial before a Leaders'-Meeting is to be conceded to an accused member is, that the person complained against should deny the charge brought against him. But if the party charged refuses, in the presence of the Leaders'-Meeting, either to admit or deny the charge preferred against him, it is hereby declared to be the judgment of the Conference that he is not entitled to *demand* the production of evidence, nor to claim that his trial should be proceeded with; but the authorities concerned may justly assume that the allegations cannot be denied with truth. Yet, in some cases, it may be competent to the party bringing the complaint, to offer proof of the matters charged, if the Superintendent deem it most conducive to the ends of Christian discipline to adopt such a course.

The DECLARATION, published by the Ministers in the year, was approved by the Conference; as were also the Minutes of the SPECIAL DISTRICT-MEETING on the case of the Third London Circuit. On expressing its approval concerning what had been done in the latter instance, the Conference declared, that the measures adopted by the Special District-Meeting to allay agitation in the Spitalfields Circuit were in strict accordance with the Rules and Usages of the Connexion; and, while not to be resorted to but in extraordinary cases, yet in the circumstances of this case they were obviously necessary and expedient. The PASTORAL ADDRESS, read by the highly-esteemed Secretary,—the Rev. Dr. Hannah,—and issued by the Conference, is eminently evangelical and scriptural in its character, and is admirably suited to the present circumstances of the Connexion. Throughout it breathes the spirit of a devoted Pastorate,—earnest in endeavour to preserve, direct, and benefit the people of its charge.

The RETURNS OF THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN SOCIETY were such as to call for loud and fervent thanksgivings to Almighty God. They showed an increase on the year of nine thousand and four mem-

bers. This, in troublous times, and when various parties have leagued themselves together to misrepresent and to assail both the principles and the administrative proceedings of Wesleyan Methodism, is more than was expected by its most ardent and sanguine supporters. In this respect, as in others, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" has shown himself "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think;" and "unto Him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen!" Nor was it merely in the past that reasons for thankfulness were to be found. The future, as viewed in connexion with the character of the Conference, was most encouraging. One prominent feature in it was the increased interest manifested towards the children and the youth of Methodism. The subject of **WESLEYAN EDUCATION**, in its several departments, occupied considerable time, and drew forth many noble sentiments from the Ministers assembled. **SUNDAY-SCHOOLS**, **DAY-SCHOOLS**, and **CATECHUMEN CLASSES**, were prominent in the business of the Conference. The reading of the Minutes of the Education Committee deeply impressed the Conference with the ability and efficiency of the respected individuals officially connected with so interesting a portion of Wesleyan agency. The Report on the erection of the Normal and Practising Schools at Westminster, and on the engagements entered into for the training of Teachers, and for the establishment of Day-Schools, fully convinced the Conference that united and most strenuous efforts are necessary to fulfil those engagements, and to sustain before the Church and the nation the honour of Methodism. And, in addition to this, it was declared that the awful increase of juvenile depravity, the plans proposed to promote ineffectual systems of secular education, and the concurrent opinion now happily in favour of a system of education administered by religious bodies, called urgently for the liberal and zealous co-operation of Wesleyan Methodists for the establishment of Week-Day Schools on a much larger scale than that on which they now are found. The Report and deliberations on **CATECHUMEN CLASSES** for the youth of Methodism were highly gratifying and instructive; and measures were adopted to render such classes still more efficient, and to link them more closely than heretofore with the pastoral charge of the ministry.

On a general review of the proceedings of the Conference held this year, we should say, it was pre-eminently distinguished, 1. By faithful adherence to Wesleyan principles; 2. By free and orderly discussion of the various and important subjects proposed; 3. By unprecedented unanimity in its resolutions and decisions; and, 4. By deep and earnest religious feeling, as evinced in the opening and closing services, and by the constant acknowledgment of dependence on God

for his blessing. The great ability and strict impartiality of the President were acknowledged by all parties; and nothing was more common during the Conference than to hear, in private and friendly conversations among the Ministers, remarks on the good order maintained in so large an assembly. His calm and dignified manner served greatly in directing and governing the deliberations of the Conference; and we could not but gratefully acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence in the peculiar adaptation of the instruments employed in times of more than ordinary interest and importance. This was evident in the election of the first President who succeeded Mr. Wesley—the Rev. William Thompson; and it has often been evident since. It was so in the election of the Rev. Thomas Jackson at the celebration of the Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism; and it was so last year, as his brethren, with earnest gratitude, acknowledged in their several addresses, and in their resolution of thanks to him on his retirement this year from the Chair of the Conference. It was so in the election of the Rev. Richard Reece at the Conference of 1835; to whose firm and efficient maintenance of Wesleyan discipline, at that period of disturbance and agitation, many, who knew him well, bore witness at this Conference. And it is not less so in the election of the Rev. Dr. Beecham. He is a Minister well versed in Wesleyan laws and usages, as his judicious and able “*Essay on the Constitution of Wesleyan Methodism*” makes known. He possesses a clear understanding and a sound judgment; and, while immovable in his adherence to the essential principles of Wesleyan Methodism, his calm and deliberate manner renders him a safe President and Counsellor in all administrative proceedings. To God be all the glory. Amen!

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A LOOKER ON.—Thanks for his excellent article on *Dissenting Hostility to Wesleyan Methodism*. It will be inserted in our next Number.

No. X.

PRICE 1d.

THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

OCTOBER, 1850.

A SERIOUS REMONSTRANCE WITH THE MEMBERS OF
THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST SOCIETIES WHO ARE
HEARKENING TO THE UNREASONABLE, UN-ME-
THODISTICAL, AND UNSCRIPTURAL CRY OF "STOP
THE SUPPLIES."

THE command issued from the second Meeting of the professed Delegates to all the dissatisfied and disaffected in Wesleyan Methodism is, "Stop all the supplies at once to its funds!" This mandate has been printed, and circulated among the members of Society; and obedience to it has been urged in the following language:—"As friends of peace, union, brotherly love, we cry, '*Stop the supplies! Stop all the supplies! Stop them all at once, and* until the Conference mends its manners, and makes the law of Christ its only law and authority! It must be done; then do it at once and have done with it. *Stop the supplies!*'"

We have no apprehension of great and permanent injury being inflicted upon Constitutional Methodism by the issue of such an order, authoritative as it may profess to be, and emphatic as it may seem in its form, by the use of italics and notes of exclamation. In fact, we anticipate advantage and gain to the Connexion through it; but we have a duty to perform to those who are in danger of being misled into separation from a church in which they have received the greatest and the most valuable blessings. We make no observations, at present, on the recklessness of the parties who have assumed the authority to address the members of the Methodist Societies, and to dictate to them the course to be pursued. Many of them are already separated

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from Methodism, and have no visible interest in its existence, or extension; and, therefore, cannot be expected to give to it their advocacy and support. They have, also, pecuniary liabilities, occasioned by the course of opposition they have adopted, which must be met; and to meet which they will require all the assistance they can possibly obtain. To attempt to "stop the supplies" to Wesleyan Methodism,—or, rather, as expressed in one of their Resolutions, to *divert them all to another purpose*,—is what might be expected from such persons in such circumstances. We shall, therefore, confine our observations to the conduct urged upon the *members* of the Societies,—that of stopping all pecuniary supplies to Wesleyan Funds; and we propose to show that such conduct would be unreasonable, un-Methodistical, and unscriptural, and at the same time cruelly unjust and oppressive.

1. It is *unreasonable* for members of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society to stop the supplies to its funds. It is a fundamental principle in voluntary associations, of every kind, that all who enter them shall, as long as they continue in them, aid in supporting them. They may separate themselves from them, and *then* cease to yield support; but as long as they continue in them, of their own will, they are required to support them. It is so with all voluntary communities, down from a mighty nation, like that to which we of this country belong, to the smallest mutual aid association existing in a village. The Briton, while he partakes of the advantages of civil government, must contribute to its support; and the villager who shares in the benefits of an association for relief in sickness, or old age, must be a subscriber to its funds. It is so with a voluntary church association,—which is formed for the mutual benefit of the members; who are, therefore, reasonably bound to support the means and agencies which it requires. If any member says that he finds no benefit from such an association, he may separate himself from it, and then be honourably free from any obligation to support it; but if he continue with it, of his own accord, then, whatever his professed dissatisfaction with its principles and administration, it is reasonable that he should aid in its support. The Englishman may say, "Though I was born in England, where a monarchical government is established, yet I prefer a republican government; and, therefore, I will remove to France, or to America;" and *on doing so* he is free from his former obligations, and may with honour support the government he prefers; but if he remain in England, and share in the benefits of its laws and institutions, he must contribute his *quota* to their support. So with the villager,—he may withdraw from the sick-relieving society, and then cease to pay his weekly or monthly subscription to it; but as long as he continues a member of that society, he is required to aid in the supply to its funds. It is so in all Christian churches; and it is so in Wesleyan Methodism. It is a voluntary association of Christians, formed on certain principles for the mutual benefit of those who belong to it; and as long as an individual remains in it, he is bound in reason and in honour to con-

tribute to its support. He may be so poor as not to be able to contribute—he may require the bounty of the church for his bodily support; and in that case provision is made for him, just as with the poor man dependent on the charity of his country; but if he have the means, it is reasonable that he should in due proportion contribute to that of whose advantages he partakes. Not to do this is so manifestly unreasonable, that it would not be tolerated in any club or secular association in existence.

2. It is *un-Methodistical* for the members of the Wesleyan Society to stop the supplies to Wesleyan funds. At the formation of Wesleyan Methodism, one of the original Rules laid down by Mr. Wesley, and enjoined upon all the members, was, that they should contribute weekly and quarterly to its support. This Rule has been continued to the present; and every member has had the means of becoming acquainted with it. The following are Mr. Wesley's own words relative to this subject, extracted from the Minutes of the Conference, for the year 1782, and which are printed with the "Rules of the Society,"—a copy of which should be given by a Leader to every member entering his class.

Q. 31. Have the weekly and quarterly contributions been duly made in all our Societies?

A. In many it has been shamefully neglected. To remedy this,

1. Let every Assistant (Superintendent) remind every society, that this was our original Rule: Every member contributes one penny weekly, (unless he is in extreme poverty,) and one shilling quarterly. Explain the reasonableness of this.

2. Let every Leader receive the weekly contribution from each person in his class.

3. Let the Assistant ask every person, at changing his ticket, "Can you afford to observe our Rule?" and receive what he is able to give.

In addition to this, the "Directions to Class-Leaders," printed at the beginning of every Class-Book, have in them the following paragraph:—

Every Leader should likewise take care that all those who meet with him be in possession of the RULES OF THE SOCIETY, and that they conscientiously observe them. He should also see that they renew their Society-ticket every quarter, and bring it with them to every meeting of the Society, according to the original rule and custom of the Methodists. He should likewise inform them of the manner in which our temporal affairs are conducted, and should encourage them, by exhortation and example, to contribute regularly to the support of the work, as their circumstances will admit.

These quotations from the printed laws and regulations of the Wesleyan-Methodist Societies show, that (except in cases of extreme poverty) it is required of *all* the members, that they contribute weekly and quarterly, according to their means; and that, by exhortation and example, the Leaders shall encourage them to do so. Not to do this, therefore, is *un-Methodistical*. And to "stop the supplies," systematically, as urged at the present time, is to act in direct violation of

the Rules, which both members and Leaders, on their entrance into Society and into office, pledged themselves to observe. No plea of abuses and grievances can release Wesleyan Methodists, while they continue such, from the obligation under which they voluntarily placed themselves. If they conclude that they are not likely to be benefited by remaining Wesleyan Methodists, they may cease to be such, and then "stop the supplies" without any discredit to themselves; but if they apply for the renewal of their Society-tickets, and continue to meet in class, and to share in the religious means and ordinances of Methodism, they are bound by Methodist law and usage to contribute according to their circumstances.

3. For Wesleyan Methodists to stop the supplies to Wesleyan funds is *unscriptural, and flagrantly unjust and tyrannical*. Wesleyan Methodists have, professedly on conscientious grounds, adopted the Wesleyan form of Christian government. They voluntarily placed themselves under it with the belief that, in its general principles, it is scriptural; and that in its means and agencies it is most helpful to persons who desire to flee from the wrath to come. If, on matured consideration of its principles, and after a fair trial of its means, they are supposed to be unscriptural, and of little or no value, then a voluntary separation from it is not only allowable, but a duty. Or if it be said, as it is falsely alleged by some, that it has become unbearably corrupt, and manifestly powerless, the duty of separation from it is the same. But if, as is the case, its essential principles are unchanged, and its usefulness undiminished, then no personal desires for alterations and supposed improvements ought to induce those who voluntarily remain in connexion with it for their own spiritual benefit to "stop the supplies" to its funds. The Scriptures most plainly and unequivocally inculcate the duty of Christians to support the Ministers of Christ's Gospel. St. Paul's teaching is, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 11—14.) And again he writes by Divine authority: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." The authority of these and of other similar precepts recorded in the New Testament, is supreme, and cannot be put aside by the resolutions of men, if they were really delegated to legislate for Christian societies or churches, however numerous. And the command lately issued to "stop all the supplies at once" is a flagrant and rebellious violation of the law of Christ, and cannot be obeyed by Wesleyan Methodists without manifest disobedience to their Lord and Saviour. He has commanded that the

supplies required for the maintenance of his church on earth shall be given by its members ; and not to do so at the dictation of any party is not only error, but *sin*. The assumed authority of an assembly of professed Delegates will not remove the criminality of stopping all supplies to Christian Ministers, nor enable those who do so to justify their conduct, when at the bar of God they shall give an account of all the deeds done in the body. The book of the Gospel law will then be opened, and the dead will be judged out of those things which are written in it, according to their works ; and no plea of published "Addresses," or of written pledges to support and obey the counsel of those who issue them, will then avail.

But to "stop the supplies," as directed, is manifestly *unjust and oppressive*. It is unjust to the men who have been separated from their secular occupations, and recommended to the "full work" of the Christian ministry. Their Divine call to preach the Gospel they received from Christ,—a call which they must obey at any risk of personal sacrifice or worldly loss ; but by Wesleyan Methodists they were recommended to be set apart for the Wesleyan ministry ; and with the understanding that their temporal wants would be provided for by the Methodist Societies, they were separated from their secular employment, and ordained to the Christian ministry. But systematically to withhold from them the supplies required for their maintenance, is unfaithful and unjust.

It is also *cruelly oppressive* in its avowed purpose. It is to force Christian Ministers to do that which their consciences do not approve, and which they believe they cannot perform without unfaithfulness to Methodism, and without disobedience to Christ. Of late references have been commonly made to Popish persecutions, and to the Inquisition ; but, assuredly, in the conduct of those who "stop the supplies," and seek to starve Wesleyan Ministers into another course than that which their consciences approve, there is the very spirit of Popish persecution. And what respect, let it be asked, would they who attempt this have for Wesleyan Ministers, if they were to succeed ? Would they then "count them worthy of all honour," and reverence them for their faithfulness and integrity ? They must inwardly despise them, and would be sure to heap insult upon them for what they had done.

We leave these truths to their legitimate exercise upon the minds of our readers ; but before we conclude this article, we have a word or two of remonstrance and expostulation to address to those who are now hearkening to the sinful cry of "Stop the supplies ! Stop all the supplies ! Stop them all at once !" We ask, Have you considered the consequences of acting thus, if the cry were to be responded to as desired by those who utter it ? We have referred to the injustice and oppression that would be perpetrated upon your Ministers now labouring in the Circuits "at home ;" but there are other aspects in which

the subject must be considered, if we would have a full view of all that belongs to it.

1. There is, for instance, the "*Fund for the worn-out Ministers and for Ministers' Widows*," which would be unsupplied; and in that case there would be scores of venerable men, who have laboured thirty, forty, and even fifty years in the service of the church, abandoned without support, and left to enter parish workhouses, or pine on a miserable pittance otherwise obtained. Some of them were the instruments of your own conversion to God; others, of the conversion of your fathers and mothers; and all of them devoted the strength of their lives to the cause of Christ in connexion with Wesleyan Methodism. Most of them toiled over miles of rough and lonely roads, by night and by day; preached from six to nine sermons a week; met numerous classes, and gave them ministerial counsel, every quarter; and now, aged and feeble, they have a bare subsistence provided for them by the church in which they have spent all their strength. But if *all* the supplies were to be stopped at once, as recommended and urged, they who have had no sudden gains to enrich them, such as tradesmen sometimes have,—and no surplus yearly amount, out of which they could provide for the days of feebleness and old age,—must be left unmercifully to perish.

And so with the *widows of deceased Ministers*. They, too, must be left to perish through destitution. In most cases, the early friends of their itinerant life have passed away. The hearers of their husbands have gone; a new generation has risen up; and only a few remain who knew their husbands' worth, or can renew the acquaintance formed with themselves. They have settled, in their lonely widowhood, in casual spots, where they may, by some means of industrious employment, add a little to the scanty assistance they receive from the Connexion. But to stop *all* the supplies, would be to deprive them even of this,—to leave them to accidental charity, or to die in want. The mere *proposal* to do this would be revolting to humanity, to say nothing of the claims of religion; but to *order* this to be done, to issue the mandate, "*Stop all the supplies at once!*" is barbarous in the extreme. We know of no representations in civilized life suited to such conduct. To obtain them, we must go to the wilds of Africa, where parents, when unable any longer to labour for their food, are thrown into the bush or the jungle, to perish with hunger. To starve superannuated Ministers and widows, as urged by men professing Christianity, is monstrous beyond description; and when it is considered that it is done revengefully, for the denial of unconstitutional demands, the exclamation of Jacob concerning Simeon and Levi becomes appropriate language: "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel."

2. There is, also, the *Contingent Fund*, from which it is directed the supplies are to be immediately stopped. This Fund is mainly devoted to the aid of preaching the Gospel in the poorer Circuits of

England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland ; and were this Fund to be annihilated, thousands, who now have the Gospel preached to them by Wesleyan Ministers, in the more thinly-populated districts of the United Kingdom, would be left entirely destitute of the means and ordinances of religion. It may be well asked concerning *them*, " And these sheep, what have they done ? " Undoubtedly they are not the cause of the dissatisfaction existing in the minds of the men who raise and publish the cry, " Stop all the supplies at once ! " And are they to be left as sheep scattered abroad, having no shepherd until some petty questions raised concerning votes and memorials shall have been adjusted to the satisfaction of leading agitators ? It is the duty of the church to evangelize the world, and to impart to the spiritually destitute of that which it possesses. This duty has been recognised in Methodism from the beginning. The Contingent Fund, or Yearly Collection, was instituted by Mr. Wesley for its performance, and by it most of the Circuits now in existence have been aided, and supplied, more or less, with the Gospel ; and shall this work of Wesleyan home evangelization stop at the bidding of a few men, confederating together to obtain increased power and influence among their brethren ? In their assembly, if Christ were to appear, it would be to rebuke them, and to say, " Ye know not of what spirit ye are ; " and to all who unite with them in stopping the supplies requisite for the preaching of the Gospel to the poor and the needy, St. John says, " Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ? "

3. Then there is the great *Missionary work*, the supplies to which are all at once to be stopped. This is, on the whole, the greatest work ever performed by any church since the days of the Apostles ; and, in many respects, it will bear a favourable comparison with what was even then accomplished. By it many thousands of Heathens in the most populous regions of the earth, who would never have heard of Christ and his salvation, have been enlightened, converted, and saved ; to say nothing of the civil benefits conferred upon them, as in Africa and in the South Sea Islands ; and to say nothing of the many thousands who by it have been prepared for that heaven into which they have entered. To speak only of the work of Wesleyan Missions, as it now exists ; and of the churches now under instruction and training by *your* Missionaries to the Heathen : Is that work, undertaken at so much risk and sacrifice, and performed with so many prayers and tears, to be abandoned at the cry from a Meeting of professed Delegates ? Are the churches to be left to sink down into Heathenism, and souls that have risen at the voice of the Gospel heralds, who have gone among them and said, " Arise, shine, for your light is come, " to be involved again in midnight darkness ? Is Feejee to be left to be devoured by its cannibalism ? Is Africa to be left to suffer in her wrongs, and to perish in her crimes, because some persons are dissatisfied with the printing of a few Reports,

and because others think there is too much borrowed capital employed by the Treasurers? Are the empires of India, and China, and the extensive regions of North America, to be left unsupplied with Christian Missionaries, because Ministers best qualified for directing this great work are not removed at the will of a few individuals? Are the expressions of discontentment on these litigated minor questions, to have more influence upon us than the cry of the dying Missionary, Waterhouse,—“Send Missionaries! Send Missionaries!” or the prayer of the dying Hunt, “Lord, bless Feejee! Lord, save Feejee!” Is the world to be abandoned by Methodism, and are the six hundred millions of mankind to be left to perish in ignorance and sin, because, to preserve the Societies from continued agitations throughout the year, only three days are allowed to memorialize for changes in ecclesiastical government; and because men who desire to share in the government of the church are not allowed a place in the Conference? Shall Christ’s laws be violated,—his authoritative command,—“Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,”—be unheeded and disobeyed, because men, denounced for their anti-Methodistical conduct by the greater number of Methodist Circuits, are not admitted to audience by the Conference; or because three or four men, deemed unfit for the Wesleyan ministry, are separated from it? Are the four hundred Missionaries who have gone forth to pestilential climes, and to savages, to rescue them from death, to be left—with their wives and their “little ones”—to perish? Or are they to return broken-hearted to poverty and destitution in their own country, because some imaginary cause of dissatisfaction with the Executive has been perseveringly set forth by the parties who cry, “Stop all the supplies at once;” and that after the alleged cause has been fully investigated, and a unanimous vote of satisfaction and confidence has been passed by six hundred of the leading and most influential men in Methodism? Surely, if the supplies to Wesleyan Missions should be even partially stopped under such circumstances, it may be said, “*Blindness in part hath happened to our Israel!*”

4. There are other Funds to be left unsupplied by the order of the professed Delegates. The Funds of *Sabbath-schools, Week-day schools, Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove schools, and the Theological Institution*. In fact, all education, both of the children of Ministers and of the people, must instantly cease. Chapels are to be deserted, seats are to be surrendered, and Trustees are to be left helpless with their pecuniary responsibilities. Places of worship are to be abandoned, the poor are to be uninstructed and unrelieved, Ministers are to be sent to wander abroad and ask for a morsel of bread; and all this at the bidding of men who are striving for the mastery. Whether they intend it or not, the result of their efforts, if successful, would be to abolish the Wesleyan ministry, to destroy its sanctuaries, break up its Societies, scatter its congregations, and reduce all its noble monuments of piety and zeal to a state of irreparable ruin.

But such unreasonable and un-Christian efforts will not be successful. The supplies to Wesleyan Funds will not be stopped. Many at this September visitation for the renewal of their Quarterly tickets have doubled and trebled their annual contributions to the Worn-out Ministers' and Deceased Ministers' Fund; and many an affecting instance of self-denial and pecuniary sacrifice for the support of this Fund might be related. The Contingent Fund has already passed through the trial, and has been sustained. Yea, a Special Fund has been originated to meet the exigencies of Ministers deprived of their Circuit allowances, and sums of £100, and £50, and £20, have been spontaneously given to it. The Missionary Income, amidst the cry of "Stop the supplies," has exceeded the amount of the former year by £7,000. Sabbath-schools, week-day schools, Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove schools, and all forms of Wesleyan education, are yet continued, and will be supported even more liberally than they have hitherto been. Now, as in all former instances, the attempts to arrest the progress of Methodism will be overruled for its greater advancement. Its latent resources will be drawn upon, and be found fully adequate to the occasion. But, while this shall be the case, the *criminality* of those who stop the supplies to its funds will remain undiminished; and as great will be their guilt, as if all the destructive consequences we have named were to be realized.

Reader, be not a partaker of other men's sins! Be warned against attempts to starve God's Ministers into unfaithfulness. He has said to them, "Whoso toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye." Be warned against putting forth your hand to arrest in its progress the ark of the Lord. Be warned against disobedience to Him who has said, "Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs." Be warned by the Divine declaration, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay." Be warned by the examples of those who on former occasions of strife and division opposed themselves to the work of God. Many of them became not only wanderers from the fold of Christ while they lived, but they died the subjects of deep remorse; reproaching themselves for the evil they had inflicted on themselves and on their families. Be warned by the consideration of the injury which will be done to others who will be encouraged by your example, and, through you, separated from the church of Christ; and who will reproach you in eternity for the ruinous evils you inflicted upon them. Be warned by the consideration of your own certain separation from Wesleyan Methodism, if you persist in an unreasonable, un-Methodistical, and unscriptural course of conduct; for, though borne with at present, yet disobedience to Christ cannot be encouraged in His church; and, if persisted in, *must* issue in your separation from it. Be warned by your own conscience, which, if under the law of God, must condemn you. Think, while you are tempted to stop all the supplies to Wesleyan funds, what parties will rejoice in your doing so. Not your heavenly Father, who "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and

sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Not angels, who rejoice when one sinner repenteth. Not good, spiritual men, who desire the salvation of their fellow-creatures. Hostile Dissenters may rejoice; bigoted Churchmen may rejoice; Socinians, Papists, infidels, an ungodly world, will rejoice; hell will rejoice. Yea, with the prospect of the consequences that would inevitably ensue, if the Delegates' mandate were to be obeyed, "a shout" that would tear "hell's concave" would be heard from Belial and his host. Reader, ponder these questions, and answer them before God:—Will you aid the cause of Christ, or oppose yourself to it? Will you ally yourself with the friends or with the enemies of the Saviour? Will you kindle rapture in heaven, or give triumph in hell?

DISSENTING HOSTILITY TO WESLEYAN METHODISM.

TWELVE months ago three men who were connected with the Wesleyan ministry, but whose conduct had for many years sorely taxed the patience of their brethren, were repudiated by the Conference, as being unworthy of future recognition by that body. They immediately commenced a system of agitation, by means of the press and of public Meetings, for the avowed purpose of effecting certain changes in the Methodist economy, under the name of "Reform." This agitation has not been carried on by reason and argument, in an orderly and Christian manner, but by means of slander, defamation, falsehood, and brutal attacks upon personal character, perfectly disgraceful, not only to religion, but even to civilized life. In some instances the sanctities of divine worship have been violated, and scandalous riots have superseded the public service of God.

In these wicked and infamous agitations several Dissenting Ministers, and members of Dissenting churches, have taken an active and prominent part; and the entire system of agitation has been encouraged and applauded by two Dissenting newspapers, both of which are conducted by runaway Methodists; one of them the son of a Methodist Preacher, who is taught by his Dissenting connexions to hate and defame his father's friends; and the other an Ex-Local Preacher. Dissenting Ministers have appeared on the platforms of agitating Meetings, where the foulest calumnies have been uttered against Wesleyan Ministers, and have taken part in the Meetings as speakers. They have opened their pulpits to the agitators, and have lent their chapels for agitation Meetings; and in some places, where the Wesleyan Societies were in a state of perfect tranquillity, Dissenting Ministers have requested visits from the agitators, and have offered them every accommodation and encouragement in their efforts to promote jealousy, strife, and division among their peaceful Wesleyan neighbours.

I have been a surprised and grieved spectator of these unworthy proceedings on the part of Dissenters, whom I had long been accus-

tomed to respect as an important branch of the Christian church in this country, and have wondered what could be the cause of all this hostility; for I could never learn that the Wesleyan Connexion, or even the Wesleyan Conference, had ever given any of the Dissenting bodies the slightest intentional provocation, and much less had ever treated them in this manner. In the course of my reading I have just met with a statement, which appears to me to contain an explanation of the whole mystery; and I beg to lay it before the Wesleyan public, through the medium of your very useful publication, thinking that it throws light upon a subject, which certainly requires elucidation. The statement occurs in a Charge, which was addressed by the late Rev. Dr. Payne, the head of the Independent College, at Exeter, to a young Minister, who had been one of his pupils; and is as follows:—

If a congregation expends all its zeal upon itself,—if it displays little interest in the prosperity of neighbouring ones,—if it puts forth no helping-hand to assist them,—and especially if it views their success with the cankered feelings of envy and jealousy, there can be no doubt that its members are grossly deceiving themselves, if they imagine they have any pure, unadulterated regard to the glory of God, and the extension of his kingdom.

Bear with me if I enlarge a little upon this point, as there are few things in the Dissenterism of the present day more offensive to me than the prevalence of this evil, against which I would guard you. To an individual who is deeply concerned for the honour and prosperity of our denomination, scarcely anything can be more humbling and affecting than the sad lack of public spirit amongst us. How little disposed are our churches to regard themselves as constituting one army, and to feel that the success of one is the success of the whole! How feeble and lifeless the sympathy which pervades the body! How inconsiderable, in the case of any one Society, is the joy which the prosperity of sister-churches produces! How little regret does their want of success awaken! Nay; does not truth compel us to acknowledge, that when the localities of churches are contiguous, they are apt to mourn over each other's growth and enlargement, and only to rejoice in each other's downfall? "Tell it not in Gath." "*Proh pudor.*" Even Heathenism itself would be disgraced by such conduct. I know not, however, that Heathenism bears upon it so foul a blot.*

Upon this statement I beg to offer three brief remarks.

1. That it may be relied upon as correct. It is not made by a hostile Episcopalian, or a bigoted Methodist, but by an Independent, who was jealous for the honour of his own community, and had the most favourable opportunities for observation through a somewhat protracted life. He received his academical training partly in London, and partly in Glasgow. He exercised his ministry in Edinburgh, in Lancashire, and in the west of England; and he was for several years the Theological Tutor in two of the Independent Colleges, first in Blackburn, and next in Exeter. His testimony therefore may be relied upon. He knew what he said, and was under no temptation to exaggerate.

2. We here see a sufficient reason for that bitter hostility to the

* Payne's Lectures on Christian Theology, vol. ii., pp. 487, 488. 1850.

Wesleyan body which breathes through the "British Banner" and "Patriot" newspapers, and which so many Dissenting Ministers, and members of Dissenting churches, have manifested in the course of the last twelve months. If these men cannot bear to witness the religious prosperity of neighbouring churches, belonging to their own denomination,—churches which profess their own theological tenets, and adhere to the same system of ecclesiastical order,—how can they bear to witness the undeniable prosperity of their Wesleyan neighbours, who hold an Arminian creed, and a Presbyterian form of church government? The erection of a Wesleyan chapel, the enlargement of a Wesleyan Society, the formation of a Wesleyan Circuit, must be to them an intolerable annoyance. This, I apprehend, is a legitimate deduction from the statement of Dr. Payne, and will account for all the hard speeches and the unfriendly meddling of Dissenters in respect of the Wesleyan body.

3. From the statement of Dr. Payne the Wesleyan Methodists may learn an important lesson with regard to their own duty and interest as a religious community. Mr. Wesley constituted them "United Societies;" and hitherto, in accordance with his purpose and arrangements, they have remained a "Connexion," holding one system of doctrine, and being governed by one body of rules. From this union of the Societies with one another the most important benefits have arisen. The strong have helped the weak. The large and wealthy Societies have furnished liberal aid to those which are small and poor, both with respect to the support of the ministry, and the erection of chapels. A healthy circulation has thus been maintained in the body; for that which one member has lacked, another has supplied; and neither the hand nor the foot can say to any one member, "I have no need of thee." The consequence is, that the prosperity of one Society is the prosperity of all; a Cornish or a Yorkshire revival produces a thrill of joy through every Society in the land; ten thousand hearts are gladdened, and ten thousand voices are lifted up in thanksgiving to God. "All" Methodism "rings with jubilee," at the report of numerous conversions, wherever they take place. One of the changes for which the agitators clamour is the breaking up of the Societies and Circuits into Independent communities; so that none of their decisions, let them be what they may, shall ever be interfered with by any pastoral or other authority. But, I would ask, If the Wesleyans should adopt this Independent plan, what guarantee can be given them that the fearful evil of which Dr. Payne complains shall not ensue among them? Shall the spiritual children of John Wesley ever pine and sicken at another's joy? Shall a religious revival among the London Methodists produce mortification and grief in the country Societies? Is this a state of things to be desired? O ye happy praying Methodists, who feel in your own souls the power of religion, and rejoice in the spread of it everywhere, will you thoughtlessly countenance, under the specious name of "Reform," schemes and projects which, if

adopted, would produce in you and your children tempers of which Dr. Payne declares Heathenism would be ashamed? *Proh pudor!* “My son, fear thou the Lord and the King: and meddle not with them that are given to change: for their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?”

August 28th, 1850.

A LOOKER-ON.

NO SECESSION,—NO SURRENDER.

THIS is the war-whoop, to the sound of which the disaffected are required to dance, by the promoters of the intestine strife in Methodism. Feeble in numerical strength, as well as in strength of principle, and afraid to expose their weakness by a fair, manly, and open demonstration, they have chosen these bush-fighting tactics; not for the purpose of promoting any intelligible or creditable cause, which could be avowed, defended, and maintained,—but simply to harass the men who are working a venerable, long-tried, and heaven-blest system; and, if possible, to neutralize the good which the world might otherwise have derived from it. Paltry and wicked as this course is, we are not surprised to find these boasting “Reformers” adopting it. They are, in fact, shut up to it. What system of church order could *they* set up, who have started without a single principle to guide them? How can *they* be expected to promulgate a plan of ecclesiastical government, whose only bond of union hitherto has been their hatred of all government? We always predicted that when things came to this point, they would be at fault.

They have hitherto been employed in undermining and pulling down what is established; and this is easily done, when tools are found ready to their hand, in the persons of men to whom slander, vituperation, and falsehood is a congenial trade; and who can, in such times, contrive to make it a profitable one, too. But these tools are not at all fitted for building up a new system; and, to save the credit of the new scheme, the old tools must be buried out of sight. This the agitators seem willing enough to do, if they could only raise among themselves other and better instruments; but, failing these, they are fain to employ such as they have at command. It is to be feared, however, that the material is running short for slanderous speeches, since the agitators are compelled to draw largely on their own inventive faculties, and on the credulity of their auditors.

If we are correctly informed, one of them recently told his audience, that for fifteen years past he has been obliged to shut out the Methodist Preachers from intercourse with his family, on account of the vulgarity of their manners and habits, which made it impossible for his children to associate with them; and that the religion which they possess, was all acquired at home. This sounds very like the last-spent shot from a defeated and flying foe in battle; and will, at least, be quite as harmless to the reputation of the Methodist Preachers,

however it may affect the reputation of the orator. Only conceive of such advocates being the pillars of a new model-church, which is to eclipse the glory of Methodism ! We have heard of the church on a rock, the church in the wilderness, and the church in a house ; but this new church, founded on such men, such principles, and such conduct, deserves to be signalized, beyond all others, by some epithet worthy of its peculiar foundation ; and we humbly suggest that the most appropriate designation for it will be, (that is, if ever it assumes a visible form,) “the church in a bog.”

We can understand this cry, then, of “No secession.” It means, “We have no men fit to put forward in the character of Apostles and founders ;” “We cannot agree even upon a scaffolding for the building, much less upon a plan for the structure itself ;” “We dare not, at present, incur the expense of organizing a new system ; and we are afraid the number of chapel-deeds with flaws in them is not great enough to set us up for a beginning.” “Besides, perhaps in sounding the people on this point, we find that though they will sign declarations, and shout at public meetings, they fight shy when it comes to the matter of leaving the Society.”—But we do not understand, in connexion with it, the cry of “No surrender.” Does it mean that they intend still to pursue their course of agitation, labouring six days in the week to hold up to public execration those Ministers of the Gospel whom they describe as “Jesuits, Neros, lick-spittles,” &c. ; and on the seventh day to go and sit, with an air of most demure hypocrisy, under their ministry ? Will they tell all other religious bodies, that Methodism is worse than Popery, and, without exception, the most corrupt church on earth ; and yet seek to be recognised as belonging to its communion ?

If this is what they mean, we may safely leave them to the judgment of Christendom,—if, indeed, Christendom will think their petty squabbling worth notice. But, perhaps, they mean, that they intend not to surrender that new principle which they have enunciated in social economics, that the minority must rule the majority. This principle, however, must not be put forth too prominently, if the faction think of forming a new church ; for they will find it inconvenient in practice, especially since there is much reason to believe that many of them belong to a class whose *ultima ratio* may be expressed in the formula,—“I think, I judge, I decide.” Such persons are somewhat impracticable, even if in a minority of one, since they are apt to glory in singularity as the highest style of greatness.

We take it for granted, then, that this is one of the principles of which there is to be “no surrender ;” and we commend this idea of theirs to the sober consideration of all those quiet people who form the bulk of our Societies, and whose peace is menaced by such threats. It is high time for them to signify to these men, who never seem to know when they are defeated, that unless they submit to the sense of the overwhelming majority of their brethren, so plainly and

strongly expressed, they cannot be tolerated longer in their mischievous designs.

We have heard, indeed, of some other rights which these deluded men seem disposed to assert, and which they do not intend to surrender. One of these is that of stopping in the Society; and the other is that of stopping the supplies. We are prepared to deny each of these separately; but when they are both put together, the collocation becomes absolutely ludicrous. All rights on the one part involve corresponding duties on the other; and therefore, if these men have the *right* to remain in the Society, regardless of its laws and institutions, and with the avowed design of subverting them, it must be the duty of the Methodist Ministers, and of the Methodist people, to tolerate this, and thereupon to allow both their laws and institutions to be trampled upon with impunity! If it is the right of men calling themselves Wesleyan Methodists to stop the supplies from the ministry at home and abroad, it must be the duty of the Ministers to labour in the word and doctrine, and at the same time to starve! But do these infatuated men think that, at the bidding of a few individuals, the whole of the Methodist people will quietly consent to accept this code of duty? It is, indeed, the practice of the party to run down Methodist laws on the pretence of setting up Scripture laws; but the Methodists have enough common sense to see that many laws not textually scriptural, though in their spirit and scope they harmonize with New-Testament principles, are yet too useful, on the ground of Christian prudence and propriety, to be recklessly thrown away. Nor will they, even in respect of those which are purely conventional, but which have been found in practice to conserve the order and promote the efficiency of the body, consent to the wilful violation of them. The Methodists have surely as much right as any other society or corporation, to make laws for the internal regulation of their affairs, and to demand adhesion to them of all who seek admission into their Societies. And no man has, or can have, any right to remain among them, who declares that he will not observe these Rules. If, indeed, there was some external coercion employed to compel men once Methodists to remain so; if, as in Mahometan countries, it were death to secede, or, as in the ministry of the Establishment, secession were punishable with fine and imprisonment, then men who were bound to remain might have a right to demand essential changes; but not so where the association is purely voluntary.

We say, then, that even if the laws which these men trample on were merely arbitrary and conventional, they have no right to violate them with impunity. But they are more than this. Take, for instance, the Rule which requires contributions towards the support of the ministry. This is a Rule of the Society; and if it were nothing more, the exclusion of all who wilfully and factiously refuse compliance with it, would not only be justifiable, but inevitable. The universal breach of this Rule would amount, in fact, to a dissolution of the whole body.

But this is a requirement of holy Scripture, as plain as, "Honour thy father and thy mother." In proof of this, let the following passages be consulted: 1 Cor. ix. 7—14; Gal. vi. 6; Phil. iv. 10—17; 2 Thess. iii. 8, 9; 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. With these Scripture precepts before them, we ask what *right* have they to refuse their Ministers the maintenance which God has thus provided for them? Yet they ask why the title of Methodists is refused to themselves, when they are so plainly entitled to be called Christians! We take leave to doubt the Christianity of men who so openly violate the laws of Christ.

It cannot but strike the most superficial observer how Scripture laws have been disregarded throughout the whole of this agitation. Nor is it to be wondered at, that a movement which began in slander, railing, and reviling, and which has been throughout sustained by exaggeration and falsehood, should be consummated in dishonesty. It stands before the Christian public now, as it will be chronicled in history hereafter, as an ebullition of irreligion and immorality, the existence of which is humiliating to any Christian church, and the prompt extrusion of which, when developed, is the only reparation such a church can make to the cause of Christianity.

Upon the whole, the course now solemnly and deliberately recommended seems likely to bring matters to the speediest and most satisfactory issue. It will at once detach from the movement all who either have, or wish to have, any reputation for decorum or consistency. None but those who are reckless of *all* consequences will proceed to such extreme and insane measures. And even of those—at first led astray by the excitement of the time—a large proportion will repent, and amend in time to save themselves from excision. Already there are signs of wavering in the ranks, which serve to show, after all, that *real* Methodists have hearts which cannot be so readily turned to stone against their Ministers; and that, after listening to a good sermon, with spiritual profit, they cannot immediately retire into the vestry, and meet the Minister with treatment which is as revolting to themselves, as it is cruel to him.

We have heard, lately, of a movement for stopping the supplies, much more to be dreaded than any that agitators can get up. The Leader of a metropolitan class, on receiving his ticket, laid down his money under protest, and with the avowal that, unless he were protected in the quiet enjoyment of those religious privileges for which he was thankful to pay, he must, in his turn, stop the supplies. There are many others in Methodism like-minded. They demand *Peace* in the church of Christ; and it must be secured to them.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THANKS to *Iwra* for his excellent article.

No. XI.

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THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

NOVEMBER, 1850.

“WESLEYAN METHODISM AS IT IS,” IN ALL THE
ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLINE, IS “JOHN-
WESLEY METHODISM.”

“NOTHING is wanting in this kingdom but zealous, active Preachers, *tenacious* of order and exact discipline.” (Wesley.)

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.” (Jeremiah.)

“ALTHOUGH it is with us ‘a very small thing to be judged of you, or of man’s judgment,’ seeing we know God will ‘make our innocency as clear as the light, an our just dealing as clear as the noon-day;’ yet we are ready to give any that are willing to hear, a plain account both of our principles and actions; as having ‘renounced the hidden things of shame,’ and desiring nothing more, ‘than by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.’

“We see (and who does not?) the numberless follies and miseries of our fellow-creatures. We see, on every side, either men of no religion at all, or men of a lifeless, formal religion. We are grieved at the sight; and should greatly rejoice, if, by any means, we might convince some that there is a better religion to be attained, —a religion worthy of God who gave it. And this we conceive to be no other than love; the love of God, and of all mankind; the loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, as having first loved us, as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we ever hope to enjoy: and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul.

“This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, long-suffering, the whole image of God; and, at the same time, a peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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‘Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind ;
 Each prayer accepted, and each wish resign’d ;
 Desires composed, affections ever even,
 Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven.’

“This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of love, and joy, and peace, having its seat in the inmost soul, but ever showing itself by its fruits, continually springing forth, not only in all innocence, (for love worketh no ill to his neighbour,) but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around it.” (Wesley’s Works, 12mo., vol. viii., p. 3.)

That this religion might spread throughout the world, and, wherever it spread, be preserved in all its purity so “long as the world standeth,” the venerable Wesley exercised a vigilant, strict, and salutary discipline. And, wisely judging that a “church without discipline, like a vineyard without a fence, would speedily be trodden down by the wild boar of the forest,” he was careful to “commit” the same “to faithful men,” his successors in the ministry. Discipline is co-eval with Methodism ; as is also its administration in the hands of the authorized ministry. The Conference to this day, animated by the same spirit, labours for the furtherance of the same object, and exercises essentially the same discipline. This is denied. And every means that malignity can devise, and sophistry render plausible, has been unscrupulously resorted to, in order to beguile unwary men to a belief of that denial. But it will be evident to every unbiassed man who candidly considers the necessity of discipline, as recorded by Mr. Wesley ; his own method of administering it ; the objections urged against it and himself ; and his answers to those objections,—that the discipline now exercised by the Conference, is, in all its essential principles, the same as that enforced by Mr. Wesley.

Let us observe,

I. *The necessity of discipline.*

Mr. Wesley remarks, “But as much as we endeavoured to watch over each other, we soon found some who did not live the Gospel. I do not know that any hypocrites were crept in ; for indeed there was no temptation : but several grew cold, and gave way to the sins which had long easily beset them. We quickly perceived there were *many ill consequences of suffering these to remain among us.* It was dangerous to others ; inasmuch as all sin is of an infectious nature. It brought such a SCANDAL on their brethren as exposed them to what was not properly the reproach of Christ. It laid a stumbling-block in the way of others, and caused the truth to be evil spoken of.” (Vol. viii., p. 243.)

II. *Mr. Wesley’s method of exercising discipline.*

“We groaned under these inconveniences long, before a remedy could be found. At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since.” Proper persons having been appointed by Mr. Wesley to visit the members, in order to receive their weekly contributions, those

persons found some whose "behaviour was disorderly." And by this means, continues Mr. Wesley, "many disorderly walkers were *detected*." (*Ibid.*) And then the very first method adopted in the exercise of this primal discipline was,

1. INFORMATION given of the behaviour of those persons.

"In a while some of those *informed me*, they found such and such an one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately,"—what, that those persons were "informers?" "accusers of the brethren?" that "they ought to be exposed to public odium?" No such thing. This is the avowed judgment of agitators. But it struck Mr. Wesley, "This is THE THING, the *very* thing we have wanted so long." (*Ibid.*)

2. Mr. Wesley directed that INQUIRY should be instituted weekly into "the behaviour" of the members.

"I called together all the Leaders of the classes, and desired that each would make a *particular inquiry* into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were *detected*. Some turned from the evil of their ways. Some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence." (*Ibid.*)

Inquiry is now derided as "espionage," "sweeping streets," "dirty work;" and is falsely alleged against the Conference as innovation and evidence of tyranny.

3. This wholesome plan of inquiry, detection, and information, was applied by Mr. Wesley to *all* the Connexion.

"As soon as possible the same method was used in London, and *all* other places. Evil men were *detected* and reprov'd. They were borne with for a season. If they forsook their sins, we received them gladly; if they obstinately persisted in them, it was openly declared that they were not of us. The rest mourned and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced that, as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the Society." (*Ibid.*)

4. Mr. Wesley made this inquiry the imperative *duty* of every Leader.

"It is the *business* of a Leader to see each person in his class once a week at least, in order to *inquire* how their souls prosper." (P. 244.)

5. He also made it incumbent on him to give *information* weekly of those who were disorderly.

"It is the business of a Leader to meet the Minister weekly, *in order to inform him* of any that are disorderly, and will not be reprov'd." (*Ibid.*)

6. In order to detect and prevent this disorderly walking, the Leaders went at first to the *houses* of the members.

"At first they visited each person at his own house." And it was only when this method was found not to answer the end proposed, that the members of a class were assembled in one place. "And,"

adds Mr. Wesley, "by this means a *more full* inquiry was made into the behaviour of every person." (*Ibid.*)

What now would self-styled Reformers say to this Methodism—this "un-English" encroachment on the "liberty," nay, privacy, "of the subject?" Yet this is undeniably "John-Wesley Methodism."

7. That this scrutiny might be still more effectual, Mr. Wesley inquired himself *at the mouth* of each person, interrogating him with "brotherly questions!" He further inquired of his Leader; nay, more, of his *neighbours*, concerning his behaviour.

"As the Society increased, I found it required still greater care to *separate* the precious from the vile. In order to *this*, I determined, at least once in three months, to talk with every member myself, and to inquire at their own mouths, as well as of their Leaders and neighbours, whether they grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (P. 247.) Personal interrogation was therefore from the first a part of the Wesleyan discipline. Why is it, then, alleged against the Conference as "un-Wesleyan?" But, above all, where is the truth in the reiterated assertion, that it was "clandestinely foisted in 1835?"

Such, then, was Mr. Wesley's own "method" of exercising discipline,—of "detecting," and dealing with "disorderly walkers." And, whatever dissatisfied men may imagine, it was a method for which Mr. Wesley had "cause to bless God." And never will the Conference suffer the Connexion to be despoiled of this "cause" of devout thanksgiving, by yielding it up to any clamour, or even violence.

III. *Objections were urged against this discipline, both by some of the people and of the Preachers.*

It was to be expected that objectors would arise against discipline so righteous and so strict. It may naturally be asked, in the words of Mr. Wesley, "Was it possible that all these things should be done without a flood of opposition? The prince of this world was not dead, nor asleep; and would he not fight, that his kingdom might not be delivered up? In truth, the god of this world was not asleep; neither was he idle: he *did* fight, and that with all his power, that his kingdom might not be delivered up. He 'brought forth all his hosts to war.' He stirred up the *beasts* of the people. They *roared like lions.*" (Vol. vii., p. 200.) It is well worthy of remark, that the objections then urged were the same as those now put forward. In fact, these are but a revival of those, urged on the same grounds, and by the same classes of persons. "There is no new thing under the sun." And it certainly is no matter of surprise that the Conference should have met such objections in the same spirit and in the same manner as the venerable Wesley.

It was objected,

1. That it imposed RESTRAINT on the members.

"But, notwithstanding all these advantages, many were extremely averse to meeting *thus.*" (That is, so that full inquiry might be made

into their behaviour.) "Some, viewing it in a wrong light, not as a privilege, (indeed, an invaluable one,) but rather a *restraint*, disliked it on *that* account, because they did not love to be restrained in *any* thing." (Vol. viii., p. 245.)

2. It was objected that it was a NEW thing.

"Some objected, 'There were no *such* meetings when I came into the Society first; and why should there now? I do not understand these things, and this changing one thing after another continually.' It was easily answered,—It is pity but they had been at first. But we knew not then either the *need* or the benefit of them. That with regard to these little prudential helps, we are continually changing one thing after another, is not a weakness or fault, as you imagine, but a peculiar advantage which we enjoy. By this means we declare them all to be prudential, *not* essential. We prevent, so far as in us lies, their growing formal or dead. We are always open to instruction, and willing to change whatever we can change *for the better*." (*Ibid.*) This objection of novelty is now also urged. And yet new things are demanded. And this reply of Mr. Wesley is that now given also, and in the same spirit.

3. It was objected that it was UNSCRIPTURAL.

"Another objection was, 'There is no Scripture for this, for classes, and I know not what.' I answer, There is no Scripture against it. You cannot show one text that forbids them. You seem not to have observed that the Scripture, in most points, gives only general rules, and leaves the particular circumstances to be adjusted by the common sense of mankind. The Scripture, for instance, gives that general rule, 'Let all things be done decently, and in order.' But common sense is to determine, on particular occasions, what order and decency require." (*Ibid.*)

4. It was objected that it was MAN'S INVENTION.

"'But these,' said another, 'are all man's inventions.'" What then? Are prudential regulations necessary for the peace, purity, and safety of the church, to be flouted and resisted because they are the result of human wisdom and experience? How ineffably absurd! Yet this is the ground on which agitators resist established discipline. But hear Mr. Wesley. "These are man's inventions. And what then? That is, they are methods which men have found by reason and common sense, for the more effectually applying several scriptural rules, couched in general terms, to particular occasions." (P. 246.)

5. POPERY was also objected.

"An objection much more boldly and frequently urged is, that 'all these are mere Popery.' I hope I need not pass a harder censure on those (most of them, at least) who affirm this, than that they talk of they know not what; they betray in themselves the most gross and shameful ignorance. But the truth is, this is a *stale* objection, which many people make against anything they do not like. It is all Popery out of hand." (P. 250.)

6. Objections were urged against Mr. Wesley's POWER.

"What power is this which you exercise over both the Preachers and the Societies?" (P. 298.) "In November, 1738, two or three persons who desired to 'flee from the wrath to come,' and then a few more, came to me in London, and desired me to advise and pray with them. I said, 'If you will meet me on Thursday night, I will help you as well as I can.' More and more then desired to meet with them, till they were increased to many hundreds. The case was afterwards the same at Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle, and many other parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. It may be observed, the desire was on their part, not mine. My desire was to live and die in retirement. But I did not see that I could refuse them my help, and be guiltless before God." In what do the solemn conviction and motive of the Conference differ from those of this venerable man? In nothing. And by God's grace never will. "Here commenced my power; namely, a power to appoint when, and where, and how they should meet, and to *remove* those whose lives showed they had not a desire 'to flee from the wrath to come.' And this power remained the same, whether the people meeting together were twelve or twelve hundred, or twelve thousand." (*Ibid.*)

"Let it be remarked, it was I myself, not the people, who chose also the *Stewards*, and appointed to each the distinct work wherein he was to help me, as long as I desired. And herein I began to exercise another sort of power, namely, that of appointing and removing *Stewards*." (P. 299.)

"After a time," one, and another, and a third young man "severally desired to serve me, as sons in the Gospel, and to labour when and where I should direct. Observe: these likewise desired me, not I them. But I durst not refuse their assistance. And here commenced my power to appoint each of these when, and where, and how to labour; that is, while he chose to continue with me. For each had a power to *go away* when he pleased; as I had also to go away from them, or any of them, if I saw sufficient cause. The case remained the same when the number of Preachers increased. I had just the same power still to appoint when, and where, and how, each should help me, and to tell any, (if I saw cause,) 'I DO NOT DESIRE YOUR HELP ANY LONGER.' On these terms and *no other* we joined at first; on these we continue joined." "Neither did I at any time divest myself of any part of the power above described, which the providence of God had cast upon me, without any design or choice of mine." (P. 300.)

Such is Mr. Wesley's explanation and defence of his power. To the Conference he solemnly committed that power as a sacred trust. And for the same purpose do they maintain and "exercise it over both the Preachers and the Societies." But "several gentlemen were then offended at" Mr. Wesley's "having so much power:" (*Ibid.* :) just as several are now also at the Conference. Let Mr. Wesley's answer be

well considered: "If you can tell me any one, or any five men, to whom I may transfer this burden, who can and will do just what I do now, I will heartily thank both them and you." (*Ibid*) Such men Mr. Wesley did find, qualified by *Him* who had so eminently qualified himself. And to the Conference did he "transfer" this "burden" as to men who could and would continue to do as he did. And now let the Wesleyan people seriously say what number of men, and who they are, that could, and would exercise this power with such assiduous vigilance, with such laborious diligence, with such unfeigned disinterestedness, and with such fervent zeal for the welfare of the people and the Redeemer's glory, as the Conference have ever done, and do this day! albeit that Conference is so wickedly calumniated, and so unjustly reproached. Are those men who set up for Reformers likely to promote that religion described by Mr. Wesley at the beginning of this paper? Reflect, and say.

7. It was objected, and by some of the *Preachers*, that this discipline "SHACKLED FREE-BORN ENGLISHMEN."

"But some of our Helpers say, 'This is shackling free-born Englishmen.'" Hear his reply:—"It is nonsense to call my using this power 'shackling free-born Englishmen.' NONE NEEDS TO SUBMIT TO IT UNLESS HE WILL. So that there is no shackling in the case. Every Preacher and every member may leave me when he pleases. But while he chooses to stay, it is on the same terms that he joined me at first." (P. 300.)

8. The objectors to Mr. Wesley's power demanded a "Free Conference, wherein all things shall be determined by most votes." (P. 300.)

Votes offer a convenient substitute for reason and principle, and may sometimes be successfully resorted to when these are lacking and disregarded. Men there are now, also, who, regardless or ignorant of their own incompetency and unfitness, are morbidly ambitious of power, and jealous of its exercise in other hands. It is on this account they cannot tolerate LEADING MEN in the Conference; but would have those grave questions, involving the interests of Christ's church, "determined," not by "the wisdom which cometh from above," but by such majority of votes as weak, or rash, or dissatisfied, or factious, men may by any expedients contrive to obtain. But in every well-ordered community there must of necessity be Leading Men. God has ordained it so, as is evinced by His providence conferring diversity of gifts. But He has specially established the order in His church, by "the self-same Spirit dividing to every man severally as He will;" and in the wise distribution of His gifts, qualifying men for different departments of usefulness. Among these gifts we especially notice "governments," *κυβερνησεις*, (1 Cor. xii. 28,) which Theophylact explains, "*governing or managing* the affairs of the brethren." And Mr. Wesley, "so called from a peculiar talent for governing or presiding in assemblies." Hence it manifestly includes the gifts of *wis-*

dom and *authority* necessary to guide the counsels of the church. Now, those on whom "the self-same Spirit" has bestowed the gift "for the edification of the body of Christ," must necessarily exercise it; and must occupy that position, even though not higher than *primi inter pares*, to which those gifts advance them, and which is indispensable to their efficient exercise. Those who are thus endowed we acknowledge as Leading Men; and are thankful to the Head of the church for the wisdom and grace manifest in those whose "eye" is on the chart, and whose "hand" is on the helm, in these "days" of "rebuke and blasphemy;" and when "the blast of the terrible ones is a storm against the wall." Such, therefore, as resist their legitimate influence and authority—be they called "clique" or any other hard name—in favour of the romance of a spiritual democracy, resist the design and operation of the Holy Spirit. But every sound-hearted Wesleyan, looking at the Conference as at present constituted, will "count those Elders who rule well worthy of *double honour*," and will now, especially, even more gratefully and heartily than before, render "honour to whom honour" is due.

9. Mr. Wesley was accused of some INEXPLICABLE MYSTERIOUSNESS concerning money, and his motives were impugned.

"But perhaps you have heard that *gain* is the true spring of all our actions: that I, in particular, am well paid for my work; and that whoever survives me will see I have made good use of my time." (Vol. viii., p. 35.)

"You affirm that I rob and plunder the poor." "You assert that I am myself as fond of riches as most worldly Clergymen." "That the *honour* I gain is even greater than the profits." (Vol. ix., pp. 77, 78.)

"A gentleman in Cornwall extends the calculation" (of Mr. Wesley's gains) "pretty considerably. 'Let me see,' said he, 'two millions of Methodists; and each paying two pence a week.'" (Vol. viii., p. 258.)

Thus it appears that the apostolic Wesley was charged with robbery! and with the sordid motives of love of gain, and thirst of power. Now, such, precisely, are the calumnies invented and promulgated against those men whose eminent services have given them just prominence in the Connexion. Allegations equally mystified, unfounded, and false are blazoned abroad against the managers of public funds. "Calculations," some baseless, and others hyperbolic, are laboriously wrought up by men as ignorant of facts as they are eager to "*expose and detect*," and exaggerate, an error; or, in default of discovering one, to fabricate any whose ingenious plausibility might answer as well the purposes of detraction. But the "just dealing" of those honourable men, has been already made "as clear as the noon-day,"—the enemies themselves being judges. Yet those intemperate men, who make no conscience of slander, nor hesitate at violence, yearn for "John-Wesley Methodism!" What assurance have we that, had they been in his day, they would not

have been the abettors of the above most vicious detraction? Human nature is the same in every age. The same moral causes ever produce the same results. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees! because ye build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them that killed the Prophets."

10. THE NE PLUS ULTRA. It was objected to Mr. Wesley, finally, "But this is making yourself a Pope." (Vol. viii., p. 301.) "You charge me with promoting the cause of arbitrary Popish power." (Vol. ix., p. 76.)

"This carries no face of truth. The Pope affirms that every Christian must do all he bids, and believe all he says, under pain of damnation. I never affirmed anything that bears any the most distant resemblance to this. All I affirm is, the Preachers who choose to labour with me, choose to serve me as sons in the Gospel. And the people who choose to be under my care, choose to be so on the same terms they were at first." (Vol. viii., p. 301.)

"Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time which was before us." The Conference is held up to public "derision," as an "Inquisition." Those distinguished men, whom the providence of God hath raised up to guide its counsels, are grossly "reviled" as "Inquisitors-General;" as an infidel "clique:" whilst HE especially, emphatically he, of our whole Connexion, who has been honoured by the Head of the church, with endowments of wisdom, with depth of well-attested piety, with extent of invaluable services, with influence unequalled, and with dignity of "hoary hairs, found in the way of righteousness" even "above his fellows," is "mocked at" as the "Pope of Methodism." Who does not see that this unnatural, this unhallowed scoff, is precisely the same, and *in ipsissimis verbis*, as that pointed at Mr. Wesley by the scorers of *his* day? Let it, then, have precisely the same appropriate and sufficient answer. But, at the same time, let such impious derision, coming from those who once "durst not" have so sinned, be a solemn warning to all,—that they who "walk in the counsel of the ungodly" will speedily "sit in the seat of the scorner;" will soon give terrible proof that they have become companions of such as "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities;" and who, being "spots in our lovefeasts, and feeding themselves without fear, *durst* bring railing accusations." "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God; looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Now it is abundantly manifest, that the Wesleyan discipline, in all its essential principles, as respects members, official members, and Preachers, continues unchanged. There is nothing new either in the

discipline, or in the objections urged against it or against the Conference on account of it. But one illustrious FACT, honourable alike to the whole Connexion and to the Conference, rises eminently conspicuous above the slander and *ribaldry* of agitators, and gathers still greater moral beauty and grandeur from the violence of the storm ; namely, THE DISTINGUISHED WISDOM vouchsafed to that venerable body, and their STEADFAST FIDELITY to their sacred trust. For in the alterations which they have consented to make since Mr. Wesley's death, no principle has ever been conceded ; nothing essential has ever been changed. Nothing, therefore, can be more base, more wicked, more cruel, than the attempt to unsettle and alarm the minds of the people, by raising the present outcry throughout the Connexion. And wherefore this outcry against the Conference ? They assume not more power than Mr. Wesley found necessary for securing the purity of the church ; not more than is now indispensably requisite to enforce and maintain that purity, which is essential to its very existence. Neither do they exercise it with more resolute firmness, or less affectionate tenderness, than he. And if, like him, they steadfastly refuse to "divest" themselves "of any part" of that necessary power, it is from a motive and for a purpose, not other than those avowed by him. That they assume new powers, or exercise any power for purposes not disinterested, are gratuitous slanders.

But who are those men who now revive and reiterate, with such vehement outcry, that "stale objection" of Pope and Popery ? Who are they ? The very same who now cry, "Stop the supplies," "Starve the Preachers ;" and who in the metropolis of the empire, in "a deliberative assembly," and by deliberate act, with all the solemn mockery of prayer, and feigned invocation of the sanction and blessing of God, organise a plan for giving actual effect to a purpose unparalleled in the history of any church ; a purpose which, if their counsel could find an abandoned people to adopt it, would speedily "make havoc of the church" throughout the world ; and who, moreover, summon to their aid the promiscuous masses of the nation, with their forces of the press ; not even scrupling to accept the assistance of the most malignant "enemies" of the truth, "and of all righteousness." And thus these very men identify *themselves* with the spirit, and perpetrate the darkest crime, for which that church is signally stigmatised, already "drunken with the blood of the saints."

They affect, however, to justify themselves on the *lex talionis* principle. The Conference have excluded certain of its members ; and their accustomed supplies having consequently been cut off, it is therefore just that the supplies of the Conference should be stopped. Where is the parallel ? Let us see. Certain Preachers and others are excluded from the Connexion. That is a simple fact. Why have they been excluded ? Now, observe, this is the question. Because, having been "detected in walking disorderly, and inquiry having been made at their own mouth, they would not be reprov'd, but obstinately

persisting in their sin, the Conference openly declared that they were no longer of us." Is there any parallel between this and the "disorderly walking" in which these men were "detected?" What, then, is the grave offence of the Conference for which they have been so unjustly reproached; for which the enemies of truth have so prematurely shouted, "Aha, aha, so would we have it!" and for which Christian sectaries, urged by the impulse of inherent bigotry, have not been ashamed eagerly to join in the shout? Mr. Wesley having transferred the administration of discipline to them as to "men who could and would do just as he did," they, faithful to their trust, *did just as he did*,—they administered "John-Wesley Methodism." This is the head and front of their offending. This, divested of culpable and intentional misrepresentation, is the sum of all the charges alleged against them. And for this those grim men,—THE FAMINE DELEGATION,—"exceedingly fierce," and, rushing forth from their "hall of music," "cry havoc, and let slip," in all its ferocity, the howling spirit of Popish persecution. No infatuation impels unhappy man so precipitately headlong, as the judicial blindness of deceitful sin.

The Wesleyan people will arise in the calm and earnest might of their characteristic truth and devotedness, and execrate the atrocious plot, which would vainly purpose to coerce their faithful Pastors into the violation of their conscience, and the abandonment of their trust, by consigning them and their families to sudden indigence and distress. And those of the unhappy promoters and abettors of that plot, who perchance yet retain any remnant of their former grace, will, ere long, ashamed of themselves, and repentant "in dust and ashes," give thanks unto God, that they were restrained from perpetrating, in the frenzy of temptation, so foul, so nefarious a crime.

Are those men who now, reckless of consequences, are moving heaven and earth to agitate the Connexion, ignorant that the discipline against which they inveigh is the same as it ever was? They are either ignorant, or they know it. If ignorant, then with what face do they propose themselves as men fit and qualified to legislate for Methodism, and to "reform" its constitution? If they know it, then with what TRUTH do they allege against the Conference that they tyrannically encroach upon the people's liberty?—that they arbitrarily bring in new rules for their own aggrandisement? With what SINCERITY do they clamour for "John-Wesley Methodism?" With what *guileless intention* have they invented that crafty catch-word! With what *conscience* do they throw into perilous agitation the whole "church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood," *as if* to demand it? If those men—and in the light and view of eternity it would be their safest course—candidly and penitently acknowledge their ignorance; if it be so, then the affair is ended. But if they adopt the alternative, and say, "We see," then verily "their sin remaineth." Let all who fear God look well to it, that they be "not partakers of their sin."

Finally,—Who suffers aught of damage, or even inconvenience, by the application of Wesleyan discipline? Who has ever at any time so suffered, save the evil-doer; or he who *winces* most of all at that stern and unswerving law by which he is “restrained” from doing wrong? Christian discipline, like the Christian Magistrate, is appointed “for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well.” Therefore, whilst the latter long for peace and tranquillity throughout our Zion, the former “set themselves, and take counsel together, saying, Let us break their bands in sunder, and cast away their cords from us.” But they only “rage, and imagine a vain thing.” “HE that sitteth in the heavens will speak to them. I have declared the DECREE. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” And HE, whilst the wrath of man shall praise Him, “and the remainder of wrath shalt *Thou* restrain,” will most assuredly “give the Heathen to His Son for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.”

Let, therefore, the Wesleyan people, above all others, BE WISE. “Let them serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.” Let them “kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and they PERISH FROM THE WAY.”

Iωτα.

IRELAND, *September 14th*, 1850.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE REV. DANIEL ISAAC,

ON THE UNSCRIPTURAL AND IMPRACTICABLE THEORY OF CHURCH-GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS SET FORTH AND URGED BY THE DISTURBERS OF WESLEYAN METHODISM IN THE YEAR 1828; AND WHICH HAS BEEN REVIVED AND CONTENDED FOR IN 1849—50.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH.—“Whatever liberty the New Testament grants on the subject of church-government, it gives to no man or body of men authority to diminish the duties or privileges which are attached to the evangelical office by the Head of the church. Things which He has not settled are left to human prudence; but for us to presume to alter what He has ordained, is impious,—as though we were His superiors in wisdom and authority. Of this presumption you are guilty in reducing the evangelical office nearly to a cipher. Let us consult common sense: Will *it* decide that a man, who is following secular employments six days out of seven, is better qualified to govern the church than another who devotes the whole of his time to the study of religion and the service of Christ? Or must the man of business necessarily be superior in piety and virtue to him who is given up entirely to the work of the ministry?”—After some acute and sarcastic remarks on the practical absurdity of this theory as it would be exemplified in Mission Stations, Mr. Isaac quotes Rev. ii., &c., and proceeds: “The church of Ephesus had existed about forty years when our Lord sent this epistle to its chief officer. Elders (lay elders)

had been in it from the first ; but they are never noticed as its chief rulers. If any of the primitive elders were living at this time, they must have been from sixty to eighty years of age ; and if, at that time of life, after forty years' experience in the office of eldership, they were not intrusted with supreme authority, the fact furnishes a moral certainty that God never intended to subject His church to their sway. At the end of forty years, this church was governed by ONE person. The church by this time was pretty well established, and its extraordinary helps were fast declining. The Apostles were all dead but one, and he was tottering over the grave. If the Head of the church intended any alteration to be made in its polity because of its altered circumstances, as this was His last revelation to it, it was the proper time to notify it. But not a word on the subject. He left the abuses in each church to be corrected by the angel of it, and never thought of the expedient hit upon by our Solomons, of putting all to rights by raising to the supremacy a committee of (lay) elders."

Upon AGITATION he says: "It requires no great abilities to do harm. One sinner destroyeth much good. In rending Societies, our opponents have gathered up the wreck. And what has become of these? Why, a few of them have found their way back to their former home, stripped and wounded, and half-dead ; and the rest are gone into the world, and are perishing. If God had sent them, it would have been on the same errand He sends all His servants,—to seek the lost sheep, to convert sinners from the error of their ways. They do not deny that our people generally are on a par with other Christians as to piety and holiness ; and that, in the multiplication of numbers, we have left most denominations behind us. *Now, how can this be reconciled with what they are continually vociferating respecting the ambition, tyranny, and avarice of the Preachers?* They have never yet attempted to explain how such *wicked Ministers*, as we are represented to be, should have been so *successful in doing the work of Christ*. Do the vices generate virtues? and do men gather grapes of thorns? We fearlessly challenge them to produce an instance, in Scripture or history, of a *corrupted ministry* producing a *pure community*. They must all answer before the judgment-seat of Christ for the hinderances they have thrown in the way of the success of our labours."

Upon the "SUPPLIES," he says: "I never complained of my salary being insufficient, nor ever expressed a wish that it should be increased ; but I am not ashamed, however, to ask you, or any one else, whether you think the salary of an exciseman too great for a Minister of the Gospel while spending the best of his days in the service of the sanctuary? And I can scarcely restrain feelings which ought not, perhaps, to be indulged towards even the most depraved, when I hear men, who are perpetually *canting about their purity and zeal for the glory of God*, impeaching our motives, prating against us with malicious words, and, with a scornful air, teaching fools to sing,

‘ Money, money’s all their cry.’ If avarice were our ruling passion, might we not have gratified it more freely by following some other employment? When there are among our traducers some of the greatest blockheads saving thousands, it is not improbable that we might have found situations more lucrative and subject to less annoyance than the profession to which we are devoted. Mr. —, I am told, belongs to the law, and I think it does not become *him* to prate against the salaries of Methodist Preachers. Such a pious man, as he evidently is, will not, I presume, deny the care of men’s souls deserves as liberal remuneration as the care of their estates.”

Upon all this, Mr. Everett, his biographer, adds,—“ On comparing their” (the rebellious Leaders’) “ professions, repeatedly and publicly made, with the conduct of these men, *a melancholy scene of duplicity was presented equally dishonourable to Christianity, and to human nature.*” He also adds,—“ This letter contained some *just remarks in defence of the Special District-Meeting which was held at Leeds, and on which so much odium had been cast by men who were hostile to the discipline of the Wesleyan body, and who wished to effect the subversion of its essential principles.*”

INTERROGATION A PART OF ENGLISH STATUTE-LAW.

EXTRACTED FROM “THE LAW TIMES,” AND COMMUNICATED BY A SOLICITOR IN YORKSHIRE.

By Letters patent, (33 H. VIII.,) as to the foundation of the Cathedral Church of Chester, the office of Chorister, or lay-Clerk, was instituted, together with statutes for Government; whereby a power is given of admonishing and punishing at discretion, and of expelling, Officers and Choristers.

Then comes the appointment of a Visiter, namely, “ We appoint the Bishop of Chester, for the time being, to be the Visiter of our Cathedral Church; requiring and commanding him, that, out of Christian fidelity and the ardent zeal for godliness, he do watch and take especial care that these statutes and ordinances be inviolably preserved; and that this may be the case, we order and require that the Bishop, whenever he shall be called on by the Dean, or two of the Canons, yea, even if uncalled for, yet once in every three years, do, in his own person, unless some weighty cause prevent him, and then by his Chancellor, visit our Church; and we do invest the said Bishop with full authority, that on any of these articles contained in our statutes, and upon every other the articles whatever that concern the estates and advantage and honour of our Church, he may well *interrogate* the Dean concerning any misdemeanours or crimes whatsoever; and on such discovery of the truth, the Bishop shall punish and correct according to the intenseness of the misdemeanour or crime; and shall

execute every thing that shall appear necessary to the extirpation of vice, and all other things that are judged lawful to appertain to the office of Visiter."

A Chorister having been removed by the Dean and Chapter, it is unnecessary for them to set out the cause thereof.—*Reg. v. Dean and Chapter of Chester, Q. B. June, 1850.*

It may possibly be said, that all this refers merely to one of the "tyrannical acts" of Henry VIII. Yet, since Henry was an English King, and this particular arrangement, made by him, is still recognised and enforced in English courts of law, the practice of interrogating reputed offenders is not so totally "un-English" as we have been taught to suppose. Although Henry was a Reformer, and thought it his special vocation to diminish the power of the Clergy, yet he felt it possible to do too much in that line; and saw that when Ministers of religion were made utterly powerless, they became utterly contemptible, and consequently useless; and, therefore, he empowered the Bishop of Chester, on hearing of the misconduct of his choristers, to go and inquire into the truth or falsehood of such reports, and act accordingly. For this, however, he will most likely be despised and disliked by those misnamed Reformers, whose course resembles that of a flame of fire; and who, when once in motion, never stop till they have reduced everything to ashes, and thereby to a common level.

OLD HUMPHREY'S JUDGMENT ON REFORM.

WRITTEN IN A LADY'S ALBUM.

THY heart is an Album. Have a care, then, what it contains. Above all things, let *His* name be inscribed therein who can write *thine* in the book of life.

When thistles grow in thy neighbour's grounds, it is high time to look into thine own paddock. If thine eyes can discern the faults of *another*, thy sight should be quick enough to see thy *own*. In every kind of reformation it is better to *do* a little, than to *undertake* a great deal. While others, with axes of zeal and anger, try to fell the giant oaks in the forest of human infirmity, weed thou the little garden of thy heart in quietness and peace.

Think much of what God *has* done, and thou wilt not doubt Him in what He has promised *to do*. Be thankful for thy *table crumbs*, and be cheerful, and thou shalt never be in want of a *banquet*; for a grateful and a "merry heart" hath a continual feast. (Prov. xv. 15.)

The great business of earth is to prepare for heaven! Thou canst save thyself, or thou canst not. If thou canst, up and be doing; for there is no time to spare. If thou canst not, away at once to Him

who is able to "save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." (Heb. vii. 25.)

Take these hints kindly; and take with them, also, for thee and thine, the hearty blessing of
 OLD HUMPHREY.

NOTICES OF PUBLICATIONS.

The objectionable Claims of the Wesleyan Reformers to the Attention of the Conference. A Pamphlet; in which the Conduct of the Reformers, including that of the expelled Ministers, is analyzed; the Policy of the Conference is justified; and the genuine Friends of Methodism, at the present Crisis, are affectionately advised. By a close and constant Observer of the existing Controversy in the Wesleyan Church. London: sold by John Mason, 66, Paternoster-Row.— It is not necessary for us to say more concerning this excellent pamphlet, than that it fully answers the title it bears; and that it is well worthy of being purchased and read by every Wesleyan Methodist.

"Stop the Supplies." A Tract for the Times. By a Looker-on. Printed by S. Bowering, Thetford.— This is a four-paged composition, in creditable verse, and may succeed in awakening some minds to the evil of withholding their contributions to the work of God, when a pamphlet in prose would not be read. "A verse may find him who a sermon flies."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANTI-DIOTREPHES.—We fully agree with you; but the subject, even in the way of reference, is too painful to be dwelt upon.

AGNITAS.—Your communication was overlooked at the time when it was forwarded. It is now too late to insert it.

VERAX.—We would not have you waste your time in writing out for publication the case of re-asserted falsehood, when denial and proof have been officially given. It is deeply lamentable that such cases are now common, as every impartial observer of what is passing in opposition to Wesleyan Methodism must perceive. The instance named is a sorrowful proof of the rapid degeneracy of the human mind, when it has once entered on an evil course. By the obstinacy manifested, we were not much surprised; but by the falsehoods asserted, and re-asserted, where they must have been known to be such, we have been really shocked.

No. XII.

PRICE 1*d.*

THE
WESLEYAN VINDICATOR
AND
CONSTITUTIONAL METHODIST.

EDITED BY THE REV. SAMUEL JACKSON,
AND A SUB-COMMITTEE.

DECEMBER, 1850.

A VIEW OF WESLEYAN-METHODIST AFFAIRS:
RETROSPECTIVE AND PROSPECTIVE.

At the beginning of the year we commenced our periodical with an article headed, "The Case stated," in which we recapitulated the several parts of the controversy which had recently arisen in the Wesleyan Connexion; and which had, at that time, been fairly settled by an appeal to facts and argument. At the close of the year we are naturally led to review what has since then transpired, and to inquire into the present position and future prospects of Constitutional Methodism.

In taking such a review, the first circumstance which forces itself upon our attention is, the altered and totally different ground now occupied by the disaffected to that on which they then professed to stand. Twelve months since, the almost exclusive reason of complaint put forth was, the "illegal" expulsion by the Conference of three of its members; but now, the entire system of Wesleyan Methodism is declared to be oppressive and tyrannical, and altogether unworthy of countenance and support. This declaration in itself sounds strangely and inconsistently from the lips of men who have asserted, and re-asserted, their undiminished love to Wesleyan Methodism, their unalterable intention to remain in connexion with it; and who make loud and bitter complaints if, by the exercise of church discipline, they are separated from it. In the name of common sense, we ask, What do they mean by such contradictory declarations and professions? If the system to which they profess inalienable attachment has become so corrupt and injurious as they represent, how can they continue to love it? and why should they desire to continue in connexion with it? If

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AND SOLD AT 66, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

totally changed, as they falsely declare, then it is no longer that which is worthy of their adherence; and they ought immediately to abandon it, and not hang their eternal interests upon a mere name. But we leave this, with other glaring inconsistencies of the same party, to their inevitable results upon thoughtful minds, and proceed to review what has transpired since we commenced our periodical.

We repeat the statement, that the ground now said to be held by the disaffected is totally different ground from that on which they professed to stand twelve months ago. Then it was stated that the Conference had acted arbitrarily and illegally, that it had abused the power with which it had been intrusted, and was guilty of mal-administration. Now it is said, not that the Conference is false to its own laws of government, but that the essential principles of the Connexion are unscriptural and oppressive. The office and relationship of the ministry, as held among us, the election of officers, the rules of the Society, and the entire disciplinary code, are now condemned and denounced; and plans of pretended reform are proposed and advocated, which, if carried out into practical working, would revolutionize and destroy the whole system of *Wesleyan Methodism*. Why has this change come over the day-dream of these men? It is because they have no settled principles on which they are acting. They wander like men in sleep, through unconnected thought and action. Why have they so entirely changed their ground within so short a period of time? It is because the ground they at first took would not support them. Before the declarations of scriptural and manly principles, it sank under them like a swampy bog; and they were obliged to leave it, if they would continue to make any appearance at all among professing Christians. Mr. Martin, in his first speech at Exeter-Hall, declared, on behalf of thousands, as he said, and in the presence of the expelled Ministers, that the ground taken respecting them would not secure the support of public opinion; and Mr. Bromley, at the Meeting of pretended Delegates held in London, promised a plan of improved action, such as should place his friends and supporters on the elevated ground of *principle*,—thus tacitly admitting, that up to that period they had been without any settled principle. We have looked, since then, for his formal announcement of such a plan; but we have not seen it; nor do we now hope to see it, though we are fully assured, that neither he, nor some other of his brethren, can eventually submit to the democratic rule and government of the Committee appointed over them. If ever the term *unprincipled* was justly applicable to any party of men associating themselves together for an avowed object, it is applicable to the professed Wesleyan Reformers of the present time. “What do they want?” “What will they do?” are questions that have been asked a thousand times over. They are continually shifting their ground, and altering their proposals; and if they make any “advance” at all, it is an “advance backwards,” as a somewhat Irish

military phrase would express it. We will look at some of the stages of this retrograde movement.

1. It was stated, and with professed certain knowledge of the fact, *that a large number of the Wesleyan Ministers were dissatisfied with the administration of Methodism*, and that they were ready, as soon as they should find that they had the support of the people, to unite with them in efforts for changes that would be sure to issue in success. A practical contradiction of this statement appeared in the votes given at the Manchester Conference on the cases of Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffith: but it was said that *many* Ministers present at that Conference did not vote for their expulsion; and afterwards expressed their strong disapprobation of what was done. Unfortunately, the **MINISTERS' DECLARATION** *proved* the statement put forth concerning the disunion of Ministers to be false: for, within a few weeks, nearly all of them signed their names to a document which declared their judgment of the righteousness and the necessity of the acts of discipline performed by the Conference; and their resolute determination—whatever might be the efforts made to induce them to do otherwise—“not to mutilate, nor alter, the essential principles of that pure and simple constitution which, under God, had been confided to them as a sacred deposit by Mr. Wesley.” On the publication of this Declaration, no attempt was made to justify or explain the statement made professedly on personal knowledge of the disaffection of *many* of the Ministers; but they were all immediately branded as “slaves,” “despots,” “tyrants,” and “oppressors,” who must be opposed and overthrown by “the people.”

2. The open failure of this part of the revolutionary plan of reforming Methodists forced them to attempt something else. *They appealed to the People*, saying, it was no longer hopeful to attempt anything with the Ministers; and that if the sentiments *known* to exist in the minds of a great majority of the people were made known, the Ministers would, for they *must*, yield to them what they desired. To succeed in this attempt *Christian* agitators resorted to the most un-Christian means. Public meetings were called, composed of all classes of the British community. Not only deluded Methodists, but worldly politicians, and notoriously ungodly men and women, were appealed to for judgment on Wesleyan rule and government. Calumny, slander, and reviling, were poured forth in torrents upon the most eminent and beloved Ministers, and upon every institution and agency of Methodism. A Monster Petition, and “Bill of Rights,” as it was called, was hawked about in parts, which were afterwards to be put together, and to astonish the Connexion by the vast amount of signatures it should have received. *Secret* pledges were taken to “stand or fall” by the leading agitators, and their plans for Wesleyan Reform; and Aggregate Meetings were held of pretended Delegates to discuss the questions at issue, and to secure, by the appointment of “a Committee of Privileges for the People,” their rights and liberties. It was soon evident that

the people desired no such interference, for they disowned the professed Delegateship, by formal resolutions, refused to sign the "Bill of Rights," and to memorialize for changes. After all the unscrupulous efforts made through several months preceding the Conference to obtain signed petitions and memorials from the people to the Conference for organic changes, not more than *twenty-two* were sent from constitutional Meetings, and they were so contradictory in the subjects of their requests, that they nullified each other; and as for the Monster Petition, which was to astonish all Christendom by the number of its signatures, and *force* the Conference to make the desired changes, it has never appeared! It now fairly belongs to the Waste-Paper question; and, with the "Wesley Banner" and the unsold copies of Mr. Kaye's "Times," may have made up the five or six tons of paper, sold to Panton and Co., and which so strangely passed from a few cwts. to that large amount. At any rate, nothing now is heard of the people's Bill of Rights; and no tangible document is put forth in proof that a large majority of the people are desirous for organic changes. With this public failure, both with the Ministers and the people, it might be supposed that no more attempts would be made to revolutionize Wesleyan Methodism; but it must be remembered that several of the leading agitators are personally interested in such proceedings, and are dependent upon them for pecuniary support. To say nothing of "the wages of unrighteousness" received by expelled Ministers, there are the proprietor and editor of a weekly newspaper, the itinerant declaimers, the Central Committee, and the responsible parties for the branch Societies, who all need support and aid from the Reform Fund, as it is called; and, therefore, another proposal has been made, and that is,—

3. *To stop all the supplies to Wesleyan Funds.* This proposal, or rather command, (for it was authoritatively given by the Aggregate Meeting of professed Delegates,) is obviously revolutionary and destructive in its object; for, if obeyed, it would not merely reform Methodism, but entirely destroy it. We have no doubt of its being suicidal, in its real results; and as soon as we heard the cry, "Stop all supplies to Connexional Funds," we heard it as the death-knell of professed Wesleyan Reform; but the intended end of the proposal is apparent, and cannot be mistaken. And who can view that object without a shudder at its recklessness and cruelty? To stop all the supplies to Connexional Funds, would be to starve to death the widows and orphans of deceased Ministers, and to leave without any sustenance but that of parish-relief aged and infirm Supernumeraries. It would be to annihilate all Wesleyan Missionary agency, and to abandon, at once, the Heathen to unrelieved ignorance and misery. It would be to close the doors of all Wesleyan Sabbath and week-day Schools, and to leave the children of the poor without religious instruction and training. It would be to leave unsupplied with Christian Ministers the most destitute parts of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and to allow the "people to be destroyed for lack of knowledge." But this

cry is futile. It is, in fact, the summons to true Wesleyans to increased liberality and exertion ; and we should wonder that they who uttered it had not learned wisdom from the past, if it were not that we know they were driven to it of necessity. It is their last resort ; on which they have hazarded the result of the conflict, and which is failing them most miserably. Through this cry their impotence has been openly manifested. The response to it for the Missions was found in the increased income, for the year, of seven thousand pounds. A Special Fund has been instituted for the relief of Ministers whom they may deprive of their Circuit supplies ; and, recently, more than five thousand pounds have been furnished towards the ten thousand to be raised, in addition to ordinary contributions, for educational purposes. This, however, was not the object of those who instituted and published the mandate of, "Stop all the supplies." Their object was not the support and extension of Methodism, but its entire destruction ; and their guilty and fearful responsibility is not at all lessened by the actual results. They must, according to their design, give an account of themselves to God. And not less cruel is the effect of their un-Christian and un-Methodistical command upon the unwary and confiding of their friends and supporters. Without providing an ark to shelter them, and whilst enjoining upon them continuance with the Wesleyan Societies, they urge and require them to do that which, of itself, separates them from Methodism ; and were it not that the Ministers of the Connexion are more compassionate to their mis-directed and deluded adherents than are professed Wesleyan Reformers, the results, in sheep scattered abroad without a shepherd, would be most lamentable and distressing. As it is, hundreds, perhaps thousands, will be, as through the agitations of 1834 and 1835, separated from Methodism, who will find no spiritual home in any section of the church of Christ. Happily, however, the people, in general, are not to be thus severed from the Wesleyan Societies by the revolutionary cry of, "Stop all the supplies." A devout and spiritual mind revolts from the course thus prescribed, and cannot think of it without repugnance. The laws of Christ, of Methodism, and of humanity, condemn it ; and there are instincts in the human mind, and in the regenerated heart, that prompt to an opposite course. A somewhat modified proposal has been made of "*Divert* the supplies ;" but this is so obviously designing and selfish, that it commends itself to none but the most prejudiced and the most reckless. What will be the next proposal, we cannot tell ; but this, we are sure, will not succeed ; and we view the present situation of the professed Wesleyan Reformers as most pitiable. They are evidently driven, by desperation and necessitous circumstances, to their last shift ; and a formal separation is now all that remains to them. Whether they will so abuse the denominational title of the self-denying members of the Scotch Church, as to describe themselves as "*Free Methodists* ;" or whether the leading agitators will, when they have accomplished their own ends, hand over their

adherents to the New Connexion, or to the Wesleyan Association, we cannot say; but their present situation is truly distressing; and cannot fail to move the compassion of a devout and reflecting mind. We must wait for the actual and entire results, as they shall be found in a retrospective view to be taken at the end of another year. We may, however, at the present time, examine the position of constitutional Methodism, and mark, with our readers, its unfailing strength and durability.

And, first, we observe, *there are no signs of decay in its Ministry.* This is important. Next to the presence of God, it is *vital* in relation to a church's prosperity. All history proves this, and testifies to the fact, that the state of religion in any branch of the church of Christ is in accordance with the character of its ministry. And had the Wesleyan ministry sunk down into ungodliness and supineness, then there would be reason to believe that Methodism was on the decline. But it is not so. The admission of unconverted men into the Wesleyan ministry has never been so much as charged upon the Conference. There may be solitary instances of deception by candidates, and of departure from God after ordination; but, on the whole, it is an undoubted fact, that the Wesleyan ministry is **A CONVERTED MINISTRY.** And, if so, then it is of God's own appointment. He has created and formed it; He has given it a commission which, if faithful, it shall accomplish and fulfil. And we are not without hope that its present trials will prove beneficial to it. The most earnestly devoted Ministers of the Gospel, known to us in history and biography, whether Nonconformists or Episcopalians, were those who lived and laboured in troublous times. And it will be so with Wesleyan Ministers. The "railing accusations" brought against them, will test their principles, lead them to examine their motives, weaken their expectations from man, force them into communion with their own hearts, and to more unreserved dependence on God. These effects of "the things they suffer" already appear.

Nor is there any reason to fear *the decline of the ministry in its attachment to the Wesleyan system of doctrine.* In this respect, Wesleyan Methodism has, in one view, an advantage over all other sections of the church of Christ. In the Establishment, through family patronage, or royal appointment, an evangelical Clergyman may be succeeded by one who shall, by Tractarian heresy, scatter to other churches for spiritual food the sheep that had been gathered into one fold. Among the Presbyterians, where the nomination to office and occupancy has usually been by Trustees, the chapels and endowments of the orthodox have not unfrequently passed into the hands even of men who "denied the Lord who bought them," and who have taught others to do the same. The Independents have placed their election of Pastors wholly with the respective churches; but when, after standing forth in competition with other Ministers for some

weeks, and inquiring of the congregation whether they think he will serve and please them, a candidate is elected by an Independent church to be their Minister, that church has not, in ordinary cases, the power to dismiss him, if he should become heterodox in his doctrine, or even immoral in his life. It may leave him in possession of the sanctuary, and form itself into another Independent church; and the Ministers of a Congregational Union may, in a case of *suspected* immorality, dissolve the Association, and receive all into the *new* Union but the suspected Minister, as was lately done in Lancashire; yet, notorious cases might be referred to in which Independent Ministers have maintained their right by law, and kept possession of their pulpits, when large majorities of their churches desired and sought their removal. Mr. Wesley, with his far-seeing wisdom, and under the direction of Divine Providence, placed it, by the Poll-Deed, beyond the power either of the Ministers or the people to introduce corrupt doctrine into Wesleyan chapels. Should they do so, the law would be brought in to drive away the heresy. A Minister, or a Trustee, may become Calvinist, Socinian, or Mormonite; but he cannot secure the preaching of doctrines in accordance with his altered creed in any Wesleyan chapel, by the office he holds. A majority of the Ministers, or of the Trustees, may alter their creed, but they cannot introduce into a Wesleyan chapel another doctrine than that which is found in Mr. Wesley's Notes and Sermons. Were they to attempt to do so, another party would immediately step forward and arrest the intrusion. And it was mainly to secure the teaching of Wesleyan *theology* in Wesleyan chapels, that Mr. Wesley placed his system under the protection of law by the enrolment of his Deed of Declaration in the High Court of Chancery. Not that the funds of the trust-estates may fall into the hands of Ministers, as some have, of late, falsely declared,—for the Ministers have no control over the funds, and derive no pecuniary benefit from them,—but that the pure Gospel might continue to be preached by his Ministers and to his people. And where has it occurred that a Wesleyan congregation had its ears assailed, and its piety outraged, by the preaching of false doctrines? If it were to occur, the remedy is at hand; and, if applied, would prove effectual.

But, it may be said, with this legal security for sound doctrine, the ministry may slumber and be ineffective, as was the case with the Church of England in the last century, when her Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, were the same as they are now; but, as we have before seen, the Wesleyan Conference provides not only for subscription to Wesleyan doctrines, but also for a converted, living ministry. It allows no unconverted men, known as such, to enter it; and it is most watchful over all who belong to it,—indeed, too much so for those who imagine they could improve it.

Nor is there reason to fear from *the decline of attachment, on the part of the Ministers, to the economy and discipline of Wesleyan*

Methodism. As a body, they have shown themselves ready to risk their all for its protection and support. And this has been equally so by the younger as by the older Ministers. The fathers of Methodism had the presence and friendship of its venerated Founder. They witnessed his apostolic labours, and beheld his success; and, from what they saw of him and his successful efforts, they were enthusiastically attached to his person; and, as his children in the Lord, they received his counsel with the most profound respect. After his departure to another world, they pleaded his opinions and advice, and were careful to make them known to those whom they received among them. And in this respect (notwithstanding the accusations of a superstitious veneration for our beloved Founder) his name has been a firmament of power, binding all Methodism together, and holding it fast in times when other communities were rent asunder by the most fierce and desolating storms. And with similar ardent veneration for the Founder of Methodism which was possessed by their predecessors, the Ministers of the present day are attached to the Wesleyan economy and discipline; and that also from the deep conviction of its *practical utility*, as seen in its results, not merely within a life-time, but in more than a hundred years. They love it for its *usefulness*,—for the blessings which it confers on mankind. They view its results not only in the towns, and villages, and hamlets of Great Britain, but also in the great American Methodist Episcopal Church; in the numerous Societies of spiritual Christians which it has raised up, under God, in the West Indies, in Southern and Western Africa, in India, Australia, and in the islands of the South Seas: and with this view of its glorious achievements, Wesleyan Ministers feel their great responsibility, and *dare not* allow the system of Wesleyan Methodism to be tampered with by a few men, who imagine they can improve it, by altering its essential principles, and framing it more in accordance with the democratic systems of the age.

Nor is there *any decline of ability and zeal in the ministry*. In looking back to the earlier periods of Methodism, and thinking of Mr. Wesley's coadjutors, we almost involuntarily exclaim, "There were giants in those days!" And great and honourable, in their character and labours, were their immediate successors. But, on a calm review of the whole case, we have no hesitation in saying, there never was greater ability in the Wesleyan ministry than at the present time. This is the uniform testimony of the aged Ministers of the body, whose early associations would bias their judgments in favour of the departed of their brethren, rather than of those who remain; and it is also evident by the published sermons of the early Methodist Preachers, when compared with the printed discourses of Ministers now living. Nor are the Ministers of the present day less laborious and zealous than their predecessors. They do not so frequently preach in the open air, because they have more chapels to preach in than had their fathers. They do not walk and ride as many miles as did the first itinerants, because the distances between the places of worship are

less. But if they have not so much physical, they have more mental exercise; and, in this respect, they have duties to perform which were scarcely felt by their predecessors, and which wear down the lives of men much more speedily than riding on horseback, or walking on the road. And when have Ministers been required for self-denying and self-sacrificing labours, and Wesleyan Ministers were not found to perform them? To say nothing of the herculean efforts of Ministers in our own country, what do the silent and solitary graves of martyred and departed brethren in heathen lands declare? Not only the youthful candidate has been found ready to be "baptized for the dead" in Western Africa, but the very Sauls and Barnabases of our churches at home,—the Shaws, the Bumbys, the Crowthers, the Waterhouses, and the Boyces,—have gone forth, and, for the salvation of Heathens, have suffered sickness, shipwreck, persecution, and death. And there are more at home now ready to go, if required. They would not, for they *dare not*, refuse the call, if it were made upon them, to "hazard their lives for the name of Jesus Christ." The original spirit of Wesleyan Methodism still lives in its Ministry.

Nor are "*the people*" less attached to the system of doctrine and discipline of Wesleyan Methodism. From the noisy professions and reports made by agitators, strangers might suppose that the Connexion is dissolving, and that if the Ministers are united, the *people* are not with them, and that soon, very soon, a disruption will take place which will astonish all Christendom. But it is not so. The people remember "the rock from which they were hewn, and the hole of the pit from which they were dug;" and they remember, also, who were the instruments of their exaltation to light and life in Christ Jesus. And this, with its tender and powerful associations of *time*, and *place*, and *means*, produces within them a strong and sacred affection, which cannot easily be destroyed. They know also, by experience, the blessedness of the *communion of saints*, as enjoyed by Wesleyan Methodists. They know the family-feeling which pervades the entire community; the Christian brotherhood that extends, not merely through one Society, or through one Circuit, but through *all* Wesleyan Societies, and *all* Wesleyan Circuits, throughout the world. As a Wesleyan Methodist, he has union of spirit and name with the converted African, and with the baptized Feejeean. And, with this privilege, he is not disposed to narrow up his fellowship within the limits of an independent or isolated church. He knows, also, that he has a large and ample field for usefulness; that in personal liberality, prayers, and efforts, he is connected with an agency which pervades the greater portion of the world; for he belongs to a community which is endeavouring to extend salvation to *all* mankind. "The world is my parish," is the saying of every genuine Wesleyan Methodist, as well as of the Founder of Methodism. He is not bigoted, not sectarian, but a true *catholic*. He loves all men for Christ's sake; and,

believing in universal redemption, he desires and seeks the salvation of all. He is not restrained by theological elections and reprobations; he is not imprisoned within a single church or congregation. He lives and breathes freely in "a large and wealthy place;" and, having exercised his gifts, talents, and affections on the world at large, he cannot allow himself to be *cooped* up within such narrow inclosures as separatists would mark out for him.

Besides, he finds in Wesleyan Methodism *real freedom of thought and action*. Not the mere name, as in a republican land, where the Negro is held in bondage, or, if pronounced free, as in the northern states of America, is treated as a slave,—being debarred all intercourse with society, and disallowed civil rights. A thoughtful man knows there is more real freedom under the monarchical government of Great Britain than in the country of boasting democrats. Good government is essential to freedom. Without it, there is lawless savagism. And an intelligent Methodist knows his freedom is far more secure *under* law than without it. He knows, too, that men most clamorous for liberty, are, if raised to power, the greatest of despots. He sees this in the spirit of the men now exclaiming against "Wesleyan Tyranny." He has also heard and pondered the testimony given by those who in former times of excitement separated from the old body, and joined the New Connexion, or the Association; and who, on their return to the Connexion they had left, declared it was a garden of freedom compared with the dungeon of despotism in which they had lately been immured. And with these feelings, this knowledge, and this experience, *the people* are not likely to separate themselves from Wesleyan Methodism, and unite themselves to the last adventurers of the day. Wesleyan Methodism is their religious home. They were born of God in it; as were also their fathers. It has stood the storms and tempests of more than a hundred years. It presents to those who dwell in it the richest and the best written theology in the world. It provides means and ordinances the most edifying to a spiritual nature—examples of the noblest piety—and unites all who are associated with it with the most successful agency, and with the most glorious of evangelical triumphs; and, with these advantages, the sincere, intelligent, and unprejudiced of the people will not abandon Wesleyan Methodism, and intrust themselves with a few inexperienced men, who are presumptuous enough to suppose that they can contrive and perfect a better system of ecclesiastical government in a day, or in a year. It is a remarkable fact, that in nearly every instance in which a separation has taken place, they who have caused it, and set up another system, have had to carry with them the main principles of the Wesleyan system. They have had no hope of succeeding with congregationalism, or without class-meetings; and they have had to make something like a show of Missions, either for home or abroad. A people trained in Methodism cannot do without these; and will never submit to the independency of local courts, as now proposed by the self-styled Reformers.

Nor will *the people* obey the unchristian order of, "Stop the supplies!" They will increase them, as they have already done. They will not only sustain, with undiminished support, old institutions, but they will lay the foundations for new ones. Last year they increased the Missionary income *Seven Thousand Pounds*. This year, notwithstanding the local efforts to be made, they have commenced a *Special Fund*; and, in a few days, subscribed Five Thousand Pounds for Education. And towards these, servants from their weekly savings, and poor men on the free-seats, have given liberally. *The people*, as a Body, are inalienable in their affection for Wesleyan Methodism. They love it now more than ever they did, and are more ready to support it.

But "the best of all is, *God is with us.*" Indeed, this is the real secret of the union and of the successful efforts among both Ministers and people. The Spirit of the living God still pervades the system of Wesleyan Methodism; and as long as this remains, a conserving power will exist, which will not only repair the wastes and desolations occasioned by infatuated, reckless, and sinful men, but which will increase its strength and efficiency, and multiply its spiritual triumphs on the earth. Already there are signs of renewed and increased life and vigour. Pecuniary supplies may be stopped by a few; and, by unchristian confederation, the funds of some of the institutions may be reduced for a time; but "there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." The Lord will arise and build again Jerusalem, and restore her waste places as at the beginning. In answer to the prayers of a united, faithful, and working people, He will "open the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing, so that there shall not be room enough to receive it." "God is our refuge, a very present help in trouble. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is *our* refuge!"

While, however, we thus express ourselves confidently, as to the issue of the present conflict, we are not insensible to the great dishonour and reproach that has by it been brought upon Christianity, and upon our beloved Methodism. At the door of those who have confederated to produce the evils that have appeared, lies the sin, for which they must answer before God; and to their account must be charged the guilt of having impaired the strength of our Zion, and of having lessened for a time her ability for usefulness to the souls of of men. It is vain to attempt to conceal the fact, that by what has been done, many who were in the church will be driven from it, to return no more; many who were alive to God, and were earnestly seeking a meetness for heaven, will sink down into comparative indifference, and be, spiritually, weak and feeble during the remainder of their days; while inquirers for salvation will be turned out of the way; and an ungodly, infidel world will laugh and blaspheme. These are no small evils; and no pretence of abuses to be reformed in a church can justify the means which produce them. Indeed, we have no hesitation in declaring the agitative and divisive proceedings of the party concerned as *sinful* and *wicked*; and we do this, not on the narrow ground of

Methodist law, but on the broad and common ground of scriptural Christianity. There are certain fundamental principles set forth in the Scriptures respecting *purity, union, and love*, which have been most flagrantly violated. And here we would take the opportunity of saying, that the questions disputed have been too much discussed, as if they were exclusively Connexional and Methodistic. Appeals have been made to this and the other Rule of Methodism, while the great standard laws of the Bible have been comparatively passed over. The holy Scriptures give no liberty to men who profess to have received personal injury to band themselves together to promote strife and division in the church of Christ. The holy Scriptures give no encouragement to seek the purifying of the church by slander, evil-speaking, and reviling. The Apostles did not use such unholy means for the removal of the evils with which they had to contend. They went forth preaching "peace on earth, and good-will towards men." Mr. Wesley did the same. Great as were the real evils in the Church to which he belonged, and which he sincerely sought to reform, he did not go forth through the land reviling it. He sought, as he declared, to "spread scriptural Christianity through the world." It is a farce to plead the examples of Luther, Cranmer, and Knox. They believed Popery to be Antichrist; they saw in it the Babylon denounced and threatened in the Apocalypse; and, therefore, besought men to come out of her, lest they should be partakers of her plagues. But the disaffected do not believe this of Wesleyan Methodism; and the analogy they assume is a gross and monstrous profanation, when they style themselves "Reformers" and "Martyrs." They have no claim to such honourable titles. They are Agitators, Anarchists, Revolutionists; and, considering the power there is in words, we strongly advise our readers never to speak of them as "Wesleyan Reformers." The confederacy to disturb and divide the church of Christ is founded in a principle of ungodliness and of Antinomian rejection of the laws of Christ; and when it shall be seen in its true character, it will appear branded before Christendom as a profane and wicked mission, instigated by selfish motives, and prosecuted by ambitious men. Meanwhile, we leave it with all who have any hesitation on this question, to say, whether at the bar of God they would rather appear among those who associated to build up His church, or among those who confederated to cast it down.

With these views of the Past, the Present, and the Future, on Wesleyan-Methodist affairs, we conclude our Periodical for the year, sincerely thanking our numerous Subscribers and Friends for the very encouraging support and assistance they have given to us.





