

love, joy and peace ; and from sinful desire, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. These are matters of fact, whereof I have been, and almost daily am, an eye or ear-witness. What I have to say, touching visions or dreams, is this : I know several persons in whom this great change was wrought, in a dream, or during a strong representation to the eye of their mind, of Christ either on the cross or in glory. This is the fact : let any judge of it as they please. And that such a change was then wrought, appears (not from their shedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out : these are not the fruits, as you seem to suppose, whereby I judge, but) from the whole tenor of their life, till then many ways wicked ; from that time, holy, just and good.

“ I will shew you him that was a lion till then, and is now a lamb ; him that was a drunkard, and is now exemplarily sober : the whoremonger that was, who now abhors the very garment spotted by the flesh. These are my living arguments for what I assert, viz. *That God does now, as aforesaid, give remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, even to us and to our children : yea, and that always suddenly, as far as I have known, and often in dreams or in the visions of God. If it be not so, I am found a false witness before God. For these things I do, and by his grace, will testify.*”

But some said, “ These were purely natural effects ; the people fainted away, only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms.” And others were sure, “ It was all a cheat : they might help it, if they would.

Else

Else why were these things only in their private Societies? Why were they not done in the face of the sun?" However, on Monday May the twenty-first, the Lord answered for himself. For while Mr. Wesley was enforcing these words, *Be still, and know that I am God*, the Lord began to make bare his arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One and another and another were struck to the earth, trembling exceedingly at the presence of his power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, *What must we do to be saved?* And in less than an hour, seven persons, wholly unknown to Mr. Wesley till that time, were rejoicing and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the God of their salvation.

In the evening, he was interrupted at *Nicholas-Street*, almost as soon as he had begun to speak, by the cries of one who was pricked to the heart, and strongly groaned for pardon and peace. Yet he went on to declare what God had already done, in proof of that important truth, That he is not willing any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Another dropped down, close to one who was a strong asserter of the contrary doctrine. While he stood astonished at the sight, a little boy near him was seized in the same manner. A young man who stood behind, fixed his eyes on him, and sunk down himself as one dead: but soon began to roar out and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. His name was *Thomas Maxfield*. In the mean while many others began to cry out to  
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the *Saviour of all*, that he would come and help them, insomuch that all the house, (and indeed all the street for some space) was in an uproar. But the truly serious continued in prayer ; and before ten, the greater part found rest to their souls.

Notwithstanding all the encouragement he met with, it appears that he had frequently many uneasy thoughts concerning this unusual manner of administering among them. But after frequently laying it before the Lord, and calmly weighing whatever objections he heard against it, he could not but adhere to what he had some time before wrote to a friend, who had freely spoken his sentiments concerning it. An extract of that letter we here subjoin ; that the whole may be placed in a clear light.

“ You think “ I ought to sit still ; because otherwise I should invade another’s office, if I interfered with other people’s business, and intermeddled with souls that did not belong to me.” You accordingly ask, “ How is it that I assemble christians who are none of my charge, to sing psalms and pray and hear the Scriptures expounded : and think it hard to justify doing this in other men’s parishes, upon Catholic principles ?”

“ Permit me to speak plainly. If by Catholic principles, you mean any other than Scriptural, they weigh nothing with me : I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the holy Scriptures. But on Scriptural principles, I do not think it hard, to justify whatever I do. God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform

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the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, to do it at all; seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom then shall I hear? God or man? *If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you. A dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.* But where shall I preach it upon the principles you mention? Why, not in *Europe, Asia, Africa, or America*: not in any of the christian parts, at least, of the habitable earth; for all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes. If it be said, "Go back then to the heathens from whence you came." Nay, but neither could I now, (on your principles) preach to them. For all the heathens in *Georgia* belong to the parish either of *Savannah* or *Frederica*.

"Suffer me now, to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to. And sure I am, that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore to be faithful, in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed (glory be to him) day and night in his service. I am employed according to the plain direction of his word, *As I have opportunity of doing good unto all men.* And his providence clearly concurs with his word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I  
might

might singly attend on this very thing, and go about doing good.

“ If you ask, “ How can this be? How can one do good, of whom *men say all manner of evil?*” I will put you in mind, (though you once knew this, yea, and much established me in that great truth) the more evil men say of me for my Lord’s sake, the more good he will do by me. That it is for his sake I know and he knoweth, and the event agreeth thereto; for he mightily confirms the words I speak, by the Holy Ghost given unto those that hear them. O my friend, my heart is moved toward you. I fear, you have herein made shipwreck of the faith. I fear, *Satan transformed into an angel of light*, hath assaulted you, and prevailed also. I fear, that offspring of hell, worldly or mystic prudence, has drawn you away from the simplicity of the Gospel. How else could you ever conceive, that the being reviled and *hated of all men*, should make us less fit for our Master’s service? How else could you ever think, of *saving yourself and them that hear you*, without being *the filth and offscouring of the world?* To this hour, is this Scripture true. And I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. Blessed be God, I enjoy the reproach of Christ! O may you also be vile, exceeding vile for his sake! God forbid, that you should ever be other than generally scandalous: I had almost said, universally. If any man tell you, there is a new way of following Christ, *he is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*”

Those

Those who have read the accounts of the great revivals of true religion in many parts of *Europe*, and in our own country in particular, will easily perceive the *sameness* of those devices of Satan, whereby he perverts the right ways of the Lord. *Lalimer*, as well as *Luther*, complains of those who knowing that we are justified by faith alone, disallow the fruits of faith. It could not be but that the sower of tares would endeavour by every means to overturn this blessed work. Mr. *Wesley* was now called to oppose three grand deceptions of the enemy of souls: 1st. *Antinomianism*, the making void the law through faith: 2dly, *Unscriptural Stillness*, the neglect of the Ordinances of the Gospel, particularly, prayer, hearing and reading the Scriptures, and the Lord's-supper: 3dly, Attention to *dreams, visions*, and men's own *imaginations and feelings*, without bringing them to the only sure test, the oracles of God.

Something of this kind began now to appear in several places, and especially in *London*. But those who fell into these errors, were in general sincere persons, that desired to know the truth, and do the will of God. It was not therefore difficult for him at this time to bring them back to *the faith once delivered to the saints*. He warned them, that Christ no more designed to *make us free* from his own law, than from holiness or heaven: that the Christian Ordinances were real means of grace; and that God does by them convey preventing, justifying, and sanctifying grace to those who humbly use them. That in respect to dreams, visions or revelations, supposed to  
be

be made to their souls: or to tears, or any other involuntary effects wrought on their bodies: these were in themselves of a doubtful, disputable nature: they might be from God, or they might not; and were therefore not simply to be relied on (any more than simply to be condemned) but to be brought to the only certain test, the law and the testimony.

He now laboured in many places between *London* and *Bristol*. In *Moorfields*, on *Kennington-Common*, *Blackheath*, &c. Many thousands attended his ministry. In every place God bore witness to his truth: multitudes were convinced, that *the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ*: and they brought forth fruit meet for repentance; and not a few found *redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of their sins*.

Various and strange were the reports concerning him. As *Jeremiah*, he could say, "I heard the defaming of many, Report, said they, and we will report it again." The most common rumour was, that he was a Jesuit, and had evil designs against the Church, if not against the State. Various were the publications concerning him. Most of these lived but a few days or weeks, the writers being totally ignorant of the subject they wrote upon. Some of them however were not unworthy of notice, which he answered with great ability, and which we shall take some notice of, when we come to treat of his writings.

His mother now began to attend his ministry, being convinced that he spoke the words of truth and soberness.

ness. She had for some time lived with her son-in-law Mr. *Hall*, and by misrepresentations had been led to think that her sons *John* and *Charles* were in a dangerous error. Her son *Samuel*, who was deep'y prejudiced against his brothers' preaching and behaviour, laments with great surprize in a letter to his mother, written about this time, that "She should countenance the spreading delusion, so far as to be one of *Jack's* congregation." But Mr. *Wesley* solves this difficulty. "Monday, September 3," says he, "I talked largely with my mother, who told me, That till a short time since, she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned, as the having forgiveness of sins now, or God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit: much less did she imagine, that this was the common privilege of all true believers. "Therefore (said she) I never durst ask for it myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son *Hall* was pronouncing those words, in delivering the cup to me, *The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee*; the words struck through my heart, and I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all my sins."

"I asked, Whether her father (Dr. *Annesley*) had not the same faith? And, Whether she had not heard him preach it to others? She answered, "He had it himself, and declared a little before his death, that for more than forty years, he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all, of his being *accepted in the Beloved*. But that nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach, no, not once, explicitly upon it; whence she supposed he also looked upon it



it as the peculiar blessing of a few, not as promised to all the people of God."

After this she lived with Mr. *John Wesley*, and joyfully attended his ministry till God called her to a better world.

A serious Clergyman, convinced of his uprightness, but yet staggered at a conduct which he thought contrary to the interests of the established church, desired to know, in what points he differed from the Church of *England*? "I answered," says Mr. *Wesley*, "To the best of my knowledge, in none: the doctrines we preach, are the doctrines of the church of *England*: indeed the fundamental doctrines of the church, clearly laid down, both in her prayers, articles, and homilies.

"He asked, in what points then do you differ from the other Clergy of the church of *England*? I answered, In none from that part of the Clergy who adhere to the doctrines of the church; but from that part of the Clergy who dissent from the church (though they own it not) I differ in the points following:

"First, They speak of justification, either as the same thing with sanctification, or as something consequent upon it. I believe justification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it.

"Secondly, They speak of our own holiness or good works, as the cause of our justification; or, that for the sake of which, on account of which, we are justified before God. I believe, neither our own holiness nor

good works are any part of the cause of our justification; but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it; or that *for the sake of which, on account of which,* we are justified before God.

“ Thirdly, They speak of good works, as a condition of justification, necessarily previous to it. I believe no good work can be previous to justification, nor consequently a condition of it: but that we are justified, (being till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of doing any good work) by faith alone, faith without works, faith (though producing all, yet) including no good work.

“ Fourthly, They speak of sanctification (or holiness) as if it were an outward thing, as if it consisted chiefly, if not wholly, in these two points, 1. The doing no harm, 2. The doing good (as it is called) i. e. The using the means of grace, and helping our neighbour.

“ I believe it to be, an inward thing, namely, *The life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the divine nature; the mind that was in Christ; or, The renewal of our heart, after the image of Him that created us.*

“ Lastly, They speak of the *new birth*, as an outward thing, as if it were no more than baptism; or, at most, a change from *outward wickedness* to *outward goodness*; from a vicious to (what is called) a virtuous life. I believe it to be an inward thing; a change from inward wickedness to inward goodness: an entire change of our inmost nature from the image of the  
devil,

devil, (wherein we are born,) to the image of God: a change from the love of the creature to the love of the Creator, from earthly and sensual, to heavenly and holy affections: in a word, a change from the tempers of the spirits of darkness, to those of the angels of God in heaven.

“ There is therefore a wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference between us: so that if they speak the truth as it is in Jesus, I am found a false witness before God. But if I teach the way of God in truth, they are blind leaders of the blind.”

He was now earnestly pressed to visit *Wales*, which he did about the middle of October. He preached in many places in that principality: and though the frost set in, and was very severe, multitudes gladly heard him, even in the open air, and many turned to the Lord.

About this time Mr. *Wesley* made the following remarks on the great work, which God had already wrought by his ministry. “ Such a work this hath been in many respects, as neither we nor our fathers had known. Not a few whose sins were of the most flagrant kind, drunkards, swearers, thieves, whoremongers, adulterers, have been brought from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Many of these were rooted in their wickedness, having long gloried in their shame, perhaps for a course of many years, yea, even to hoary hairs. Many had not so much as a notional faith, being Jews, Arians, Deists or Atheists. Nor has God only made bare his arm in these last days, in behalf of open publicans

and finners ; but many of the pharisees also have believed on him ; of the righteous that needed no repentance : and having received the sentence of death in themselves, have then heard the voice that raiseth the dead : have been made partakers of an inward, vital religion, even righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

“ The manner wherein God hath wrought this work, is as strange as the work itself. In any particular soul, it has generally, if not always, been wrought in one moment. As the lightning shining from heaven, so was the coming of the Son of Man, either to bring peace or a sword ; either to wound or to heal ; either to convince of sin, or to give remission of sins in his blood. And the other circumstances attending it have been equally remote from what human wisdom would have expected. So true is that word, “ My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts.” These extraordinary circumstances seem to have been designed by God, for the further manifestation of his work, to cause his power to be known, and to awaken the attention of a drowsy world.”

That mystery of iniquity which had appeared before, now ripened apace. The Society which had been formed in *London* soon after his return from *Georgia*, was much increased in number, and in general consisted of those who walked worthy of their calling. But doubtful disputations had for some time

interrupted

interrupted their harmony, and they seemed no longer to keep “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

In order to give a full view of the nature of those disputes, we subjoin a statement of them drawn up by Mr. *Wesley*, immediately after conversing with one of those who were principally concerned.

“Monday, December 31. I had a long and particular conversation with Mr. *Molther*. I weighed all his words with the utmost care, desired him to explain what I did not understand; asked him again and again, Do I not mistake what you say? Is this your meaning, or is it not? So that I think, if God has given me any measure of understanding, I could not mistake him much.

“As soon as I came home, I besought God to assist me, and not suffer *the blind to go out of the way*. I then wrote down what I conceived to be the difference between us, in the following words:

“As to *faith*, you believe,

“1. There are *no degrees of faith*, and that no man has *any degree* of it, before all things in him are become new, before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception, that Christ dwelleth in him.

“2. Accordingly you believe, there is *no justifying faith*, or state of justification, short of this.

“3. Therefore you believe, that that gift of God, which many received since *Peter Bohler* came into *England*,

viz. “ A sure confidence of the love of God to *them*,”  
was *not justifying faith*.

“ 4. And, that the *joy and love* attending it, were from  
*animal spirits*, from *nature or imagination*; not *joy in*  
*the Holy Ghost*, and the real *love of God*, shed abroad  
in their hearts.

“ Whereas I believe,

“ 1. There are *degrees in faith*, and that a man may  
have *some degree* of it, before all things in him are be-  
come new, before he has the full assurance of faith,  
the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear percep-  
tion that Christ dwelleth in him.

“ 2. Accordingly, I believe, there is *a degree of justi-*  
*fying faith* (and consequently a state of justification)  
short of, and commonly antecedent to, this.

“ 3. And, I believe that that gift of God, which  
many received since *Peter Bohler* came into *England*,  
viz. “ A sure confidence of the love of God to *them*,”  
was *justifying faith*.

“ 4. And that the *joy and love* attending it, were *not*  
from *animal spirits*, from *nature or imagination*; but a  
measure of *joy in the Holy Ghost*, and of *the love of*  
God shed abroad in their hearts.

“ As to *the way to faith*, you believe,

“ That the way to attain it is, to *wait for Christ*, and  
be *still*, i. e.

“ Not to use (what *we term*) the *means of grace*: not  
to go to church: not to communicate: not to fast:

not

not to use *so much* private prayer: not to read the Scripture: (because you believe, These are *not means of grace*, i. e. do not ordinarily convey God's grace to unbelievers: and, that it is impossible for a man to use them, without *trusting* in them.)

“ Not to do temporal good: nor to attempt doing spiritual good: because you believe, no fruit of the Spirit is given, by those who have it not themselves. And, that those who have not faith are utterly blind, and therefore unable to guide other souls.

“ Whereas I believe,

“ The way to attain it is, To *wait* for Christ and be *still*:

“ In using *all the means of grace*.

“ Therefore I believe it right, for him who knows he has not faith, (i. e. that conquering faith.)

“ To go to Church: to Communicate: to Fast: to use as much private prayer as he can, and to read the Scripture: (because I believe, These are *means of grace*, i. e. do ordinarily convey God's grace to unbelievers: and, that it is possible for a man to use them, without *trusting* in them.)

“ To do all temporal good he can: and to endeavour after doing spiritual good: because I know, many fruits of the Spirit are given, by those who have them not themselves: and that those who have not faith, or but in the lowest degree, may have more light from God, more wisdom for the guiding of other souls, than many that are strong in faith.

“As to the *manner of propagating* the faith, you believe (as I have also heard others affirm)

“That we may, on some accounts, *use guile* :

“By saying what we know will *deceive* the hearers, or lead them to think the thing which is not : by describing things a *little beyond the truth*, in order to their coming up to it : and by speaking, *as if* we meant, what we do not.

“But I believe, that we may not *use guile*, on any account whatsoever : that we may not on any account say, what we know will, and design should, *deceive* the hearers : that we may not describe things one jot *beyond the truth*, whether they come up to it, or no : and that we may not speak, on any pretence, *as if* we meant, what indeed we do not.

“Lastly, As to the fruits of your thus propagating the faith in *England*, you believe,

“Much good has been done by it : many, unfettered from a false foundation : many brought into *true stillness*, in order to their coming to the true foundation : some grounded thereon ; who were wrong before, but are right now.

“On the contrary, I believe, that very little good, but much hurt has been done by it : many, who were beginning to build holiness and good works, on the true foundation of faith in Jesus, being now wholly unfettered and lost in vain reasonings and doubtful disputations : many others being brought into a *false unscriptural stillness* ; so that they are not likely to come to any true foundation : and many  
being



being grounded on a faith which is without works ; so that they who were right before, are wrong now."

His attention to these things did not hinder him from being still abundant in labours. He now visited many parts of *Devonshire*, where multitudes heard him gladly. He continued also from time to time his usual labours in and near *Bristol* : and at the earnest invitation of Mr. *Howell Harris* of *Breconshire*, he made a second visit to *Wales*.

But the vain reasonings and disputings mentioned above, again revived in *London* ; the effects of which were, that not one in ten of the believers retained his "*first love* : " and most of the rest were in the utmost confusion. " I found," says he, " more and more undeniable proofs, that the Christian state is a *continual warfare*, and that we have need every moment to *watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation*. Outward trials indeed were now removed, and *Peace was in all our borders*. But so much the more did inward trials abound ; and *if one member suffered, all the members suffered with it*. So strange a sympathy did I never observe before : whatever considerable temptation fell on any one, unaccountably spreading itself to the rest, so that exceeding few were able to escape it."

Finding there was no time to delay, without utterly destroying what he believed to be the cause of God, he resolved to strike at the root of the grand delusion ; and accordingly, from the words of *Jeremiah*, *Stand in the way ; ask for the old paths*, he gave an account of the work of God among them from the beginning,

ginning, bearing at the same time the most unequivocal testimony against the unscriptural, mischievous refinements, lately introduced to the weakening, if not destroying, the faith of many.

The hearts of most of the brethren in *London*, became now quite estranged from him. A few however still cleaved to him, and strengthened him much. He still hoped that the rest would yet hear the Scripture, and return to the faith and love which they once enjoyed. But finding on the contrary that they laboured to pervert the few that were faithful, he saw nothing remained but that he should give them up to God : which he did in the most solemn manner, on Sunday, July 20, 1740. At the conclusion of the evening service, he read a paper, containing a short statement of those doctrines which had been lately introduced among them : after which, he added the following words :

“ I believe these assertions to be flatly contrary to the word of God. I have warned you hereof again and again, and besought you to turn back to the law and the testimony. I have borne with you long, hoping you would turn. But as I find you more and more confirmed in the error of your ways, nothing now remains, but that I should give you up to God. You that are of the same judgment, follow me.”

When he had thus spoke, he withdrew, as did eighteen or nineteen of the Society.

Some time after this, Count *Zinzendorff*, who arrived in *England* after the commencement of the dispute,

pute, desired an interview with him, in Gray's-Inn-Walks. Mr. Wesley met him according to appointment. But the Count strenuously insisting on those points which Mr. Wesley accounted errors, as above related, they parted without the least prospect of a reconciliation. \*

But he still loved and esteemed the people, from whom he was now obliged to separate himself. As a proof of this, he observes in the Address to the Moravian Church, which he annexed to an account of the whole transaction, and soon afterwards published,

*“ I have delayed thus long, because I loved you, and was therefore unwilling to grieve you in any thing: and likewise because I was afraid of creating another obstacle to that union, which (if I know my own heart in any degree) I desire above all things under heaven. But I dare no longer delay, lest my silence should be a snare to any others of the children of God; and lest you yourselves should be more confirmed in what I cannot reconcile to the law and the testimony. This would strengthen the bar which I long to remove. And were that once taken out of the way, I should rejoice to be a door-keeper in the house of God, a hewer of wood or drawer of water among you. Surely I would follow you to the ends of the earth, or remain with you in the uttermost parts of the sea.*

*“ What unites my heart to you is, The excellency (in many respects) of the doctrine taught among you: your laying the true foundation, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, your declaring the free grace of God*  
*the*

\* See the conversation at large in the latter part of Mr. Wesley's fourth Journal.

*the cause, and faith the condition of justification: your bearing witness to those great fruits of faith, righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and that sure mark thereof, he that is born of God, doth not commit sin.*

*“ I magnify the grace of God which is in many among you, enabling you to love him who hath first loved us; teaching you, in whatsoever state you are, therewith to be content: causing you to trample under foot the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life: and above all, giving you to love one another, in a manner the world knoweth not of.*

*“ I praise God, that he hath delivered and yet doth deliver you, from those outward sins that overspread the face of the earth. No cursing, no light or false swearing, no profaning the name of God is heard among you: no robbery or theft, no gluttony, or drunkenness, no whoredom or adultery, no quarrelling or brawling (those scandals of the christian name) are found within your gates: no diversions but such as become saints, as may be used in the name of the Lord Jesus. You regard not outward adorning, but rather desire the ornament of a serious, meek and quiet spirit. You are not slothful in business, but labour to eat your own bread; and wisely manage the Mammon of unrighteousness, that ye may have to give to others also, to feed the hungry, and cover the naked with a garment.”*

It is here necessary to observe, that Mr. Wesley's objections to the Moravians, with whom he had been connected, (though without leaving the Church of England,)

England,) from the beginning of his acquaintance with *Peter Bohler*, were not levelled at the whole Body; but only at that part of it which resided in *London*.

He now met his little Society at his Preaching-house near *Moorfields*, which was generally known by the name of *the Foundery* (because it was originally built for the casting of cannon.) In this place he also regularly preached. His word was owned of God, and his Society rapidly increased. He therefore now saw it necessary to draw up, jointly with his Brother, rules for his Societies, in *London, Bristol, Kingswood*, and other parts of the kingdom: and as they contain as fine a system of christian ethics, as was ever perhaps drawn up in so small a compass, and have been the rules by which since that time the whole connection has been governed, we think it our indispensable duty to give them a place in the present History.

I. There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies, *a desire to flee from the wrath to come. to be saved from their sins*: but, wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shewn by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind; especially, that which is most generally practised. Such is

The taking the name of God in vain:

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or buying or selling:

Drunkennes,

Drunkennes, *buying or selling spirituous liquors; or drinking them*, unless in cases of extreme necessity:

*Fighting*, quarrelling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing: the *using many words* in buying or selling:

The *buying or selling uncustomed goods*:

The *giving or taking things on usury*: i. e. unlawful interest:

*Uncharitable or unprofitable* conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates, or of ministers:

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us:

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God:

As, The *putting on of gold or costly apparel*.

The *taking such diversions* as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus:

The *singing those songs*, or *reading those books*, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God:

Softness, and needless self-indulgence:

Laying up treasure upon earth:

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

II. It is expected of all who continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible to all men;

“ To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

“ To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with : trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that “ We are not to do good, unless *our hearts be free to it.*”

“ By doing good especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be : employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business : and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them *only.*”

“ By all possible *diligence and frugality*, that the Gospel be not blamed.

“ By running with patience the race that is set before them, *denying themselves and taking up their crosses daily* ; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ ; to be as the filth and offscouring of the world ; and looking that men should *say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.*

“ 3. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

“ Thirdly, By attending on all the ordinances of God : such are

“ The public worship of God : The ministry of the word, either read or expounded :

“ The supper of the Lord ; family and private prayer ;

prayer; searching the scriptures: and fasting or abstinence.

“ These are the general rules of our Societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways; we will bear with him for a season. But then if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

JOHN WESLEY,  
CHARLES WESLEY.”

## C H A P. II.

*Of the progress of Religion, receiving Assistants, regulations in the Society, the Classes, Bands, Watch-Nights, Love-Feasts, and Quarterly Visitations: and of the Death and Character of Mrs. WESLEY:*

**H**E now went on with his labours, and with the same success. Multitudes, as before, attended his ministry, and many, renouncing ungodliness, were brought into the liberty of the Gospel. Many also were the witnesses, who, after patiently suffering the afflictions



afflictions which the Lord was pleased to lay upon them, resigned their souls into the hands of God, with triumphant praise and joy.

For a considerable time Mr. *Whitefield* continued to labour in union with him: and sometimes they appeared in the pulpit together. Mr. *Whitefield*, after his second visit to *America*, was well received by many pious ministers in the northern states. Almost all these were of Mr. *Calvin's* sentiments, and asserted absolute Predestination. Mr. *Whitefield* being edified by their piety, began in a little time to relish their creed. They strongly recommended to him the writings of the Puritan divines, which he from that time read with much pleasure, approving all he found therein, as he informs Mr. *Wesley* in a letter which he wrote to him on the subject. The consequence was, that on his return to *England* he could not join his old friend in the work of the ministry, with the same cordiality as before.

As Mr. *Wesley* fully believed, and firmly asserted, that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved, he had now another error to oppose. The Calvinistic sentiments had been long held by a great part of the dissenting congregations, but did not appear for some time among those, who were converted in the present revival of religion. This however was not of long continuance.

“One evening,” says Mr. *Wesley*, “Mr. *Acourt* complained, that Mr. *Nowers* had hindered his going into the Society. Mr. *Nowers* answered, it was by

Mr. C. *Wesley's* order. "What, (says Mr. A——) do you refuse admitting a person into your Society, only because he differs from you in opinion?" I answered, "No. But what opinion do you mean?" He said, "That of election. I hold a certain number is elected from eternity. And these must and shall be saved. And the rest of mankind must and shall be damned. And many of your Society hold the same." I replied, "I never asked, whether they hold it or no. Only let them not trouble others by disputing about it." He said, "Nay, but I *will* dispute about it." What, wherever you come? "Yes, wherever I come." Why then would you come among us, who you know are of another mind? "Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you all right." I fear your coming with this view, would neither profit you nor us. He concluded, "Then I will go and tell all the world, that you and your brother are false prophets. And I tell you, in one fortnight you will all be in confusion."

Soon after this, the copy of a letter written by Mr. *Whitefield* to him, was printed without the permission of either, and great numbers of copies were given to the people both at the door of the Foundery and in the house itself. Mr. *Wesley* having procured one of them, related (after preaching) the naked fact to the congregation, and told them, "I will do just what I believe Mr. *Whitefield* would, were he here himself." Upon which he tore it in pieces before them all. Every one who had received it, did the same. So that in two minutes, there was not a whole copy

copy left. “ Ah, poor *Alithophel* ! added Mr. *Wesley*,

“ *Ibi omnis effusus labor!*” †

The disturbance, however, which this opinion occasioned at *Bristol*, and the parts adjacent, was not so soon or so easily quieted. Mr. *Wesley* had permitted an excellent young man, Mr. *Cennick*, afterwards a minister of the Moravian church, to pray with and exhort the Society at *Kingswood*, as well as to superintend the school during his absence. Mr. *Cennick* now embraced the doctrine of the *Decrees*, and soon after seems to have lost all love and respect for his former friend, speaking against him and his doctrine with much contempt and bitterness. The consequence was, that after some fruitless efforts to heal the breach Mr. *Cennick* departed, and carried off with him about fifty of the Society, whom he formed into a separate connection. Mr. *Wesley* mourned over this young man in such a manner, as evidenced that he held him in high esteem. We have reason to believe that Mr. *Cennick* was afterwards convinced of his mistake, and lived many years an active and successful minister of the Gospel.

But Mr. *Wesley* was now to suffer the loss of a still more beloved friend. Mr. *Whitefield*'s prejudice, since the change in his opinions, seemed incurable. “ Having heard much,” says Mr. *Wesley*, “ of Mr. *Whitefield*'s unkind behaviour, since his return from *Georgia*, I went to hear him speak for himself, that I might know how to judge. I much approved of his plainness of speech.

He told me, "He and I preached two different Gospels, and therefore he not only would not join with, or give me the right-hand of fellowship, but was resolved publicly to preach against me and my brother, wheresoever he preached at all." Mr. *Hall* (who went with me) put him in mind of the promise he had made but a few days before, that "whatever his private opinion was, he would never publicly preach against us." He said; "That promise was only an effect of human weakness, and he was now of another mind."

From this time they had no close or intimate union with each other. Yet it clearly appears, that this circumstance gave both of them pain. They had loved long, and loved well. They were convinced of each other's sincerity. They often therefore visited, and sometimes preached for each other during many years. Mr. *Whitefield* always spoke in the most respectful terms of Mr. *Wesley*: while the latter, though he continued to bear the strongest testimony against absolute Predestination, ever esteemed and spoke of Mr. *Whitefield* as a man of God, and as an eminent minister of Jesus Christ.

Mr. *Whitefield*, in his will, written with his own hand, observes, "I leave a mourning-ring to my honoured and dear friends and disinterested fellow-labourers, the Rev. Messrs. *John* and *Charles Wesley*, in token of my indissoluble union with them, in heart and christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine." On Mr. *Whitefield's* death, his Executors desired Mr. *Wesley* to  
preach

preach his Funeral-sermon in his chapels near *Moorfields* and *Tottenham-Court-Road*, in *London*, which he did in a manner that did honour to them both. Mr. *Charles Wesley* published a poetic tribute to the memory of this great and good man, which was written with much affection and respect.

We cannot give so complete an idea of the earnest desire of Mr. *Wesley* to effect a reconciliation with Mr. *Whitefield*, as by inserting in his own words the concessions which he made for the accomplishment of so desirable an end.

“ Having found for some time,” says he, “ a strong desire to unite with Mr. *Whitefield*, as far as possible, to cut off needless dispute I wrote down my sentiments, as plain as I could, in the following terms :

“ There are three points in debate, 1. Unconditional election, 2. Irresistible grace, 3. Final perseverance.

“ With regard to the first, unconditional election, I believe,

“ That God before the foundation of the world, did *unconditionally elect* certain persons to do certain works, as *Paul* to preach the Gospel.

“ That he has *unconditionally elected* some nations to receive peculiar privileges, the *Jewish* nation in particular :

“ That he has *unconditionally elected* some nations to hear the Gospel, as *England* and *Scotland* now, and many others in past ages :

“ That he has *unconditionally elected* some persons to many peculiar advantages, both with regard to temporal and spiritual things :

“And I do not deny (though I cannot prove it is so,)

“That he has *unconditionally elected* some persons, thence eminently stiled, the elect, to eternal glory.

“But I cannot believe,

“That all those who are *not thus elected* to glory, *must* perish everlastingly: Or

“That there is one soul on earth, who has not, nor ever had, *a possibility* of escaping eternal damnation.

“With regard to the second, irresistible grace, I believe

“That the grace which brings faith, and thereby salvation into the soul, is irresistible *at that moment*.

“That most believers may remember some time when God did *irresistibly* convince them of sin:

“That most believers do at some other times find God *irresistibly* acting upon their souls:

“Yet I believe, That the grace of God both before and after those moments, may be and hath been resisted: And

“That, in general, it does not act *irresistibly*, but we *may* comply therewith, or *may not*.

“And I do not deny,

“That in those eminently stiled *the elect* (if such there be) the grace of God is so far *irresistible*, that they cannot but believe and be finally saved.

“But I cannot believe

“That, All those *must* be damned, in whom it does not *thus irresistibly* work: Or

“That there is one soul on earth, who has not, and never had any other grace, than such as does in fact  
increase

increase his damnation, and was designed of God so to do.

“ With regard to the third, final perseverance, I believe,

“ That there is a state attainable in this life, from which a man cannot finally fall :

“ That he has attained this, who is, according to St. Paul's account, *a new creature* ; that is, who can say, *Old things are past away ; all things in me are become new.*

“ And I do not deny

“ That all those eminently styled the elect, will infallibly persevere to the end.”

As the people who placed themselves under his care daily increased, he was involved in a considerable difficulty : either he must confine his labours to those whom he could visit constantly or within a short space of time, or endeavour to procure some other assistance for them. It seems he at first had some hopes that the Ministers of the respective parishes would watch over those who were lately turned from the error of their ways. In this however he was disappointed ; which induced him to try other methods, and at last drew forth that defence of himself, which he makes in the third part of his *Farther Appeal to men of Reason and Religion.*

“ It pleased God,” says he, “ by two or three Ministers of the Church of *England*, to call many sinners to repentance ; who, in several parts, were undeniably turned from a course of sin, to a course of holiness,

“ The Ministers of the places where this was done, ought to have received those Ministers with open arms ; and to have taken them who had just begun to serve God, into their peculiar care ; watching over them in tender love, lest they should fall back into the snare of the Devil.

“ Instead of this, the greater part spoke of those Ministers, as if the devil, not God, had sent them. Some repelled them from the Lord’s table : others stirred up the people against them, representing them even in their public discourses, as *Fellows not fit to live : Papists, Heretics, Traitors ; Conspirators* against their *King and Country*.

“ And how did they watch over the sinners lately reformed ? Even as a leopard watcheth over his prey. They drove some of them also from the Lord’s table ; to which, till now, they had no desire to approach. They preached all manner of evil concerning them, openly cursing them in the name of the Lord. They turned many out of their work : persuaded others to do so too, and harassed them all manner of ways.

“ The event was, that some were wearied out, and so turned back to their vomit again. And then these good pastors gloried over them, and endeavoured to shake others by their example.

“ When the Ministers, by whom God had helped them before, came again to those places, great part of their work was to begin again ; if it could be begun again : but the relapsers were often so hardened in sin, that no impression could be made upon them.

“ What



“What could they do in a case of so extreme necessity? Where so many souls lay at stake?”

“No Clergyman would assist at all. The expedient that remained was, to find some one among themselves, who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God: and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he could, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation.”

With this view he had formerly appointed Mr. *Cennick* to reside at *Kingswood*. But the want of an assistant of this kind was particularly felt in *London*. The Society in that city had recently and deeply experienced the mischievous effects of that instruction, which is not according to the oracles of God. And therefore, when he was about to leave *London* for a season, he appointed one whom he judged to be strong in faith, and of an exemplary conversation, to meet the Society at the usual times, to pray with them, and give them such advice as might be needful. This was Mr. *Maxfield*, of whose remarkable conversion at *Bristol*, we have before spoken. This young man, being fervent in spirit, and *mighty in the Scriptures*, greatly profited the people. They crowded to hear him: and by the increase of their number, as well as by their earnest and deep attention, they insensibly led him to go further than he at first designed. He began to *preach*: and the Lord so blessed the word, that many were not only deeply awakened and brought to repentance, but were also made happy in a consciousness of pardon. The Scripture-marks of true

true conversion, inward peace and power to walk in all holiness, evinced the work to be of God.

Some however were offended at this *irregularity*, as it was termed. A complaint was made in form to Mr. *Wesley*, and he hastened to *London* in order to put a stop to it. His mother then lived in his house, adjoining to the Foundery. When he arrived, she perceived that his countenance was expressive of dissatisfaction, and inquired the cause. “*Thomas Maxfield*,” said he abruptly, “has turned Preacher, I find.” She looked attentively at him, and replied, “*John*, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily any thing of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach, as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching: and hear him also yourself.” He did so. His prejudice bowed before the force of truth: and he could only say, “*It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good.*”

In other places also, the same assistance was afforded. It appears indeed from what he has said at various times, that he only *submitted with reluctance to it*. His high-church principles stood in his way. But such effects were produced, that he frequently found himself in the predicament of *Peter*, who being questioned in a matter somewhat similar, could only relate the fact, and say, “*what was I, that I could withstand God?*”

But the Lord was about to shew him still greater things than these. An honest man, a Mason, of  
*Bristol*

*Birstal* in *Yorkshire*, whose name was *John Nelson*, coming up to *London* to work at his trade, heard that word which he found to be the power of God unto salvation. *Nelson* had full business in *London*, and large wages. But from the time of his finding peace with God, it was continually on his mind, that he must return to his native place. He did so, about Christmas, in the year 1740. His relations and acquaintance soon began to inquire, "What he thought of this new faith? And whether he believed, there was any such thing, as a man's knowing that his sins were forgiven?" *John* told them point blank, That this new faith, as they called it, was the old faith of the gospel: and that he himself was as sure his sins were forgiven, as he could be of the shining of the sun." This was soon noised abroad; more and more came to inquire concerning these strange things. Some put him upon the proof of the great truths, which such inquiries naturally led him to mention. And thus he was brought unawares to quote, explain, compare and enforce several parts of Scripture. This he did at first, sitting in his house, 'till the company increased, so that the house could not contain them. Then he stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do in the evening, as soon as he came from work. God immediately set his seal to what was spoken: and several believed, and therefore declared, that God was merciful also to their unrighteousness, and had forgiven all their sins.

Here was a Preacher and a large congregation, many of whom were happy partakers of the faith of  
the

the gospel, raised up without the direct interference of Mr. *Wesley*. He therefore now fully acquiesced in the order of God, and rejoiced that *the thoughts of God were not as his confined thoughts*. His mind was enlarged with the love of God and man; and he determined more firmly than ever, to spend and be spent, for the glory of his name. *Nelson's Journal* was afterwards published, and is now extant. And it is hard to say which is most to be admired, the strength of his understanding, unassisted by human learning; his zeal for the salvation of souls; or the injuries and oppressions which he suffered from those who "knew not what spirit they were of."

Mr. *Wesley* visited this good man at his earnest request, and from that time laboured much in *Yorkshire*. In no part of *England* has religion taken a deeper root, or had a wider spread, than in this favoured county. The people, who are numerous, are also industrious, and in general fully employed. They have learned to be "diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Not only in all the capital towns, but in all the villages also, numerous Societies were formed; and Christian fellowship, till then unknown, has given to religion a stability, and a beauty, which can hardly be conceived by those who know it not.

Mr. *Wesley* at this time visited *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, and the neighbouring towns and villages. As there is something remarkable in the commencement of his labours in this part of the kingdom, and as he ever after had a peculiar attachment to the town of *Newcastle*, in which he himself erected a large Preaching-house

house, we shall give the account of his entrance on that work in his own words.

“ Friday, May 28. 1742. We came to *Newcastle* about six in the evening, and after a short refreshment, walked into the town. I was surprised; so much drunkenness, cursing and swearing (even from the mouths of little children) do I never remember to have seen and heard before, in so small a compass of time. Surely this place is ripe for *Him*, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

“ Sunday 30. At seven I walked down to *Sandgate*, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town, and standing at the end of the street with *John Taylor*,\* began to sing the hundredth psalm. Three or four people came to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose, there might be twelve or fifteen hundred, before I had done preaching: to whom I applied those solemn words, *He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by his stripes we are healed.*

“ Observing the people when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me, with the most profound astonishment, I told them, “ If you desire to know who I am, my name is *John Wesley*. At five in the evening, with God’s help, I design to preach here again.”

“ At five, the hill on which I designed to preach, was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in *Moorfields*,

\* A good man who travelled with him at that time,

*fields, or on Kennington-Common.* I knew it was not possible for the one half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear, and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, *I will heal their backsliding. I will love them freely.* After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. It was some time before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came. But several were got to our Inn before me; by whom I was vehemently importuned, to stay with them, at least, a few days: or, however, one day more. But I could not consent; having given my word, to be at *Birstal*, with God's leave, on Tuesday night."

He now also visited *Epworth*, his native place, where his father had been Rector of the parish for many years, and had borne a faithful testimony, though almost all the seed seemed to have been sown as *by the high-way side.* "It being many years," says he, "since I had been in *Epworth* before, I went to an Inn, in the middle of the town, not knowing whether there were any left in it now, who would not be ashamed of my acquaintance. But an old servant of my father, with two or three poor women, presently found me out. I asked her, "Do you know any in *Epworth* who are in earnest to be saved?" She answered, "I am, by the grace of God; and I know I am saved through faith." I asked, "Have you then the peace of God? Do you know that he has forgiven your sins?"

“*sins?*” She replied, “I thank God, I know it well. And many here can say the same thing.”

He proceeds, “Sunday, June 6, 1742. A little before the service began, I went to Mr. *Romley* the curate, and offered to assist him either by preaching or reading prayers. But he did not choose to accept of my assistance. The church was exceeding full in the afternoon, a rumour being spread, that I was to preach. But the sermon on *Quench not the Spirit*, was not suitable to the expectation of many of the hearers. Mr. *Romley* told them, “One of the most dangerous ways of quenching the Spirit was by enthusiasm: and enlarged on the character of an enthusiast, in a very florid and oratorical manner. After sermon *John Taylor* stood in the church-yard, and gave notice as the people were coming out, “Mr. *Wesley*, not being permitted to preach in the church, designs to preach here at six o’clock.”

“Accordingly at six I came, and found such a congregation, as I believe *Epworth* never saw before. I stood near the east end of the church, upon my father’s tombstone, and cried, *The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*”

He continues, “Friday 11, I preached again at *Epworth* on *Ezekiel’s* vision of the resurrection of the dry bones. And great indeed was the shaking among them: lamentation and great mourning were heard; God bowing their hearts, so that on every side, as with one accord, they lifted up their voice and wept  
aloud,

aloud. Surely he who sent his Spirit to breathe upon them, will hear their cry and help them.

“ Saturday 12. I preached on the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith. While I was speaking, several dropped down as dead: and among the rest, such a cry was heard, of sinners groaning for the righteousness of faith, as almost drowned my voice. But many of these soon lifted up their heads with joy, and broke out into thanksgiving: being assured, they now had the desire of their soul, the forgiveness of their sins.

“ I observed a gentleman there, who was remarkable for not pretending to be of any religion at all. I was informed he had not been at public worship of any kind for upwards of thirty years. Seeing him stand as motionless as a statue, I asked him abruptly, “ Sir, are you a sinner ?” He replied with a deep and broken voice, “ Sinner enough,” and continued staring upwards, ’till his wife and a servant or two, who were all in tears, put him into a chaise and carried him home.

“ Sunday 13. At six I preached for the last time in *Epworth* church-yard (being to leave the town the next morning,) to a vast multitude gathered together from all parts, on the beginning of our Lord’s sermon on the mount. I continued among them for near three hours: and yet we scarce knew how to part. O let none think his labour of love is lost, because the fruit does not immediately appear. Near forty years did my father labour here. But he saw little fruit of all his labour. I took some pains among this  
people



people too : and my strength also seemed spent in vain. But now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town, on whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed sown so long since, now sprung up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins."

On another visit to *Epworth*, he observes, " Sunday, January 2, 1743. At five I preached on *So is every one who is born of the Spirit*. About eight I preached from my father's tomb, on Heb. viii. 11. Many from the neighbouring towns, asked, If it would not be well, as it was Sacrament-Sunday, for them to receive it? I told them, " By all means. But it would be more respectful first to ask Mr. *Romley*, the curate's leave." One did so, in the name of the rest. To whom he said, " Pray tell Mr. *Wesley*, I shall not give *him* the sacrament. For he is not fit."

" How wise a God is our God ! There could not have been so fit a place under heaven, where this should befall me first, as my father's house, the place of my nativity, and the very place, where, according to the strictest sect of our religion, I had so long lived a pharisee ! It was also fit in the highest degree, that he who repelled me from that very table, where I had myself so often distributed the bread of life, should be one who owed his all in this world, to the tender love which my father had shewn to his, as well as personally to himself."

As the various Societies now began to walk by rule, and to be trained up in the discipline as well as doctrine of the Lord, we shall here give a circum-

stantial account of *the discipline* which was gradually introduced among them: only observing that there was no previous design or plan at all, but every thing arose just as the occasion offered. And as this is so delicate and so important a part of *Mr. Wesley's Life*, and of the History of that revival of religion, in which he was the chief instrument, we will give the relation in his own words.

With regard to the formation of the Societies, he observes, "It quickly appeared, that their thus uniting together answered the end proposed. In a few months the far greater part of those who had begun to *fear God, and work righteousness*, but were not united together, grew faint in their minds, and fell back into what they were before. Mean while the far greater part of those, who were thus united together, continued *striving to enter in at the strait gate, and to lay hold on eternal life*.

"Upon reflection," continues he, "I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of christianity. In the earliest times, those whom God had sent forth, *preached the Gospel to every creature*. And the *ὁ ἀκροατής*, the body of hearers, were mostly either Jews or Heathens. But as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth, as to forsake sin and seek the Gospel-salvation, they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these *κατηχημένους* (catechumens, as they were then called) apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities. "But

“ But it was not long before an objection was made to this, which had not once entered into my thought.

“ Is not this making a schism? Is not the joining these people together, *gathering churches out of churches?*”

“ It was easily answered, if you mean only *gathering people out of buildings called churches*, it is. But if you mean, dividing christians from christians, and so destroying christian fellowship, it is not. For 1st. These were not christians before they were thus joined. Most of them were barefaced heathens. 2. Neither are they christians, from whom you suppose them to be divided. You will not look me in the face, and say they are. What! Drunken christians? Cursing and swearing christians? Lying christians? Cheating christians? If these are christians at all, they are *devil christians* (as the poor *Malabarians* term them.) 3. Neither are they divided any more than they were before, even from these wretched *devil christians*. They are as ready as ever to assist them, and to perform every office of real kindness toward them. 4. If it be said, “but there are some true christians in the parish, and you destroy the christian fellowship between these and them.” I answer, that which never existed, cannot be destroyed. But the fellowship you speak of, never existed. Therefore it cannot be destroyed. Which of those true christians had any such fellowship with these? Who watched over them in love? Who marked their growth in grace? Who advised and exhorted them from time to time? Who prayed with them and for them as they had need? This, and this alone is christian fellowship: but alas! Where is it to be found?

Look *East* or *West*, *North* or *South*: name what parish you please. Is this christian fellowship there? Rather are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand? What christian connexion is there between them? What intercourse in spiritual things? What watching over each other's souls? What bearing of one another's burdens? What a mere jest is it then, to talk so gravely, of *destroying* what never was? The real truth is just the reverse of this: we *introduce* christian fellowship where it was *utterly destroyed*. And the fruits of it have been peace, joy, love, and zeal for every good word and work.

“ 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.

“ We groaned under these inconveniencies 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. I was talking with several of the Society in *Bristol*, concerning the means of paying the debts there;

there; when one stood up and said, "Let every member of the Society give a *penny* a week 'till all are paid." Another answered, "But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it." "Then, said he, put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give any thing, well. I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly: receive what they give, and make up what is wanting." It was done. In a while some of these informed me, "they found such and such a one did not live as he ought." It struck me immediately, "This is the thing; the very thing we have wanted so long." I called together all the *Leaders* of the *classes*, (so we used to term them and their companies) 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.

"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 therein, 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.

“ It is the business of a Leader,

“ I. To see each person in his Class, once a week at the least : in order, to inquire how their souls prosper ? To advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasion may require ; to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor.

“ II. To meet the Minister and the stewards of the Society, in order to inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that are disorderly and will not be reprov'd ; to pay the stewards what they have received of their several Classes in the week preceding.

“ At first they visited each person at his own house : but this was soon found not so expedient. And that on many accounts. 1. It took up more time, than most of the leaders had to spare. 2. Many persons lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, who would not suffer them to be thus visited. 3. At the houses of those who were not so averse, they often had no opportunity of speaking to them but in company. And this did not at all answer the end propos'd, of exhorting, comforting or reprov'ing. 4. It frequently happened that one affirmed what another denied. And this could not be cleared up without seeing them together : 5. Little misunderstandings and quarrels of various kinds frequently arose among relations or neighbours ; effectually to remove which it was needful to see them all face to face. Upon all these considerations it was agreed, that those of each Class should meet all together. And by this means, a more full inquiry was made into the behaviour of every person. Those who could not be visited at home, or no otherwise than

than in company, had the same advantage with others. Advice or reproof was given as need required; quarrels made up, misunderstandings removed. And after an hour or two spent in this labour of love, they concluded with prayer and thanksgiving.

“It can scarce be conceived, what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation. Many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship, of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to *bear one another's burdens*, and *naturally to care for each other*. As they had daily a more intimate acquaintance with, so they had a more endeared affection for each other. And *speaking the truth in love, they grew up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplied, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, increased unto the edifying itself in love.*

“About this time, I was informed, that several persons in *Kingswood* frequently met together at the School, and (when they could spare the time) spent the greater part of the night in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. Some advised me to put an end to this: but upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed, it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, “I designed to watch with them, on the Friday nearest the full-moon, that we might have light thither and back again.” I gave public notice of this, the Sunday before, and withal, that I intended  
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to preach; desiring, they and they only would meet me there, who could do it without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine; and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God.

“ This we have continued to do once a month ever since, in *Bristol, London, and Newcastle*, as well as *Kingswood*. And exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein: it has generally been an extremely solemn season; when the word of God sunk deep into the hearts, even of those who till then knew him not. If it be said, “ this was only owing to the novelty of the thing (the circumstance which still draws such multitudes together at those seasons) or perhaps to the awful silence of the night:” I am not careful to answer in this matter. Be it so: however, the impression then made on many souls, has never since been effaced. Now allowing, that God did make use either of the novelty or any other indifferent circumstance, in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together.

“ Nay, may I not put the case farther yet? If I can probably conjecture, that either by the novelty of this *ancient* custom, or by any other indifferent circumstance, it is in my power to *save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins*: am I clear before God, if I do it not? If I do not snatch that brand out of the burning?

“ 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? At these seasons I likewise particularly inquire, Whether there be any misunderstanding or differences among them? That every hindrance of peace and brotherly love may be taken out of the way.

“To each of those, of whose seriousness and good conversation I found no reason to doubt, I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing their name on a ticket prepared for that purpose: every ticket implying as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it was given, as if I had wrote at length, “I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God and works righteousness.”

“Those who bore these tickets (these *σύμβολα* or *Tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them; being of just the same force with the *ἐπιστολαὶ συστατικαὶ*, commendatory letters mentioned by the Apostle) wherever they came, were acknowledged by their brethren, and received with all cheerfulness. These were likewise of use in other respects. By these it was easily distinguished when the Society were to meet apart, who were members of it, and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member. He has no new ticket at the quarterly visitation; (for so often the tickets are changed) and hereby it is immediately known, that he is no longer of this community.

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“ The thing which I was greatly afraid of all this time, and which I resolved to use every possible method of preventing was, a narrowness of spirit, a party-zeal, a being straitened in our own bowels; that miserable bigotry, which makes many so unready to believe, that there is any work of God but among themselves. I thought it might be a help against this, frequently to read, to all who were willing to hear, the accounts I received from time to time, of the work which God is carrying on in the earth, both in our own and other countries, not among us alone, but among those of various opinions and denominations. For this I allotted one evening in every month. And I find no cause to repent my labour. It is generally a time of strong consolation to those who love God, and all mankind for his sake: as well as of breaking down the partition-walls, which either the craft of the devil, or the folly of men has built up: and of encouraging every child of God to say, (O when shall it once be?) *Whosoever doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother.*

“ By the blessing of God upon their endeavours to help one another, many found the pearl of great price. Being justified by faith, they had *peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* These felt a more tender affection than before, to those who were partakers of like precious faith: and hence arose such a confidence in each other, that they poured out their souls in each other's bosom. Indeed they had great need so to do: for the war was not over, as they had supposed

supposed. But they had still to wrestle both with flesh and blood, and with principalities and powers: so that temptations were on every side: and often temptations of such a kind, as they knew not how to speak of in a Class; in which persons of every sort, young and old, men and women, met together.

“ These therefore wanted some means of closer union: they wanted to pour out their hearts without reserve, particularly with regard to the sin which did still *easily beset* them, and the temptations which were most apt to prevail over them. And they were the more desirous of this, when they observed it was the express advice of an inspired writer, *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed.*\*

“ In compliance with their desire, I divided them into smaller companies; putting the married or single men, and married or single women together. The chief Rules of these Bands, (i. e. little companies; so that old *English* word signifies) run thus:

“ In order to *confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another that we may be healed*, we intend, 1. To meet once a week at least: 2. To come punctually at the hour appointed: 3. To begin with singing or prayer: 4. To speak, each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our soul, with the faults we have committed in thought, word or deed, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting: and, 5. To desire some person among us (thence called a Leader) to speak *his* own state first, and then to ask the rest in order, as many and as searching questions

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\* Jam. v. 16.

as may be, concerning their state, sins and temptations.

“ In order to increase in them a grateful sense of all the mercies of the Lord, I desired that one evening in a quarter, they should all come together that we might *eat bread* (as the ancient Christians did) *with gladness and singleness of heart*. At these *Love-Fests* (so we termed them, retaining the name, as well as the thing, which was in use from the beginning)\* our food is only a little plain cake and water. But we seldom return from them, without being fed, not only with the *meat that perisheth*, but with *that which endureth to everlasting life*.

“ Great and many are the advantages which have ever since flowed, from this closer union of the believers with each other. They prayed one for another, that they might be healed of the faults they had confessed; and it was so. The chains were broken: the bands were burst in sunder, and sin had no more dominion over them. Many were delivered from the temptations, out of which till then they found no way to escape. They were built up in our most holy faith. They rejoiced in the Lord more abundantly. They were strengthened in love, and more effectually provoked to abound in every good work.

“ And yet while most of these who were thus intimately joined together, went on daily from faith to faith; some fell from the faith, either all at once, by falling into known, wilful sin: or gradually, and almost insensibly, by giving way in what they called

little

\* Jude 12.

little things : by sins of omission, by yielding to heart-sins, or by not watching unto prayer. The exhortations and prayers used among the believers, did no longer profit these. They wanted advice and instructions suited to their case : which as soon as I observed, I separated them from the rest, and desired them to meet me apart on Saturday evenings.

“ At this hour, all the hymns, exhortations and prayers, are adapted to their circumstances : being wholly suited to those who did see God, but have now lost the light of his countenance : and who mourn after him, and refuse to be comforted, till they know he has healed all their backsliding.

“ By applying both the threats and promises of God, to these real (not nominal) *penitents*, and by crying to God in their behalf, we endeavoured to bring them back to the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls ; not by any of the fopperies of the *Roman* church, although in some measure countenanced by antiquity. In prescribing hair-shirts, and bodily austerities, we durst not follow even the ancient church : although we had unawares done so, both in dividing the believers from the rest of the Society, and in separating the *penitents* from them, and appointing a peculiar service for them.”

Upon his return from *Yorkshire*, Mr. *Wesley* spent some time in and near *Bristol*. He then revisited *London*, where he arrived on Tuesday, July 20th. 1742, being hastened by the account of his mother's illness. He found her on the borders of eternity, free from all doubt and fear, and from every desire  
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but (as soon as God should call) “To depart and to be with Christ.”

But we must beg leave to give Mr. *Wesley's* own account of this awful occurrence. “Friday, July 30. About three in the afternoon, I went to my mother, and found her change was near. I sat down on the bed-side. She was in her last conflict; unable to speak, but I believe quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward, while we commended her soul to God. From three to four, the silver cord was loosening, and the wheel breaking at the cistern: and then without any struggle or sigh or groan, the soul was set at liberty. We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech, “Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God.”

“Sunday, August 1. Almost an innumerable company of people being gathered together, about five in the afternoon, I committed to the earth the body of my mother, to sleep with her fathers. The portion of scripture from which I afterwards spoke was, *I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it; from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead small and great stand before God, and the books were opened—And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see on this side eternity.

“We set up a plain stone at the head of her grave, inscribed with the following words:

“Here

“ Here lies the body of Mrs. *Susannah Wesley*, the youngest and last surviving daughter of Dr. *Samuel Annesley*.”

“ IN sure and steadfast hope to rise  
And claim her mansion in the skies,  
A christian here her flesh laid down,  
The cross exchanging for a crown.

True daughter of affliction she  
Inur'd to pain and misery,  
Mourn'd a long night of griefs and fears,  
A legal night of seventy years.

The Father then reveal'd his Son,  
Him in the broken bread made known.  
She knew and felt her sins forgiven,  
And found the earnest of her heaven.

Meet for the fellowship above,  
She heard the call, “ Arise, my love :”  
“ I come,” her dying looks replied,  
And lamb-like, as her Lord, she died.”

We cannot but further observe, That even she (as well as her father and grandfather, her husband, and her three sons) had been, in her measure and degree, a preacher of righteousness. This we learn from a letter, wrote long since to her husband; part of which we here subjoin.

Feb. 6, 1711-12.

“ AS I am a woman, so I am also mistress of a large family. And though the superior charge of the  
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souls contained in it, lies upon you,—yet in your absence I cannot but look upon every soul you leave under my care, as a talent committed to me under a trust, by the great Lord of all the families both of heaven and earth. And if I am unfaithful to him or you, in neglecting to improve these talents, how shall I answer unto him, when he shall command me to render an account of my stewardship?

“As these and other such like thoughts made me at first take a more than ordinary care of the souls of my children and servants; so knowing our religion requires a strict observation of the Lord’s day, and not thinking that we fully answered the end of the institution by going to church, unless we filled up the intermediate spaces of time by other acts of piety and devotion: I thought it my duty to spend some part of the day in reading to and instructing my family.—And such time I esteemed spent in a way more acceptable to God, than if I had retired to my own private devotions.

“This was the beginning of my present practice. Other people’s coming in and joining with us was merely accidental. Our lad told his parents: they first desired to be admitted: then others that heard of it, begged leave also. So our company increased to about thirty: and it seldom exceeded forty last winter.—

“But soon after you went to *London* last, I lighted on the account of the *Danish* missionaries. I was, I think, never more affected with any thing. I could not forbear spending good part of that evening, in  
praising



praising and adoring the divine goodness for inspiring them with such ardent zeal for his glory.—For several days I could think or speak of little else. At last it came into my mind, Though I am not a man, nor a minister, yet if my heart were sincerely devoted to God, and I was inspired with a true zeal for his glory, I might do somewhat more than I do. I thought, I might pray for and speak to those with whom I converse with more warmth of affection. I resolved to begin first with my own children. Afterwards I discoursed more freely and affectionately with those few neighbours that came to me. I chose the best and most awakening sermons we have. And I spent somewhat more time with them in such exercises, without being careful about the success of my undertaking. Since this our company increased every night. For I dare deny none that ask admittance.

“Last Sunday I believe we had above two hundred. And yet many went away for want of room to stand.

“We banish all temporal concerns from our Society. None is suffered to mingle any discourse about them with our reading or singing. We keep close to the business of the day, and when it is over, all go home.

“I cannot conceive, why any should reflect upon you, because your *wife* endeavours to draw people to church, and to restrain them from profaning the Lord's day, by reading to them and by other persuasions. For my part, I value no censure upon this account. I have long since shook hands with the  
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world;

world: and I heartily wish, I had never given them more reason to speak against me.

“As to its looking particular, I grant it does. And so does almost any thing that is serious, or that may in any way advance the glory of God or the salvation of souls.—

“As for your proposal, of letting some other person read: alas! You do not consider what a people these are. I do not think one man among them could read a sermon without spelling a good part of it. Nor has any of our family a voice strong enough to be heard by such a number of people.—

“But there is one thing about which I am much dissatisfied; that is, Their being present at family-prayers. I do not speak of any concern I am under, barely because so many are present. For those who have the honour of speaking to the Great and Holy God, need not be ashamed to speak before the whole world: but because of my sex. I doubt, if it is proper for *me* to present the prayers of the people to God. Last Sunday I would fain have dismissed them before prayers; but they begged so earnestly to stay, I durst not deny them.—

To the Rev. Mr. Wesley, in St. Margaret's church-yard, Westminster.”

The few traits we have given of this Lady, are sufficient to discover her genuine character. She was a woman of sound understanding and great penetration. She possessed a single eye: she inquired after truth, and followed it wherever she found it. Her resolution

resolution was unshaken: the smiles and frowns of the world she trod under her feet; but at the same time discovered the greatest caution in admitting any thing as true, which to her appeared novel. In some things she evidenced the soul of a Missionary; and therefore was peculiarly qualified to reside with her son, whose high-church principles might otherwise have induced him, as in the case of Mr. *Maxfield*, to reject that assistance, which the Lord afforded him, and which was so indispensably necessary to enable him, to diffuse the favour and power of religion through this and distant lands.

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### C H A P. III.

*Progress of Religion, with the Persecutions that followed. Accounts from Germany of the state of Religion in the English Army. And of the first Conferences, with some other particulars.*

MR. WESLEY having now several helpers after his own heart, the work of God prospered in many places. Many Societies were formed in *Somersetshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire*, and in several parts of *Yorkshire*. And those in *London, Bristol, Kingswood* and *Newcastle upon Tyne*, were much increased.

But as in the beginning of christianity, so it was now. This sect was every where spoken against. But its enemies were not content with this. In the year

1740, several rioters who had long disturbed the meetings in *Bristol*, were emboldened by impunity. Their numbers also increased, so as to fill, not only the court before the preaching-house, but a considerable part of the street. The Mayor sent them orders to disperse: but they set him at defiance. He then dispatched several of his officers, who took the ringleaders into custody. The next day they were brought into court, it being the time of the quarter-sessions. There they received a severe reprimand: and from that time, the Societies in *Bristol* enjoyed almost uninterrupted peace.

In *London* the rioters were not so easily subdued. They assembled at various places, and frequently treated Mr. *Wesley* and many of his serious hearers in a cruel manner. They followed them with showers of stones, and once attempted to unroof the *Foundery*, where the congregation was assembled, and had nearly accomplished their design. The common cry was, "You may treat them as you please, for there is no law for them." But Sir *John Ganson* the chairman of the *Middlesex* justices called on Mr. *Wesley*, and informed him, That he had no need to suffer these riotous mobs to molest him: adding, "Sir, I and the other *Middlesex* Magistrates have orders from above, to do you justice whenever you apply to us." A short time after he did apply. Justice was done, though not with rigour; and from that period the Society had peace in *London*. We are happy, that from authentic information we can inform the public, that his late Majesty, on a representation made to him  
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of the persecutions suffered by the Societies at this time, declared that "No man in his dominions should be persecuted on the account of religion, while he sat on the throne : " A declaration, that reflected much honour on the King.

However the rioters in the country, particularly in *Staffordshire*, were not so easily quelled. In the beginning of 1743, Mr. *Wesley* visited *Wednesbury*, and preached in the Town-hall morning and evening, and also in the open air. He also visited the parts adjacent, and more especially those which were inhabited by colliers. Many appeared to be deeply affected, and about a hundred desired to join together. In two or three months these were increased to between three and four hundred, and enjoyed much peace upon the whole. But in the summer following there was an entire change. Mr. *Egginton* the minister of *Wednesbury*, with several neighbouring justices of the peace, stirred up the basest of the people ; on which such outrages followed, as were a scandal to the christian name. Riotous mobs were summoned together by the sound of horn : men, women, and children were abused in the most shocking manner : being beaten, stoned, covered with mud : some even pregnant women, treated in a manner that cannot be mentioned. In the mean time their houses were broke open by any that pleased, and their goods spoiled or carried away, some of the owners standing by, but not daring to oppose, as it would have been at the peril of their lives. Mr. *Wesley's* own account

of those riots, as far as they related to himself, is so remarkable, that we make no scruple of inserting it at large.

“ Thursday, October 20, 1743. After preaching at *Birmingham*, I rode to *Wednesbury*. At twelve I preached in a ground near the middle of the town, to a far larger congregation than was expected, on, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever*. I believe every one present felt the power of God, and no creature offered to molest us.

“ I was writing at *Francis' Ward's* in the afternoon, when the cry arose, that “ the mob had beset the house.” We prayed, that God would disperse them. And it was so: so that in half an hour, not a man was left. I told our brethren, “ Now is the time for us to go :” but they pressed me exceedingly to stay. So, that I might not offend them, I sat down, though I foresaw what would follow. Before five the mob surrounded the house again, in greater numbers than ever. The cry of one and all was, “ Bring out the Minister: we *will* have the Minister.” I desired one, to take their Captain by the hand, and bring him into the house. After a few sentences interchanged between us, the lion was become a lamb. I desired him to go and bring one or two more of the most angry of his companions. He brought in two, who were ready to swallow the ground with rage; but in two minutes, they were as calm as he. I then bade them make way, that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was in the midst of them, I called for a chair, and standing up asked “ What do any of you want with me ?”

me?" Some said, "We want you to go with us to the Justice." I replied, "That I will with all my heart." I then spoke a few words, which God applied; so that they cried out with might and main, "The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defence." I asked, "Shall we go to the Justice to night or in the morning?" Most of them cried, "To night, to night:" on which I went before, and two or three hundred followed.

"The night came before we had walked a mile, together with heavy rain. However on we went to *Bentley-hall*, two miles from *Wednesbury*. One or two ran before to tell Mr. *Lane*, "They had brought Mr. *Wesley* before his Worship." Mr. *Lane* replied, "What have I to do with Mr. *Wesley*? Go and carry him back again." By this time the main body came up, and began knocking at the door. A servant told them, "Mr. *Lane* was in bed." His son followed, and asked, "What was the matter?" One replied, "Why, an't please you, they sing psalms all day; nay, and make folks rise at five in the morning. And what would your Worship advise us to do?" "To go home, said Mr. *Lane*, and be quiet."

"Here they were at a full stop, till one advised, "To go to Justice *Persehouse* at *Walsal*." All agreed to this. So we hastened on, and about seven came to his house. But Mr. *Persehouse* likewise sent word, "That he was in bed." Now they were at a stand again: but at last they all thought it the wisest course to make the best of their way home. About fifty of them undertook to convoy me. But we had not gone  
a hundred

a hundred yards, when the mob of *Walsal* came, pouring in like a flood, and bore down all before them. The *Darlaston*-mob made what defence they could; but they were weary, as well as out-numbered. So that in a short time, many being knocked down, the rest ran away, and left me in their hands.

“ To attempt speaking was vain; for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea. So they dragged me along till we came to the town: where seeing the door of a large house open, I attempted to go in; but a man catching me by the hair, pulled me back into the middle of the mob. They made no more stop till they had carried me through the main-street. I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness. At the West-end of the town, seeing a door half open, I made toward it, and would have gone in. But a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, saying, “ They would pull the house down to the ground.” However, I stood at the door and asked, “ Are you willing to hear me speak?” Many cried out, “ No, no! knock his brains out: down with him: kill him at once.” Others said, “ Nay; but we will hear him first.” I began asking, “ What evil have I done? Which of you all have I wronged in word or deed?” And continued speaking for above a quarter of an hour, till my voice suddenly failed. Then the floods began to lift up their voice again; many crying out, “ Bring him away, bring him away.”

“ In the mean time my strength and my voice returned, and I broke out aloud into prayer. And  
now



now the man who just before headed the mob, turned and said, "Sir, I will spend my life for you. Follow me, and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head." Two or three of his fellows confirmed his words, and got close to me immediately. At the same time the gentleman in the shop cried out, "For shame, for shame, let him go." An honest butcher, who was a little farther off, said, "It was a shame they should do thus:" and pulled back four or five one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The people then, as if it had been by common consent, fell back to the right and left: while those three or four men took me between them, and carried me through them all. But on the bridge the mob rallied again: we therefore went on one side, over the Mill-dam, and thence through the meadows: till a little before ten, God brought me safe to *Wednesbury*: having lost only one flap of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands.

"I never saw such a chain of providences before: so many convincing proofs, that the hand of God is on every person and thing, over-ruling as it seemeth him good.

"A poor woman of *Darlaston*, who had headed that mob, and sworn that none should touch me, when she saw her fellows give way, ran into the thickest of the throng, and knocked down three or four men, one after another. But many assaulting her at once, she was soon overpowered, and had probably been killed in a few minutes, (three men keeping her down, and beating her with all their might)

might) had not a man called to one of them, "Hold, Tom, hold!" "Who is there, said Tom? What, honest Munchin? Nay then, let her go." So they held their hand and let her get up, and crawl home as well as she could.

"From the beginning to the end I found the same presence of mind, as if I had been sitting in my own study. But I took no thought for one moment before another: only once it came into my mind, that if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket. For myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat, and a light pair of boots.

"By how gentle degrees does God prepare us for his will! Two years ago a piece of a brick grazed my shoulders. It was a year after, that a stone struck me between the eyes. Last month I received one blow: and this evening, two: one before we came into the town, and one after we were gone out. But both were as nothing: for though one man struck me on the breast with all his might, and the other on the mouth with such a force that the blood gushed out immediately; I felt no more pain from either of the blows, than if they had touched me with a straw.

"It ought not to be forgotten, that when the rest of the Society made all haste to escape for their lives, four only would not stir, *William Sitch, Edward Slater, John Griffiths, and Joan Parks*: these kept with me, resolving to live or die together. And none of them received one blow, but *William Sitch*, who held me by the arm from one end of the town to the other.

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He was then dragged away and knocked down: but he soon rose and got to me again. I afterwards asked him, "What he expected when the mob came upon us?" He said, "To die for him who had died for us: and he felt no hurry or fear, but calmly waited till God should require his soul of him."

"When I came back to *Francis Ward's*, I found many of our brethren waiting upon God. Many also whom I never had seen before, came to rejoice with us. And the next morning, as I rode through the town in my way to *Nottingham*, every one I met expressed such a cordial affection, that I could scarce believe what I saw and heard."

About this time a Captain *Turner*, of *Bristol*, a member of the Methodist Society, landed at *St. Ives* in *Cornwall*, and was agreeably surpris'd to find a few persons who feared God, and constantly met together. They were much refresh'd by him, as he was by them. On his mentioning this at *Bristol*, Mr. *Charles Wesley* went there with two of the Preachers, whose labours were blessed to many. Mr. *John Wesley* soon after made them a visit, and found a considerable Society, many of whom enjoyed peace with God. But both he and his serious hearers were roughly handled by the Rector, the Curate and the Gentry, who set the mob upon them on every occasion. Many of the people were wounded; and the Preaching-house at *St. Ives* was pulled down to the ground.

The persecution Mr. *Wesley* met with in *Falmouth* and its neighbourhood, is so remarkable, that we shall give his own description of it: and this, with the

account of the persecution at *Wednesbury*, will give our readers some idea of the sufferings Mr. Wesley endured in the commencement of his extensive labours.

“ Thursday, July 4. I rode to *Falmouth*. About three in the afternoon I went to see a gentlewoman who had been indisposed. Almost as soon as I sat down, the house was beset on all sides by an innumerable multitude of people. A louder or more confused noise could hardly be at the taking of a city by storm. At first Mrs. B. and her daughter endeavoured to quiet them. But it was labour lost. They might as well have attempted to still the raging of the sea, and were therefore soon glad to shift for themselves. The rabble roared with all their throats, “ Bring out the *Canorum* ! Where is the *Canorum* ? ” (an unmeaning word which the *Cornish* rabble then used instead of *Methodist*.) No answer being given, they quickly forced open the outer door, and filled the passage. Only a wainscot-partition was between us, which was not likely to stand long. I immediately took down a large looking-glass which hung against it, supposing the whole side would fall in at once. They began their work with abundance of bitter imprecations. A poor girl who was left in the house, was utterly astonished, and cried out, “ O Sir, what must we do ? ” I said, “ We must pray.” Indeed at that time, to all appearance, our lives were not worth an hour’s purchase. She asked, “ But, Sir, is it not better for you to hide yourself ? To get into the closet ? ” I answered “ No. It is best for me to stand just where I am.” Among those with-

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out, were the crews of some privateers, which were lately come into the harbour. Some of these, being angry at the slowness of the rest, thrust them away, and coming up altogether, set their shoulders to the inner door, and cried out, "Avast, lads, avast!" Away went all the hinges at once, and the door fell back into the room. I stepped forward into the midst of them and said, "Here I am. Which of you has any thing to say to me? To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? Or you? Or you?" I continued speaking, till I came into the middle of the street, and then raising my voice, said, "Neighbours, countrymen! Do you desire to hear me speak?" They cried vehemently, "Yes, yes. He shall speak. He shall. Nobody shall hinder him." But having nothing to stand on, and no advantage of ground, I could be heard by few only. However I spoke without intermission; and as far as the sound reached, the people were still: till one or two of their captains turned about and swore, "Not a man shall touch him." Mr. *Thomas*, a Clergyman, then came up, and asked, "Are you not ashamed to use a stranger thus?" He was soon seconded by two or three gentlemen of the town, and one of the Aldermen; with whom I walked down the town speaking all the time, till I came to Mrs. *Maddern's* house. The gentlemen proposed sending for my horse to the door, and desired me to step in and rest the mean time. But on second thoughts, they judged it not advisable to let me go out among the people again. So they chose to send my horse before me to *Penryn*, and to send me thither  
by

by water: the sea running close by the backdoor of the house in which we were.

“ I never saw before, no, not at *Walsal* itself, the hand of God so plainly shewn as here. *There* I had many companions, who were willing to die with me: *here* not a friend, but one simple girl; who likewise was hurried away from me in an instant, as soon as ever she came out of Mrs. B's house. *There* I received some blows. lost part of my clothes, and was covered over with dirt. *Here*, although the hands of perhaps some hundreds of people were lifted up to strike or throw, they were one and all stopped in the midway; so that not a man touched me with one of his fingers. Neither was any thing thrown from first to last: so that I had not even a speck of dirt on my clothes. Who can deny, that God heareth the prayer? Or that he hath all power in heaven and earth?”

The Preachers in the different parts of the kingdom were permitted to *drink of the same cup*, yea, in many instances suffered greater persecutions than Mr. *Wesley* himself. Stones, dirt and rotten eggs were the common weapons of the mob. In some instances, as in that of Mr. *Thomas Mitchell*, they were thrown into ponds of water, and held down till they were nearly drowned. Applications were made for redress to the neighbouring Magistrates, but generally in vain. They then, under the patronage of Mr. *Wesley*, had recourse to the Court of King's Bench, and in every instance found the most ample justice. The Judges of that Court acted on every occasion with the greatest uprightnes and impartiality: the consequence

sequence of which was, that peace was in general perfectly restored.

Mr. *Wesley* now preached in most of the towns in *Cornwall*: and the seed sown, through the blessing of God, produced a plentiful harvest. Perhaps there is no part of these kingdoms where there has been a more general change. *Hurling*, their favourite but a most brutal diversion, at which limbs were frequently broke, and lives lost, is now hardly heard of: and that scandal of humanity, which had been so constantly practised on all the coasts of *Cornwall*, the plundering vessels that struck upon the rocks, and often murdering those that escaped from the wreck, is now well nigh at an end. But it is not harmlessness or outward decency alone, which has evidenced the reality of their religion, but *Faith working by love*, producing all inward and outward holiness.

About the time of the persecutions in *Cornwall*, *John Nelson* of *Birstal* in *Yorkshire*, who has been mentioned before, and *Thomas Beard* an honest industrious man, were pressed and sent off as soldiers, for no other crime either committed or pretended, than that of calling sinners to repentance. *John Nelson* was after much ill usage released by an order from the Secretary at War, and preached the Gospel many years. But *Thomas Beard* sunk under his oppressions. He was then lodged at the Hospital at *Newcastle*, where he praised God continually. His fever increasing, he was bled. His arm festered, mortified, and was cut off: two or three days after which, God signed his discharge, and called him up to his eternal home.

On Friday, August 24, 1744. Mr. *Wesley* preached for the last time at *Oxford* before the University. He had preached to them twice before, since the time he began to declare the truth in the fields and highways. Those sermons are printed in the first volume of his Works, and are well worthy of a serious perusal. "I am now," says he, "clear of the blood of those men. I have fully delivered my own soul. And I am well pleased that it should be the very day, on which, in the last century, near two thousand burning and shining lights were put out at one stroke. Yet what a wide difference is there between their case and mine! They were turned out of house and home, and all that they had: whereas I am only hindered from preaching, without any other loss: and that in a kind of honourable manner: it being determined, that when my next turn to preach came, they would pay another person to preach for me. And so they did twice or thrice: even to the time that I resigned my fellowship."

A few letters which Mr. *Wesley* received about this time from some of the English soldiers in *Germany*, shew the power of religion in the midst of the tumults of war in so striking a point of view, that we make no apology for inserting them: especially as the principal instrument of the work therein related, was afterwards a preacher in connection with him for many years. We shall give them together, though written at some distance of time from each other; as they will hereby afford a more complete view of this work of God in the British army.



Rev. SIR,

“ We marched to the camp near *Brussels*, on the first of May 1744. There a few of us joined in a Society, being sensible, where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is our Lord in the midst of them. Our place of meeting was a small wood near the camp. We remained in this camp eight days, and then removed to a place called *Arsk*. Here I began to speak openly, at a small distance from the camp, just in the middle of the *English* army. And here it pleased God to give me some evidences, that my labour was not in vain. We sung a hymn, which drew about two hundred soldiers together, and they all behaved decently. After I had prayed, I began to exhort them, and though it rained very hard, yet very few went away. Many acknowledged the truth; in particular a young man, *John Greenwood*, who has kept with me ever since, and whom God has lately been pleased to give me for a fellow-labourer. Our Society is now increased to upwards of two hundred, and the hearers are frequently more than a thousand; although many say, I am mad; and others have endeavoured to incense the Field-Marshal against us. I have been sent for, and examined several times. But, blessed be God, he has always delivered me.

“ Many of the officers have come to hear for themselves, often nine or ten at a time. I endeavour to lose no opportunity. During our abode in the camp at *Arsk*, I have preached thirty-five times in seven days. One of those times a soldier who was present, called aloud to his comrades, to come away, and not hear that fool any longer. But it pleased God, to

send the word spoken to his heart: so that he roared out in the bitterness of his soul for a considerable time; and then He who never fails those that seek him, turned his heaviness into joy. He is now never so happy as when he is proclaiming the loving-kindness of God his Saviour.

“ I was a little shocked at my first entrance on this great work, because I was alone, having none to help me. But the Lord helped me, and soon raised up *William Clements*, and in June, *John Evans* belonging to the train, to my assistance. Since we have been in this camp, we have built two small tabernacles, in which we meet at eight in the morning, at three in the afternoon, and seven at night: and commonly two whole nights in each week.

“ Since I began to write this, we are come to our quarters: so that our Society is now divided. Some of us are in *Bruges*, and some in *Ghent*. But it has pleased the Lord to leave neither place without a teacher. For *John Greenwood* and I are in this city: and *B. Clements* and *Evans* are in *Ghent*. So that we trust our Lord will carry on his work in both places.

“ We that are in *Bruges* have lived a small place, in which we meet. And our dear Lord is in the midst of us. Many times the tears run down every face, and joy reigns in every heart.

“ I shall conclude with a full assurance of your prayers, with a longing desire to see you. O, when will the joyful meeting be! Perhaps not on this side death. If not, my Master's will be done.

Your unworthy brother in the Lord,

To the Rev. Mr. Wesley.

*John Haime.*  
*Ghent,*

*Ghent, Nov. 12. O. S. 1744.*

*Rev. S I R,*

“ WE made bold to trouble you with this, to acquaint you with some of the Lord's dealings with us here. We have hired two rooms, one small one, wherein a few of us meet every day at one o'clock; and another large one for public service, where we meet twice a day, at nine in the morning and four in the afternoon; and the hand of the Omnipotent God is with us, to the pulling down of the strong-holds of Satan.

“ The seventh instant, when we were met together in the evening, as I was at prayer, one that was kneeling by me, cried out (like a woman in travail) “ My Redeemer! my Redeemer!” Which continued about ten minutes. When he was asked, “ What was the matter,” he said, “ He had found that which he had often heard of, that is, a heaven upon earth:” and some others had much ado to forbear crying out in the same manner.

“ Dear Sir, I am a stranger to you in the flesh. I know not if I have seen you above once, when I saw you preaching on *Kennington-Common*. And then I hated you, as much as now (by the grace of God) I love you. The Lord pursued me with convictions from my infancy, and I often made abundance of good resolutions. But finding as often that I could not keep them (as being made wholly in my own strength) I at length left off all striving, and gave myself over to all manner of lewdness and profaneness. So I

continued for some years, till the battle of *Dettingen*. The balls then came very thick about me, and my comrades fell on every side. Yet I was preserved unhurt. A few days after this, the Lord was pleased to visit me again. The pains of hell gat hold upon me, the snares of death encompassed me. I durst no longer commit any outward sin, and I prayed God to be merciful to my soul. Now I was at a loss for books. But God took care for this also. One day as I was at work, I found an old Bible in one of the train-waggons. To read this, I soon forsook my old companions : all but one, who was still a thorn in my flesh. But not long after he sickened and died.

“ My Bible was now my only companion, and I believed myself a very good Christian, till we came to winter-quarters, where I met with *John Haime*. But I was soon sick of his company. For he robbed me of my treasure ; he stole away my gods, telling me, “ I and my works were going to hell together.” This was strange doctrine to me, who being wholly ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, sought only to establish my own righteousness. And being naturally of a stubborn temper, my poor brother was so perplexed with me, that sometimes he was resolved (as he afterwards told me) to forbid my coming to him any more.

“ When the Lord had at length opened my eyes, and shewn me that *by grace we are saved, through faith*, I began immediately to declare it to others, though I had not as yet experienced it myself. But October 23, as *William Clements* was at prayer, I felt on a sudden  
a great

a great alteration in my soul. My eyes overflowed with tears of love. I knew I was through Christ reconciled to God; which enflamed my soul with fervent love to him, whom I now saw to be my complete Redeemer.

“O the tender care of Almighty God, in bringing up his children! How are we bound to love so indulgent a Father, and to fall down in wonder and adoration of his great and glorious name for his tender mercies!—Dear Sir, I beg you will pray for him, who is not worthy to be a door-keeper to the least of my Master’s servants,

*John Evans.\**

Rev. S I R,

October 10, 1745.

“I shall acquaint you with the Lord’s dealings with us since April last. We marched from *Ghent* to *Alloft* on the 14th, where I met with two or three of our brethren in the fields, and we sung and prayed together, and were comforted. On the 15th, I met a small company about three miles from the town, and the Lord filled our hearts with love and peace. On the 17th, we marched to camp near *Brussels*. On the 18th, I met a small congregation on the side of a hill, and spoke from those words, *Let us go forth therefore to him without the camp, bearing his reproach.* On the

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\* He continued both to preach and to live the gospel, till the battle of *Fontenoy*. One of his companions saw him there, laid across a cannon, (both his legs having been taken off by a chain-shot) praising God, and exhorting all that were round about him; which he did, till his spirit returned to God.

28th, I spoke from those words of *Isaiah*, *Thus saith the Lord concerning the house of Jacob; Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.* On the 29th, we marched close to the enemy, and when I saw them in their camp, my bowels moved toward them, in love and pity for their souls. We lay on our arms all night. In the morning, April 30, the cannon began to play at half an hour after four: and the Lord took away all fear from me, so that I went into the field with joy. The balls flew on either hand, and men fell in abundance; but nothing touched me till about two o'clock. Then I received a ball through my left arm, and rejoiced so much the more. Soon after, I received another into my right, which obliged me to quit the field. But I scarce knew whether I was on earth or in heaven. It was one of the sweetest days I ever enjoyed.

*William Clements."*

*Leare near Antwerp,*

October 21, 1745.

Rev. SIR,

" Since I wrote to you last, I have gone through great trials. It was not the least, that I have lost my dear brother *Clements* for a season, he being shot through both the arms. To try me farther, *J. Evans* and *Bishop* were both killed in the battle, as was *J. Greenwood* soon after. Two more who spoke boldly in the name of Jesus, are fallen into the world again. So I am left alone. But I know it is for my good. Seeing iniquity so much abound, and the love of  
many

many wax cold, adds wings to my devotion, and my faith grows daily as a plant by the water-side.

“ The Lord has been pleased to try our little flock, and to shew them his mighty power. Some days before the late battle, one of them standing at his tent-door, broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand, and was so filled with the love of God, that he danced before his comrades. In the battle, before he died, he openly declared, “ I am going to rest from my labours in the bosom of Jesus.” I believe nothing like this was ever heard of before, in the midst of so wicked an army as ours. Some were crying out in their wounds, “ I am going to my Beloved:” others, “ Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly:” and many that were not wounded, were crying to their Lord, to take them to himself. There was such boldness in the battle among this little despised flock, that it made the officers, as well as common soldiers, amazed. And they acknowledge it to this day. As to my own part, I stood the fire of the enemy for above seven hours. Then my horse was shot under me, and I was exposed both to the enemy and our own horse. But that did not discourage me at all; for I knew the God of *Jacob* was with me. I had a long way to go, the balls flying on every side; and thousands lay bleeding, groaning, dying and dead on each hand. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace, but it never singed one hair of my head. The hotter it grew, the more strength was given me. I was full of joy and love, as much as I could well bear. Going on, I met one of our brethren with a little dish in his hand,

hand, seeking for water. He smiled, and said, he had got a fore wound in his leg: I asked, "Have you got Christ in your heart?" He answered, "I have, and I have had him all the day. Blessed be God, that I ever saw your face." Lord, what am I, that I should be counted worthy to set my hand to the gospel-plough? Lord, humble me, and lay me in the dust!

*John Haime."*

The work in *England* now extended with a rapidity, which far exceeded the expectations of the most sanguine. For some years the Preachers moved round the kingdom as Mr. *Wesley* thought best from time to time without any regular plan. But he now found it absolutely necessary to divide the whole work into Circuits, appointing so many Preachers to each Circuit. This plan was attended with so many difficulties, and required so much thought, contrivance and foresight, that he judged it expedient to summon annually a considerable number of the Preachers, in order to consult together concerning the affairs of the Societies. The Preachers, thus met with him at their head, he termed *The Conference*: which name is now so perfectly familiar among the people, that *the Conference* is always understood as signifying the body of Preachers thus annually assembled. His design in calling them together, was not merely for the regulation of the Circuits, but also for the review of their doctrines and discipline, and for the examination of their moral conduct: that those who were to administer with him in holy things, might be thoroughly



thoroughly furnished for every good work, for “*the saving of their own souls as well as them that heard them.*”

In treating on so essential a part of the discipline established by Mr. *Wesley*, as *the annual Conferences*, from which infinite blessings through the grace of heaven have been derived, not only in the government and union of the whole connection, but in the preservation and enforcement of purity and holiness among the Preachers; we shall be necessarily obliged to speak of many things, which hundreds of our readers are already perfectly acquainted with: but they will excuse us, when they recollect, that it will be impossible to give a complete view to the world of that great work, of which Mr. *Wesley* was the principal instrument, without enlarging on so important a branch of it. For which purpose we shall give several extracts of the most remarkable Conversations which passed in these Conferences, especially in the earliest of them, when the grand points in respect both to Doctrines and Discipline were laid down, methodised and established, which have continued unshaken even to the present day.

## CONVERSATION I.

IT is desired, that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God. That we may meet with a single eye, and as little children, who have every thing to learn: that every point which is proposed, may be examined to the foundation. That every  
 person

person may speak freely whatever is in his heart: and that every question which arises, may be thoroughly debated and settled.

Q. 1. Need we be fearful of doing this? What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles?

A. If they are false, the sooner they are overturned, the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. Let us all pray for a willingness to receive light, to know of every doctrine, whether it be of God.

Q. 2. How may the time of this Conference be made more eminently a time of watching unto prayer?

A. 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care, to set God always before us. 2. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises. 3. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on this our labour.

Q. 3. How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

A. In speculative things, each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced: in every practical point, each will submit so far as he can without wounding his conscience.

Q. 4. Can a Christian submit any farther than this, to any man, or number of men upon earth?

A. It is plain, he cannot; either to Bishop, Convocation, or General Council. And this is that grand principle of private judgment, on which all the reformers proceeded: "Every man must judge for himself; because every man must give an account of himself to God."

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II. The design of the meeting was proposed, namely to consider, 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. And 3. What to do. i. e. How to regulate our doctrine, discipline and practice. They began with considering the doctrine of justification: the questions relating thereto, with the substance of the answers given, were as follows.

Q. 1. What is it to be justified?

A. To be pardoned, and received into God's favour; into such a state, that if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved.

Q. 2. Is faith the condition of justification?

A. Yes; for every one who believeth not is condemned; and every one who believes is justified.

Q. 3. But must not repentance, and works meet for repentance, go before this faith?

A. Without doubt: if by repentance you mean conviction of sin; and by works meet for repentance, obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, ceasing to do evil, doing good, and using the ordinances according to the power we have received.

Q. 4. What is faith?

A. Faith in general is, a divine, supernatural <sup>Ἐλεγκτος</sup> \* of things not seen; i. e. of past, future or spiritual things: it is a spiritual sight of God and the things of God.

First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, "*Christ loved me and gave himself for me*"—This is that faith by which he is justified or pardoned, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same Spirit bears witness,

\* Conviction or Evidence.

witness, "Thou art pardoned : thou hast redemption in his blood."—And this is saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.

Q. 5. Have all christians this faith ? May not a man be justified and not know it ?

A. That all true christians have such a faith as implies an assurance of God's love, appears from Rom. viii. 15, 16. Eph. iv. 32. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Heb. viii. 10. 1 John iv. 13. and v. 19. And that no man can be justified and not know it, appears farther from the nature of the thing. For faith after repentance is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from the immediate, as well as distant fruits thereof.

Q. 6. But may not a man go to heaven without it ?

A. It does not appear from holy writ that a man who hears the Gospel, can : (Mark xvi. 16.) whatever a heathen may do. Rom. ii. 14.

Q. 7. What are the immediate fruits of justifying faith ?

A. Peace, joy, love, power over all outward sin, and power to keep down inward sin.

Q. 8. Does any one believe, who has not the witness in himself, or any longer than he sees, loves, obeys God ?

A. We apprehend not ; *seeing God* being the very essence of faith ; love and obedience the inseparable properties of it.

Q. 9. What sins are consistent with justifying faith ?

A. No

A. No *wilful sin*. If a believer *wilfully sins*, he casts away his faith. Neither is it possible he should have *justifying faith* again, without previously *repenting*.

Q. 10. *Must* every believer come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness? Will he do so, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness? Does God otherwise withdraw himself?

A. It is certain, a believer *need* never again come into condemnation. It seems, he need not come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness: and that (ordinarily at least) he *will* not, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness. Yet it is true, That the first joy does seldom last long: that it is commonly followed by doubts and fears; and that God frequently permits great heaviness before any large manifestation of himself.

Q. 11. Are works necessary to the continuance of faith?

A. Without doubt; for a man may forfeit the free gift of God, either by sins of omission or commission.

Q. 12. Can faith be lost, but for want of works?

A. It cannot but through disobedience.

Q. 13. How is faith *made perfect* by works?

A. The more we exert our faith, the more it is increased. To him that hath, shall be given.

Q. 14. St. Paul says, *Abraham* was not justified by works. St. James, he was justified by works. Do they not contradict each other?

A. No: 1. Because they do not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that justification, which

which was when *Abraham* was seventy-five years old; above twenty years before *Isaac* was born. St *James* of that justification, which was when he offered up *Isaac* on the altar.

2dly. Because they do not speak of the same works: St. *Paul* speaking of works that precede faith: St. *James*, of works that spring from it.

Q. 15. In what sense is *Adam's* sin imputed to all mankind?

A. In *Adam* all die, i. e. 1. Our bodies then became mortal. 2. Our souls died, i. e. were disunited from God. And hence, 3. We are all born with a sinful, devilish nature: by reason whereof, 4. We are children of wrath, liable to death eternal. Rom. v. 18. Eph. ii. 3.

Q. 16. In what sense is the righteousness of Christ imputed to all mankind, or to believers?

A. We do not find it expressly affirmed in Scripture, That God imputes the righteousness of Christ to any. Although we do find, That faith is imputed to us for righteousness.

That text, "*As by one man's disobedience all men were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, all were made righteous,*" we conceive means, by the merits of Christ all men are cleared from the guilt of *Adam's* actual sin.

We conceive farther, That through the obedience and death of Christ, 1. The bodies of all men become immortal after the resurrection, 2. Their souls receive a capacity of spiritual life; and, 3. An actual spark or seed thereof: 4. All believers become children of grace, reconciled to God, and 5. Are made partakers of the divine nature.

Q. 17.

Q. 17. Have we not leaned towards *Antinomianism*?

A. We are afraid we have.

Q. 18. What is *Antinomianism*?

A. The doctrine which makes void the law through faith.

Q. 19. What are the main pillars thereof?

A. 1. That Christ abolished the moral law. 2. That therefore christians are not obliged to observe it. 3. That one branch of christian liberty, is liberty from obeying the commandments of God. 4. That it is bondage, to do a thing because it is commanded, or forbear it because it is forbidden. 5. That a believer is not obliged to use the ordinances of God, or to do good works. 6. That a preacher ought not to exhort to good works: not unbelievers, because it is hurtful; not believers, because it is needless.

III. Q. 1. Is a sense of God's pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favour? Or may there be some exempt cases?

A. We dare not say, There are not.

Q. 2. Is it necessary to inward and outward holiness?

A. We incline to think it is.

Q. 3. Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

A. We conceive not. But we allow there may be infinite degrees in seeing God: even as many as there are between him who sees the sun, when it shines on his eye-lids closed, and him who stands with his eyes wide open in the full blaze of its beams.

Q. 4. Does a man believe any longer than he loves God?

A. In no wise. For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails, without faith working by love.

Q. 5. Have we duly considered the case of *Cornelius*? Was not he in the favour of God, when his prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God? i. e. Before he believed in Christ?

A. It does seem that he was, in some degree. But we speak not of those who have not heard the Gospel.

Q. 6. Is a believer constrained to obey God?

A. At first he often is. The love of Christ constraineth him. After this, he may obey, or he may not; no constraint being laid upon him.

Q. 7. Can faith be lost, but through disobedience?

A. It cannot. A believer first inwardly disobeys, inclines to sin with his heart: then his intercourse with God is cut off, i. e. his faith is lost. And after this, he may fall into outward sin, being now weak, and like another man.

Q. 8. How can such a one recover faith?

A. By repenting, and doing the first works, Rev. ii. 5.

Q. 9. Do we ordinarily represent a justified state so great and happy as it is?

A. Perhaps not. A believer, walking in the light, is inexpressibly great and happy.

Q. 10. Should we not have a care of depreciating justification, in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?



A. Undoubtedly we should beware of this : for one may insensibly slide into it.

Q. 11. How shall we effectually avoid it ?

A. When we are going to speak of entire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state as strongly as possible.

Q. 12. Does not the truth of the Gospel lie very near both to *Calvinism* and *Antinomianism* ?

A. Indeed it does : as it were, within a hair's breadth. So that it is altogether foolish and sinful, because we do not quite agree either with one or the other, to run from them as far as ever we can.

Q. 13. Wherein may we come to the very edge of *Calvinism* ?

A. 1. In ascribing all good to the free grace of God :  
2. In denying all natural free will, and all power antecedent to grace : and 3. In excluding all merit from man ; even for what he has or does by the grace of God.

Q. 14. Wherein may we come to the edge of *Antinomianism* ?

A. 1. In exalting the merits and love of Christ.  
2. In rejoicing evermore.

Q. 15. Does faith supersede (set aside the necessity of) holiness or good works ?

A. In no wise. So far from it, that it implies both, as a cause does it's effects.

IV. Q. 1. What is sincerity ?

A. Willingness to know and do the whole will of God. The lowest species thereof seems to be *faithfulness in that which is little*.

Q. 2. Has God any regard to man's sincerity?

A. So far, that no man in any state can possibly please God without it: nor indeed in any moment wherein he is not sincere.

Q. 3. But can it be conceived that God has any regard to the sincerity of an unbeliever?

A. Yes, so much, that if he persevere therein, God will infallibly give him faith.

Q. 4. What regard may we conceive him to have, to the sincerity of a believer?

A. So much, that in every sincere believer he fulfils all the great and precious promises.

Q. 5. Whom do you term a *sincere believer*?

A. One that walks in the light, as God is in the light.

Q. 6. Is not sincerity all in all?

A. All will follow persevering sincerity. God gives every thing with it; nothing without it.

Q. 7. Are not then sincerity and faith equivalent terms?

A. By no means. It is at least as nearly related to works as it is to faith. For example: who is sincere before he believes? He that, according to the power he has received, brings forth *fruits meet for repentance*. Who is sincere after he believes? he that, from a sense of God's love, is zealous of all good works.

Q. 8. But do you consider, That we are under the covenant of grace? And that the covenant of works is now abolished?

A. All mankind were under the covenant of grace; from the very hour that the original promise was made.

made. If by the covenant of works you mean, That of unfinning obedience made with *Adam* before the fall: no man, but *Adam*, was ever under that covenant.

V. Q. 1. Is not the whole dispute of salvation by faith, or by works, a mere *strife of words*?

A. In asserting salvation by faith, we mean this; 1. That pardon (salvation begun) is received by faith, producing works. 2. That holiness (salvation continued) is faith working by love: 3. That heaven (salvation finished) is the reward of this faith.

If those who assert salvation by works, or by faith and works, mean the same thing (understanding by faith, the revelation of Christ in us; by salvation, pardon, holiness, glory) we will not strive with them at all. If they do not, this is not a *strife of words*: but the very vitals, the essence of christianity is the thing in question.

Q. 2. May not some degree of the love of God go before a distinct sense of justification?

A. We believe it may.

VI. The doctrine of sanctification was considered: with regard to which the questions asked and the substance of the answers given, were as follows.

Q. 1. What is it to be sanctified?

A. To be renewed in the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.

Q. 2. Is faith the condition, or the instrument of sanctification?

A. It is both the condition and instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins.

And as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew.

Q. 3. What is implied in being *a perfect Christian*?

A. The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our mind, and soul, and strength. Deut. vi. 5. xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—29.

Q. 4. Does this imply, That all inward sin is taken away?

A. Without doubt: or how could he be said to be saved *from all his uncleannesses*? Ezek. xxxvi. 29.

Q. 5. Can we know one who is thus saved? What is a reasonable proof of it?

A. We cannot, without the miraculous discernment of spirits, be infallibly certain of those who are thus saved. But we apprehend, these would be the best proofs which the nature of the thing admits. 1. If we had sufficient evidence of their unblamable behaviour preceding. 2. If they gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein they were saved from sin, and of the circumstances thereof, with such sound speech as could not be reprov'd. And 3. If upon a strict inquiry afterwards from time to time, it appeared that all their tempers and words and actions were holy and unreprouable.

Q. 6. How should we treat those who think they have attained this?

A. Exhort them to forget the things that are behind, and to watch and pray always, that God may search the ground of their hearts.

VII. Q. 1. How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us, with regard to entire sanctification?

A. They

A. They grant, 1. That every one must be entirely sanctified, in the article of death: 2. That till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection. 3. That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.

Q. 2. What do we allow them?

A. We grant, 1. That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not sanctified throughout, not made perfect in love, till a little before death: 2. That the term "sanctified" is continually applied by St. Paul, to all that were justified, were true believers: 3. That by this term alone, he rarely (if ever) means, saved from all sin: 4. That consequently, it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the word "Wholly, entirely," or the like: 5. That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified; but very rarely, either of or to those, who were wholly sanctified: 6. That consequently, it behoves us to speak in public almost continually of the state of justification: but more rarely, in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

Q. 3. What then is the point wherein we divide?

A. It is this: whether we should expect to be saved from all sin, before the article of death?

Q. 4. Is there any clear Scripture *promise* of this? That God will save us from *all* sin?

A. There is. Psalm cxxx. 8. *He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.*

This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of *Ezekiel*: *then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols I will cleanse you—I will also save you from all your uncleannesses, xxxvi. 25, 29.* No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, *Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2. Cor. vii. 1.* Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, *The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. Deut. xxx. 6.*

Q. 5. But does any *assertion* answerable to this, occur in the New Testament?

A. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So *1 John iii. 8. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil: the works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction: but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is that assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25, 27. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it—that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

And to the same effect is his assertion in *Rom. viii. 3, 4. God sent his Son—that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.*

Q. 6. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from all sin?

A. Undoubtedly

A. Undoubtedly it does, both in those prayers and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

Q. 7. What prayers do you mean?

A. Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such, in particular, are, 1. *Deliver us from evil; or rather, ἀπό τῆς πόνησῆς. from the evil one.* Now when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. 2. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* John xvii. 20, 21, 23. 3. *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—that he would grant you—that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.* Eph. iii. 14, 16—19. 4. *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thess. v. 23.

Q. 8. What commands are there to the same effect?

A. 1. *Be ye perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* Matt. v. ult. 2. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.* Matt. xxii. 37. But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

Q. 9. But how does it appear, that this is to be done before the article of death?

A. First, from the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, *Thou shalt love God with all thy heart*, cannot mean, *Thou shalt do this when thou diest*, but while thou livest.

Secondly, from express texts of Scripture: 1. *The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that having renounced (ἀγνοούμενοι) ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world: looking for—the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Tit. ii. 11—14.* 2. *He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us—to perform the mercy promised to our fathers; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. Luke i. 69, &c.*

Q. 10. Is there any example in Scripture of persons who had attained to this?

A. Yes, St. John and all those of whom he says in his first epistle, iv. 17. *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.*

Q. 11. Does not the preaching perfection with harshness, tend to bring believers into a kind of bondage, or slavish fear?

A. It



A. It does. Therefore we should always place it in the most amiable light, so that it may excite only hope, joy and desire.

Q. 12. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith even till we are made perfect?

A. Why indeed? Since holy grief does not quench this joy: since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Q. 13. Do we not discourage believers from rejoicing evermore?

A. We ought not so to do. Let them all their life long, rejoice unto God, so it be with reverence. And even if lightness or pride should mix with their joy, let us not strike at the joy itself (this is the gift of God) but at that lightness or pride, that the evil may cease and the good remain.

Q. 14. But ought we not to be *troubled*, on account of the sinful nature which still remains in us?

A. It is good for us to have a deep sense of this, and to be much ashamed before the Lord. But this should only incite us, the more earnestly to turn unto Christ every moment, and to draw light, and life, and strength from him, that we may go on, conquering and to conquer.

VIII. Q. 1. In what view may we and our *helpers* be considered?

A. Perhaps as extraordinary messengers (i. e. out of the ordinary way) designed, 1. To provoke the regular ministers to jealousy. 2. To supply their  
lack

lack of service, toward those who are perishing for want of knowledge.

Q. 2. What is the office of a *helper*?

A. To feed and guide the flock: in particular,  
 1. To preach morning and evening. 2. To meet the Society and the Bands weekly. 3. To meet the Leaders weekly,

Q. 3. What are the rules of a helper in respect to his general conduct?

A. Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment, Never be triflingly employed.

Be serious. Let your motto be, holiness to the Lord. Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

Believe evil of no one; unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the Judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

Speak evil of no one: else *your* word especially, would eat as doth a canker: keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly as soon as may be: else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of fetching wood (if time permit) or drawing water.

Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time. And in general, do not *mend* our rules, but *keep* them.

You

You have nothing to do, but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most.

Observe. It is not your business, to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that Society: but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord.

IX. Q. What general method of employing our time would you advise us to?

A. We advise you, 1. As often as possible to rise at four. 2. From four to five in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray and read, partly the Scripture with the notes, partly the closely practical parts of what we have published. 3. From six in the morning till twelve (allowing an hour for breakfast) to read in order, with much prayer, first, the christian library, and the other books which we have published in prose and verse, and then those which we have recommended.

In the afternoon, follow Mr. *Baxter's* plan: that is, Go into *every house* in course, and teach *every one* therein, young and old, if they belong to us, to be christians, inwardly and outwardly.

Make every particular plain to their understanding; fix it in their memory; write it in their heart. In order to this, there must be *line upon line, precept upon precept*. What patience, what love, what knowledge is requisite for this?

X. Q. 1. Who

X. Q. 1. Who is the *Assistant* ? \*

A. That preacher in each circuit, who is appointed from time to time, to take charge of the Societies and the other preachers therein.

Q. 2. What is the business of an *Assistant* ?

A. 1. To see that the other preachers in his circuit behave well, and want nothing : 2. To visit the Classes quarterly, regulate the Bands, and deliver tickets : 3. To take in, or put out of the Society or the Bands : 4. To keep Watch-nights and Love-feasts : 5. To hold Quarterly-meetings, and therein diligently to inquire both into the temporal and spiritual state of each Society : 6. To overlook the accounts of all the stewards.

XI. Q. 1. Are we not *Dissenters* ?

A. No. Although we call sinners to repentance *in all places* of God's dominion ; and although we frequently use *extemporary prayer*, and unite together in a *religious Society* ; yet we are not *Dissenters* in the only sense which our law acknowledgcs, namely those who renounce the service of the church. We do not : we dare not separate from it. We are not *Seceders*, nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The *Seceders* laid the very foundation of their work, in judging and condemning *others*. We laid the foundation of our work, in judging and condemning *ourselves*. They

\* By the *Assistant* was meant the chief preacher in a Circuit, who immediately *assisted* Mr. Wesley in the regulation of the Societies.

begin every where, with shewing their hearers, How fallen the *Church* and *Ministers* are. We begin every where, with shewing our hearers, how fallen they are *themselves*.

Q. 2. But what reasons are there, why we should not separate from the Church ?

A. Among others, those which have been already printed, entitled “Reasons against a separation from the Church of *England*.”

We allow two exceptions, 1. If the Parish Minister be a notoriously wicked man: 2. If he preach Socinianism, Arianism, or any other essentially false doctrine.

XII. Q. 1. How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach ?

A. Inquire, 1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation? 2. Have they *gifts*, (as well as *grace*) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? 3. Have they *fruit*? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God, by their preaching?

As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof, that he is *moved thereto by the Holy Ghost*.

Q. 2. What method may we use in receiving a new helper.

A. A proper

A. A proper time for doing this, is at a Conference after solemn fasting and prayer.

Every person proposed is then to be present; and each of them may be asked,

“ Have you faith in Christ? Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be perfected in love in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and to his work? Have you considered the rules of a *helper*? Will you keep them for conscience sake? Are you determined to employ *all* your time in the work of God? Will you preach every morning and evening? Will you diligently instruct the children in every place? Will you visit from house to house? Will you recommend fasting, both by precept and example?

We may then receive him as a probationer, by giving him the Minutes of the Conference inscribed thus: “ To *A. B.* You think it your duty to call sinners to repentance. Make full proof hereof, and we shall rejoice to receive you as a fellow-labourer.” Let him then read, and carefully weigh what is contained therein, that if he has any doubt, it may be removed.

When he has been on trial four years, if recommended by the Assistant, he may be received into full connection.

It may be useful to add a few remarks on the method pursued in the choice of the Itinerant Preachers, as many have formed the most erroneous ideas on the subject, imagining they are employed with hardly any prior preparation. 1. They are received as private members of the Society on trial. 2. After a  
quarter

quarter of a year, if they are found deserving, they are admitted as proper members. 3. When their grace and abilities are sufficiently manifest, they are appointed Leaders of Classes. 4. If they then discover talents for more important services, they are employed to exhort occasionally in the smaller congregations, when the preachers cannot attend. 5. If approved in this line of duty, they are allowed to preach. 6. Out of these men, who are called *local preachers*, are selected the *itinerant preachers*, who are first proposed in the Conference, and, if accepted, are nominated for a circuit. 7. Their characters and conduct are examined annually in the Conference: and if they continue faithful for four years of trial, they are received into full connection. At these Conferences also strict inquiry is made into the conduct and success of every preacher: and those who are found deficient in abilities, are no longer employed as Itinerants; while those whose conduct has not been agreeable to the Gospel, are expelled, and thereby deprived of all the privileges even of private members of the Society.

The salary of each preacher is twelve pounds per annum for himself: the same for his wife: and, if wanted, four pounds for each of his children, till they are able to support themselves; he being allowed food for himself and horse wherever he goes. Thus care is taken, that none of them shall grow rich by the Gospel.

Mr. *Wesley's* great love of exactness and order was now abundantly gratified. In every place where he

or the preachers in connection with him laboured, the same rules were observed in the formation and government of the Societies. From this time, the work of reformation, and of true religion, went forward with a regularity, and sameness, which will render the remainder of our work comparatively easy. We have now only to treat of the most remarkable occurrences.

In the tumultuous years of forty-five and forty-six, during the Rebellion, the work of God spread with great rapidity. The Scriptures declare, "When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, the nations will learn righteousness." The Ministers of God went through the land, calling upon sinners to repent, and many had ears to hear the things *that made for their peace*.

At this time all denominations of people were addressing the King, and testifying their attachment to the august family that now fills the throne. Mr. *Wesley* and those in connection with him, testified this with every breath they drew: but he was unwilling to address his Majesty, lest his Societies should be considered as a separate body. Yet he at length yielded so far to importunity, as to draw up the following address, which however from the before-mentioned motive on further consideration he did not present. The thoughts and style of a man of God may be easily seen therein, rather than the laboured eloquence so common upon such occasions.



“ To the King’s most excellent Majesty :

“ The humble address of the Societies in *England* and  
*Wales*, called *Methodists* :

“ *Most gracious Sovereign,*

“ SO inconsiderable as we are, *a people scattered and peeled and trodden under foot from the beginning hitherto*, we should in no wise have presumed, even on this great occasion, to open our lips to your Majesty, had we not been induced, indeed constrained so to do, by two considerations : the one, that in spite of all our remonstrances on that head, we are continually represented as a peculiar sect of men, separating ourselves from the established church : the other, that we are still traduced as inclined to popery, and consequently disaffected to your Majesty.

“ Upon these considerations, we think it incumbent upon us, if we must stand as a distinct body from our brethren, to tender for ourselves, our most dutiful regards to your sacred Majesty : and to declare in the presence of Him we serve, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, that we are a part (however mean) of that Protestant church, established in these kingdoms : that we unite together for this, and no other end, to promote, so far as we may be capable, justice, mercy, and truth, the glory of God, and peace and good-will among men : that we detest and abhor the fundamental doctrines of the church of *Rome*, and  
are

are steadily attached to your Majesty's royal person and illustrious house.

“ We cannot indeed say or do either more or less, than we apprehend consistent with the written word of God. But we are ready to obey your Majesty to the uttermost, in all things which we conceive to be agreeable thereto. And we earnestly exhort all with whom we converse, as they fear God, to honour the King. We of the clergy in particular, put all men in mind, to revere the higher powers as of God; and continually declare, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

“ Silver and gold (most of us must own) we have none. But such as we have, we humbly beg your Majesty to accept, together with our hearts and prayers. May He who hath bought us with his blood, the Prince of all the Kings of the earth, fight against all the enemies of your Majesty, with the two-edged sword that cometh out of his mouth! And when he calleth your Majesty from this throne, full of years and victories, may it be with that voice, “ Come, receive the kingdom prepared for thee, from the beginning of the world!”

“ These are the continual prayers of your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects,

JOHN WESLEY, &c.”

*Newcastle upon Tyne* was a place of almost continual alarm during the troubles in *Scotland*. Here therefore *Mr. Wesley* remained a considerable time: and his labour

labour was not in vain. Many now learned truly to honour the King, (from the right principle, the fear of God,) who were before as reeds shaken with the wind. But his soul was grieved within him, at the extreme ungodliness of those who were appointed to defend the land. He therefore wrote the following letter to one of the magistrates.

S I R,

“THE fear of God, the love of my country, and the regard I have for his Majesty King *George*, constrain me to write a few plain words to one, who is no stranger to these principles of action.

“My soul has been pained day by day, even in walking the streets of *Newcastle*, at the senseless, shameless wickedness, the ignorant profaneness of the poor men, to whom our lives are intrusted. The continual cursing and swearing, the wanton blasphemy of the soldiers in general, must needs be a torture to the sober ear, whether of a christian or an honest infidel. Can any that either fear God or love their neighbour, hear this without concern? Especially, if they consider the interest of our country, as well as of these unhappy men themselves? For can it be expected, that God should be on their side, who are daily affronting him to his face? And if God be not on their side, how little will either their number, or courage, or strength avail?

“Is there no man that careth for these souls? Doubtless there are some who ought so to do. But many of

these, if I am rightly informed, receive large pay, and do just nothing.

“I would to God it were in my power, in any degree, to supply their lack of service. I am ready to do what in me lies, to call these poor sinners to repentance, once or twice a day (while I remain in these parts) at any hour, or at any place. And I desire no pay at all for doing this : unless what my Lord shall give at his appearing.

“If it be objected (from our heathenish poet) “This conscience will make cowards of us all :” I answer, let us judge by matter of fact. Let either friends or enemies speak. Did those who feared God, behave as cowards at *Fontenoy*? Did *John Haime* the dragoon betray any cowardice, before or after his horse sunk under him? Or did *William Clements*, when he received the first ball in his left, and the second in his right arm? Or *John Evans*, when the cannon-ball took off both his legs? Did he not call all about him as long as he could speak, to praise and fear God, and honour the king? As one who feared nothing, but lest his breath should be spent in vain?

“If it were objected, that I should only fill their heads with peculiar whims and notions! That might easily be known. Only let the officers hear with their own ears : and they may judge, whether I do not preach the plain principles of manly, rational religion.

“Having myself no knowledge of the General, I took the liberty to make this offer to you. I have no interest herein : but I should rejoice to serve, as I am able,

able, my King and Country. If it be judged, that this will be of no real service, let the proposal die, and be forgotten. But I beg you, Sir, to believe, that I have the same glorious cause, for which you have shewn so becoming a zeal, earnestly at heart : and that therefore I am, with warm respect,

S I R,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN WESLEY."

A polite answer was returned by the Magistrate ; and the General being informed of it, gave his consent ; in consequence of which Mr. *Wesley* preached to the soldiers as long as he continued in those parts.

On the 24th of June, 1748, he opened his large school at *Kingswood*. He had long before built a small one for the children of the colliers, which still exists. The last was intended for the children of our principal friends, that they might receive a complete education in the languages and sciences, without endangering their morals in the great schools, where vice is so prevalent. In time, many of the Preachers married, and had families. Their little pittance was not sufficient to enable them, to support their children at school. The uninterrupted duties of the itinerant life would not permit the father to give his son the necessary education he required ; and it is well known how impossible it is in the general for a mother to instruct, or even to govern, a son after a given age, especially during the absence of the father. On these considerations, after a few years, the school was appropriated

to the education of a considerable number of the Preachers' sons, as well as of the children of private independent members. At present the sons of the Preachers make about three fourths of the children. These are instructed, boarded and clothed: and the charity is supported by an annual collection made in all the chapels belonging to the Societies in these kingdoms. The collection is now so increased, that a few small sums out of it are allowed towards the education of Preachers' daughters. Mr. *Wesley* drew up a set of rules for this school, which have been highly admired by most that have seen them.

But this pious design, like all human institutions, often fell below the expectations of the benevolent founder. Yet, notwithstanding this, it has been productive of much good. Scores, if not hundreds, of useful Preachers have been thereby preserved for the general work, and have been enabled to devote their whole life to the immediate service of God, who must otherwise have sunk under the weight of their families, and settled in some trade for their support. The present head-master is well qualified for his office, and has ever given, since his first appointment to it, great satisfaction.

A circumstance respecting the erection of this edifice deserves to be remembered. Mr. *Wesley* was mentioning to a Lady, with whom he was in company in the neighbourhood of *Bristol*, his desire and design of erecting a *Christian School*, such as would not disgrace the apostolic age. The Lady was so pleased with his views, that she immediately went to her scrutoire, and

and brought him five hundred pounds in bank-notes, desiring him to accept of them, and to enter upon his plan immediately. He did so. Afterwards being in company with the same Lady, she inquired how the building went on; and whether he stood in need of further assistance. He informed her that he had laid out all the money he had received, and that he was three hundred pounds in debt; at the same time apologizing, and intreating her not to consider it as a concern of hers. But she immediately retired, and brought him the sum he wanted.

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#### C H A P. IV.

*Progress of Religion. Mr. Wesley's marriage. His dangerous Illness. Proposals for an union with the pious Clergy of the Church of England. Remarkable revival in London. The Minutes of the Conference of the year 1770. Account of Mr. Fletcher and his Writings. Spread of Religion through the Land. The Deed of Declaration.*

IT has been already seen how perseveringly Mr. Wesley laboured in Georgia. From what has been said of him after his return to England, it will as clearly appear that he did not in the least relax. He generally preached three or four and sometimes five times a day, and often rode forty, fifty or threescore miles. We shall present our readers with an account of one of his journeys from London to Epworth, taken from his own Journals, as a specimen of his mode of travelling,

“ Tuesday,

“Tuesday, February 10, 1747.\* My brother returned from the North, and I prepared to supply his place there. Sunday 15, I was very weak and faint. But on Monday 16, I rose soon after three, lively and strong, and found all my complaints were fled away like a dream.

“I was wondering the day before at the mildness of the weather, such as seldom attends me in my journeys. But my wonder now ceased: the wind was turned full North, and blew so exceeding hard and keen, that when we came to *Hatfield*, neither my companions nor I had much use of our hands or feet. After resting an hour, we bore up again through the wind and snow, which drove full in our faces. But this was only a squall. In *Baldock*-field the storm began in earnest. The large hail drove so vehemently in our faces, that we could not see, nor hardly breathe. However before two o'clock we reached *Baldock*, where one met and conducted us safe to *Potten*. About six I preached to a serious congregation.

“Tuesday 17, we set out as soon as it was well light. But it was really hard work to get forward. For the ice would not well bear or break. And the untracked snow covering all the road, we had much ado to keep our horses on their feet. Mean time the wind rose higher and higher, till it was ready to overturn both

\* We concluded the former chapter with an account of *Kingswood*-school, though it was opened a year after this date. Much of that chapter consisted of regulations and institutions: and therefore we thought it well to close the whole with that account.



man and beast. However after a short bait at *Bugden*, we pushed on, and met in the middle of an open field with so violent a storm of rain and hail, as we had not had before. It drove through our coats, great and small, boots and every thing, and yet froze as it fell, even upon our eye-brows: so that we had scarce either strength or motion left, when we came into the Inn at *Stilton*.

“We now gave up our hopes of reaching *Grantham*, the snow falling faster and faster. However we took the advantage of a fair blast, and made the best of our way to *Stamford-Heath*. But here a new difficulty arose, from the snow lying in large drifts. Sometimes horses and men were well nigh swallowed up. Yet in less than an hour we were brought safe to *Stamford*. Being willing to get as far as we could, we made but a short stop here; and about sun-set came, cold and weary, yet well, to a little town called *Brig-casterton*.

“Wednesday 18. Our servant came up and said; “Sir, there is no travelling to-day. Such a quantity of snow has fallen in the night, that the roads are quite filled up.” I told him, “At least we can walk twenty miles a day, with our horses in our hands.” So in the name of God we set out. The North East wind was piercing as a sword, and had driven the snow into such uneven heaps, that the main road was not passable. However we kept on, a foot or on horseback, till we came to the White Lion at *Grantham*. Some from *Grimsbey* had appointed to meet us here. But not hearing any thing of them, (for they were

were at another house by mistake) after an hour's rest we set out straight for *Epworth*.

“Thursday 19. The frost was not so sharp: so that we had little difficulty till we came to *Haxey-Car*. But here the ice which covered the dikes and great part of the common, would not bear, nor readily break. Nor did we know, there being no track of man or beast, what parts of the dikes were fordable. However we committed ourselves to God, and went on. We hit all our fords exactly, and without any fall or considerable hinderance came to *Epworth* in two hours, full as well as when we left *London*.”

Thus, strange as it may seem, did he labour whilst he could ride on horseback; nor do we believe there could be an instance found, during the space of fifty years, wherein the severest weather hindered him even for one day!

Many were the “hair-breadth escapes,” which he experienced during that time; and which he has noted in his Journals, with lively gratitude to Him who numbers the hairs of our head. In this year he records a remarkable one.

“I took horse” says he, “in *Bristol* for *Wick*, where I had appointed to preach at three in the afternoon. I was riding by the wall through *St. Nicholas’ gate* (my horse having been brought to the house where I dined just as a cart turned short from *St. Nicholas street*, and came swiftly down the hill. There was just room to pass between the wheel of it and the wall; but that space was taken up by the carman. I called to him to go back, or  
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must ride over him. But the man, as if deaf, walked straight forward. This obliged me to hold back my horse. In the mean time the shaft of the cart came full against his shoulder, with such a shock as beat him to the ground. He shot me forward over his head, as an arrow out of a bow, where I lay, with my arms and legs, I know not how, stretched out in a line, close to the wall. The wheel ran by, close to my side, but only dirtied my clothes. I found no flutter of spirit, but the same composure as if I had been sitting in my study. When the cart was gone, I rose. Abundance of people gathered round, till a gentleman desired me to step into his shop. After cleaning myself a little, I took horse again, and was at *Wick* by the time appointed. I returned to *Bristol* (where the report of my being killed had spread far and wide) time enough to praise God in the great congregation, and to preach on, *Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast.*"

He now visited, with those that laboured with him, many parts of *Yorkshire*, *Lancashire*, *Derbyshire*, and *Cheshire*, where he had never been before. He also visited *Plymouth* and many other places in the West: and in every place *the work of God* prospered. (Mr. *Wesley* observes, "This is no cant word: it means the conversion of sinners from sin to holiness.") But still they were obliged in many parts to carry their lives in their hands. Some instances of this have been related already. We will mention one more in his own words.

"Friday, February 12, 1748. After preaching at *Oakhill*, a village in *Somersetshire*, I rode on to *Shepton-Mallett*,

*Mallett*, but found the people all under a strange consternation. A mob, they said, was hired, and made sufficiently drunk to do all manner of mischief. I began preaching between four and five; and none hindered or interrupted at all. We had a blessed opportunity, and the hearts of many were exceedingly comforted. I wondered what was become of the mob. But we were quickly informed, they mistook the place, imagining I should alight (as I used to do) at *William Stone's* house, and had summoned by drum all their forces together to meet me at my coming. But *Mr. Swindells* (one of the Preachers) innocently carrying me to the other end of the town, they did not find their mistake till I had done preaching.

“ However they attended us from the Preaching-house to *William Stone's*, throwing dirt, stones and clods in abundance; but they could not hurt us, only *Mr. Swindells* had a little dirt on his coat, and I a few specks on my hat.

“ After we had gone into the house, they began throwing large stones, in order to break the door. But perceiving this would require some time, they dropped that design for the present. They then broke all the tiles on the Pent-house over the door, and poured in a shower of stones at the windows. One of their Captains, in his great zeal, had followed us into the house, and was now shut in with us. He did not like this, and would fain have got out; but it was not possible. So he kept as close to me as he could, thinking himself safest when he was near me. But staying a little behind, (when I went up two pair

of stairs, and stood close on one side, where we were a little sheltered,) a large stone struck him on the forehead, and the blood spouted out like a stream. He cried out, "O Sir, are we to die to-night? What must I do? What must I do?" I said, "Pray to God. He is able to deliver you from all danger." He took my advice, and began praying, I believe, as he had scarce ever done before.

"Mr. *Swindells* and I then went to prayer: after which I told him, "We must not stay here. We must go down immediately." He said, "Sir, we cannot stir, you see how the stones fly about." I walked straight through the room, and down the stairs; and not a stone came in, till we were at the bottom. The mob had just broke open the door, when we came into the lower room; and while they burst in at one door, we walked out at the other. Nor did one man take any notice of us, though we were within five yards of each other.

"They filled the house at once, and proposed setting it on fire. But one of them remembering that his own house was next, persuaded them not to do it. Hearing one of them cry out, "They are gone over the grounds," I thought the hint was good. So we went over the grounds to the far end of the town, where one waited, and undertook to guide us to *Oakhill*.

"I was riding on in *Shepton-Lane*, it being now quite dark, when he cried out, "Come down: come down from the bank." I did as I was desired; but the bank being high, and the side almost perpendicular, I came

I came down all at once, my horse and I tumbling one over another. But we both rose unhurt. In less than an hour we came to *Oakhill*, and the next morning to *Bristol*."

Mr. *Wesley* had hitherto preferred a single life, because, as he himself observes, he believed he could be more useful in a single than in a married state: "and I praise God," says he, "who enabled me so to do." He now as fully believed, that in his present circumstances he might be more useful in a married state: into which, upon this clear conviction, and by the advice of his friends, he entered some time after.

Previous to this step, he had published a small tract entitled "Thoughts on a single life." He therein advised all unmarried persons, who were able to receive it, to follow the counsel of our Lord and *St. Paul*, and "remain single for the kingdom of heaven's sake." But in the same tract he pronounces after *St. Paul*, the "*forbidding to marry, to be a doctrine of devils,*" and declares "it cannot be doubted but a man may be as holy in a married as in a single state." Nor did he ever suppose that this precept was designed of God *for the many*. Several years after his marriage he mentions in his Journal his again reading over that tract, and observes, "I am of the same mind still: and I must be so, till I give up my Bible."

We should not have said so much on the present occasion, if it was not for the many sneers that have been cast at Mr. *Wesley* on this account. The best excuse that can be made for those gentlemen who have indulged their wit on this subject, is that they knew  
nothing

nothing of the matter: that they had never seriously considered those passages of the Bible alluded to, nor ever read over what Mr. *Wesley* has said upon it. It was quite enough for them to hear that he had recommended celibacy, and had afterwards married; which all candid men, who believe the Scriptures, must be sensible, involves neither blame nor contradiction.

But it is certain, Mr. *Wesley's* marriage was not what is commonly called a happy one. We cannot take upon us to state in every respect what were the causes of that inquietude, which for some years lay so heavy upon him. It might arise, in some degree, from his peculiar situation with respect to the great work in which he was engaged. He has more than once mentioned to us, that it was agreed between him and Mrs. *Wesley*, previous to their marriage, that he should not preach one sermon, or travel one mile the less on that account. "If I thought I should," said he, "My dear, as well as I love you, I would never see your face more."

But Mrs. *Wesley* did not long continue in this mind. She would fain have confined him to a more domestic life: and having found by experience that this was impossible, she unhappily gave place to jealousy. This entirely spoiled her temper, and drove her to many outrages. She repeatedly left his house, but was brought back by his earnest importunities. At last she seized on part of his Journals and many other papers, which she would never afterwards restore; and taking her final departure, left word that

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she

she never intended to return. Who then can wonder, that after all this he should only observe, “*Non eam reliqui, non dimisi; non revocabo?*” *I have not left her; I have not put her away; I will not call her back.* She died in the year 1781, at *Camberwell*, near *London*. A stone is placed at the head of her grave, in the church-yard of that place, setting forth, “*That she was a woman of exemplary piety; a tender parent, and a sincere friend.*”

What fortune she possessed at her death, she left to a *Mr. Vizelle*, her son by a former husband. To *Mr. Wesley* she bequeathed a ring. There are several letters which passed between them relative to their mutual uneasiness. These letters are now before us; but they would add nothing material to the account which we have given. We shall only present our readers with a long postscript of one of his, as it is a summary of the unhappy dispute.

“*I cannot but add a few words; not by way of reproach, but of advice. God has used many means to curb your stubborn will, and break the impetuosity of your temper. He has given you a dutiful but sickly daughter: he has taken away one of your sons. Another has been a grievous cross, as the third probably will be. He has suffered you to be defrauded of much money: he has chastened you with strong pain. And still He may say ‘How long livest thou up thyself against me?’ Are you more humble, more gentle, more patient, more placable than you was? I fear quite the reverse: I fear your natural tempers are rather increased than diminished. O beware*”



beware lest God give you up to your own heart's lusts, and let you follow your own imaginations.

“ Under all these conflicts it might be an unspeakable blessing, that you have a husband, who knows your temper and can bear with it : who, after you have tried him numberless ways, laid to his charge things that he knew not, robbed him, betrayed his confidence, revealed his secrets, given him a thousand treacherous wounds, purposely aspersed and murdered his character, and made it your *business* so to do, under the poor pretence of vindicating your own character, (whereas of what importance is *your* character to mankind, if you was buried just now ; or if you had never lived, what loss would it be to the cause of God?) who, I say, after all these provocations is still willing to forgive you all ; to overlook what is past, as if it had not been, and to receive you with open arms : only not while you have a sword in your hand, with which you are continually striking at me, though you cannot hurt me. If, notwithstanding, you continue striking, what can I, what can all reasonable men think, but that either you are utterly out of your senses, or your eye is not single : that you married me only for my money ; that being disappointed, you was almost always out of humour : that this laid you open to a thousand suspicions, which, once awakened, could sleep no more.

“ My dear *Molly*, let the time past suffice. If you have not (to prevent my giving it to bad women)

† Her jealousy having strangely induced her to bring that terrible charge against him.

robbed me of my substance too ; if you do not blacken me, on purpose that when this causes a breach between us, no one may believe it to be your fault : stop, and consider what you do : as yet the breach may be repaired ; you have wronged me much : but not beyond forgiveness. I love you still, and am as clear from all other women as the day I was born. At length know me, and know *yourself*. Your enemy I cannot be : but let me be your friend. Suspect me no more ; asperse me no more ; provoke me no more. Do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, money or praise. Be content to be a private insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Attempt no more to abridge me of my liberty, which I claim by the laws of God and man. Leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience. Then shall I govern you with gentle sway, and shew that I do indeed love you even as Christ the church.”

Soon after his marriage, he resigned his fellowship. His letter of resignation was as follows : “ Ego Johannes Wesley, Collegii Lincolnienfis in Academia Oxoniensi Socius, quicquid mihi juris est in prædicta Societate, ejusdem Rectori & Sociis sponte ac libere resigno : illis universis & singulis perpetuam pacem ac omnimodo in Christo felicitatem exoptans.” *I John Wesley, fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, freely resign to the Rector and Fellows, whatsoever belongs to me in that Society : earnestly wishing to them all, and to each of them, continual peace, and all felicity in Christ.*

Mr. *Wesley* had hitherto enjoyed remarkable health, considering his great and continual labour, and exposures of every kind. But in the month of October 1753, soon after his coming to *London*, he was attacked with a consumptive disorder, which brought him to the gates of death. After struggling some time against it, he retired to *Lewisham* near *London*, for the benefit of air and gentle exercise. It was at this place, that, as he observes, not knowing how it might please God to dispose of him, and “to prevent vile panegyrick,” he wrote as follows :

Here lieth

The Body of *John Wesley*,

A Brand plucked out of the burning :

Who died of a Consumption in the fifty-first year  
of his age :

Not leaving, after his debts are paid, ten pounds  
behind him :

praying,

God be merciful to me an unprofitable Servant !

He ordered, that this inscription, if any, should be placed on his Tomb-stone.

From *Lewisham* he removed to the Hot-Wells near *Bristol*, where it pleased God, in answer to the prayers of thousands, to renew his strength, and to enable him again to declare his truth. This he did at first to a few persons at his apartments in the evenings ; the Lord thus preparing him for his usual labours, to which he soon after returned. He was confined upon

the whole about four months. Part of this time he employed in writing notes on the New Testament, a work which he had long purposed to undertake, but for which he never could find time before. "I now," says he, "can neither travel nor preach; but, blessed be God, I can still read, write and think: O that it may be to his glory!"

While Mr. *Wesley* was confined, he received the following letter from Mr. *Whitefield*, which is so expressive of the high opinion which that great and good man entertained of him, and so honourable to his piety and feelings, that we make no apology for inserting it.

*Bristol*, Dec. 3, 1753.

"Rev. and very dear Sir,

"If seeing you so weak when leaving *London* distressed me, the news and prospect of your approaching dissolution hath quite weighed me down. I pity myself and the church, but not you: a radiant throne awaits you, and ere long you will enter into your Master's joy: yonder he stands with a massy crown, ready to put it on your head amidst an admiring throng of saints and angels. But I, poor I, that have been waiting for my dissolution these nineteen years, must be left behind to grovel here below! Well! this is my comfort: it cannot be long ere the chariots will be sent even for worthless me. If prayers can detain them, even you, Rev. and very dear Sir, shall not leave us yet: but if the decree is gone forth, that you must now fall asleep in Jesus, may he kiss  
your

your soul away, and give you to die in the embraces of triumphant love ! If in the land of the dying, I hope to pay my last respects to you next week. If not, Rev. and very dear Sir, F—a—r—e—w—e—ll. Ego sequar, etsi non passibus æquis.\* My heart is too big, tears trickle down too fast, and you are I fear too weak for me to enlarge. Underneath you may there be Christ's everlasting arms. I commend you to his never-failing mercy, and am,

Rev. and very dear Sir,  
Your most affectionate, sympathizing,  
And afflicted younger brother,  
In the Gospel of our common Lord,

G. WHITEFIELD."

Mr. *Wesley* always supposed that God's design in raising up the Methodists, so called, was, "To reform the nation, especially the church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land." He therefore still greatly wished that the Clergy would co-operate with him; or at least favourably receive those who in their several parishes were turned from ignorance and profaneness to true religion. This in general was not the case. However some were of a better mind. The late Mr. *Walker* of *Truro* in *Cornwall*, and a few others, not only loved and preached the Gospel, but were well disposed towards him and those under his care. Some of these gentlemen assisted at the first Conferences. But after some years they seemed unwilling to share in his reproach. To avoid this, they

† I shall follow, though not with equal steps.

d. fired that he would give up his Societies which were formed in their respective parishes, into their care. As this proposal involves a question, which it has sometimes been thought he could not easily answer, viz. "If you love the church, why do not you give up your people to those in the church, whom you yourself believe to be real Ministers of Christ?" We shall insert his reply to the above-mentioned gentleman, who wrote to him on the subject in behalf of himself and his brethren.

*Helston, Cornwall, Sept. 16, 1757.*

Rev. and dear Sir,

"Nothing can be more kind than the mentioning to me whatever you think is amiss in my conduct. And the more freedom you use in doing this, the more I am indebted to you. I am thoroughly persuaded that you "wish me well:" and that it is this, together with a "concern for the common interests of religion," which obliges you to speak with more plainness than otherwise you would. The same motives induce me to lay aside all reserve, and tell you the naked sentiments of my heart.

You say, "If you believed Mr. *Vowler* to be a gracious person and a Gospel-minister, why did you not, in justice to your people, leave them to him?"

*J. H.* assured me, that Mr. *Vowler* had a clear conviction of his being reconciled to God. If so, I could not deny his being a gracious person. And I heard him preach the *true*, though not the *whole* Gospel; But had it been the whole, there are several reasons  
still,

still, why I did not give up the people to him. 1. No one mentioned or intimated any such thing, nor did it once enter into my thoughts. But if it had, 2. I do not know, that every one who preaches the truth, has wisdom and experience to govern a flock: I do not know that Mr. *Vowler* in particular has. He may, or he may not. 3. I do not know whether he would or could give that flock, all the advantages for holiness which they now enjoy: and to leave them to him, before I was assured of this, would be neither justice nor mercy. 4. Unless *they* were also assured of this, they could not in conscience give up themselves to him. And I have neither right nor power to dispose of them, contrary to their conscience.

“But they are his already by legal establishment.” If they receive the Sacrament from him thrice a year, and attend his ministrations on the Lord’s-day, I see no more which the Law requires. But, to go a little deeper into this matter of *legal establishment*. Does Mr. *Conon* or you think, that the King and Parliament have a right to prescribe to me, what Pastor I shall use? If they prescribe one which I know God never sent, am I obliged to receive him? If he be sent of God, can I receive him with a clear conscience till I know he is? And even when I do, if I believe my former Pastor is more profitable to my soul, can I leave him without sin? Or has any man living a right to require this of me?

I “extend this to every Gospel-minister in *England*.” Before I could with a clear conscience leave a Methodist Society even to such a one, all these considerations must come in. And

And with regard to the people: far from thinking that “the withdrawing our Preachers” from such a Society without their consent, would prevent a separation from the church, I think it would be the direct way to cause it. While we are with them; our advice has weight, and keeps them to the church. But were we totally to withdraw, it would be of little or no weight. Nay, perhaps, resentment of our unkindness (as it would appear to them) would prompt them to act in flat opposition to it.

Again, you say, “Before an union can be effected, something must be done on your part.” Tell me what, and I will do it without delay, however contrary it may be to my ease or natural inclination: provided only, that it consists with my keeping a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man. It would not consist with this, to give up the flock under my care to any other Minister, till I and they were convinced, they would have the same advantages for holiness under him, which they now enjoy.

But “paying us visits, can serve no other purpose than to bring us under needless difficulties.” I will speak very freely on this head. Can our conversing together serve no other purpose? You seem then not to have the least conception of your own want of any such thing! But whether you do or not, I feel my want: I am not *in memet totus teres atque rotundus*.\* I want more light, more strength, for my personal walking with God. And I know not but he may

\* I am not all-sufficient,



give it me through you. And whether you do or no, I want more light and strength for guiding the flock committed to my charge. May not the Lord send this also, by whom he will send? And by you as probably as by any other? It is not improbable that he may by you give me clearer light, either as to doctrine or discipline. And even hereby, how much comfort and profit might redound to thousands of those, for whom Christ hath died? Which I apprehend would abundantly compensate any *difficulties* that might arise from such conversation.

*I speak as a fool*: bear with me. I am clearly satisfied that you have far more faith, more love, and more of the mind which was in Christ than I have. But have you more gifts for the work of God? Or more fruit of your labour? Has God owned you more? I would he had, a thousand fold! I pray God, that he may! Have you at present more experience of the wisdom of the world and the devices of Satan? Or of the manner and method wherein it pleases God to counterwork them in this period of his providence? Are you sure, God would add nothing to you by me, (beside what he might add to me by you?) Perhaps when the time is slipped out of your hands, when I am no more seen, you may wish you had not rejected the assistance of even

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

To the Rev. Mr. *Walker*,  
in *Truro*.

That

That he sincerely wished to unite with every Minister of the Church of *England* who lived and preached the Gospel, is evident from his whole behaviour towards them, and from many passages in his Journals. A few years after the above correspondence with Mr. *Walker*, he wrote to all those Clergymen, who, he believed, answered the above description, proposing, in the fulness of his heart, that they should unite to forward the real work of God in the souls of men. His letter upon that occasion is as follows :

Rev: S I R,

“ Near two years and a half ago, I wrote the following letter. You will please to observe, 1. That I propose no more therein, than is the bounden duty of every Christian: that *you* may comply with this proposal, whether any other does or not. I myself have endeavoured so to do for many years, though I have been almost alone therein; and although many, the more earnestly I *talk of peace*, the more zealously *make themselves ready for battle*.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.”

Dear S I R,

“ It has pleased God to give you both the will and the power, to do many things for his glory, (although you are often ashamed you have done so little, and wish you could do a thousand times more.) This induces me to mention to you, what has been upon  
my

my mind for many years : and what I am persuaded would be much for the glory of God, if it could once be effected. And I am in great hopes it will be, if you heartily undertake it, trusting in him alone.

Some years since, God began a great work in *England* : but the labourers were few. At first those few were of one heart : but it was not so long. First one fell off, then another and another, till no two of us were left together in the work, beside my brother and me. This prevented much good, and occasioned much evil. It grieved our spirits, and weakened our hands. It gave our common enemies huge occasion to blaspheme. It perplexed and puzzled many sincere Christians. It caused many to draw back to perdition. It grieved the holy Spirit of God.

As labourers increased, disunion increased, offences were multiplied. And instead of coming nearer to, they stood farther and farther off from each other : till at length those who were not only brethren in Christ, but fellow-labourers in his gospel, had no more connection or fellowship with each other, than Protestants have with Papists.

But ought this to be ? Ought not those who are united to one common head, and employed by him in one common work, to be united to each other ? I speak now of those labourers, who are Ministers of the Church of *England*. These are chiefly

Mr. Perronet, Romaine, Newton, Shirley : Mr. Downing, Jesse, Adam : Mr. Talbot, Ryland, Stillingfleet, Fletcher : Mr. Johnson, Baddeley, Andrews, Jane : Mr. Hart, Symes, Brown, Rouquet : Mr. Sel-  
lon,

Ion, Venn, Richardson, Burnet, Furley, Crook: Mr. Eastwood, Conyers, Bentley, King: Mr. Berridge, Hicks: G. W. J. W. C. W. John Richardson, Benjamin Colley.

Not excluding any other Clergymen, who agree in these essentials,

I. Original sin,

II. Justification by faith,

III. Holiness of heart and life: provided their life be answerable to their doctrine.

“But *what union* would you desire among these?” Not an union in *opinions*. They might agree or disagree, touching absolute decrees on the one hand, and perfection on the other. Not an union in *expressions*. These may still speak of the *imputed righteousness*, and those of the *merits of Christ*. Not an union, with regard to *outward order*. Some may still remain quite *regular*; some quite *irregular*; and some *partly regular* and *partly irregular*. But these things being as they are, as each is persuaded in his own mind, is it not a most desirable thing, that we should

1. Remove hindrances out of the way? Not *judge* one another, not *despise* one another, not *envy* one another? Not be *displeased* at one another's *gifts* or *successes*, even though greater than our own? Not *wait* for another's halting, much less *wish* for it, or *rejoice* therein?

Never *speak* disrespectfully, slightly, coldly, or unkindly of each other: never *repeat* each other's faults, mistakes, or infirmities, much less *listen* for and *gather* them up: never say or do any thing to hinder each other's usefulness, either directly or indirectly?

Is it not a most desirable thing, that we should  
 2. *Love as brethren?* Think well of and honour one another? *Wish* all good, all grace, all gifts, all success, yea, greater than our own to each other? *Expect* God will answer our wish, *rejoice* in every appearance thereof, and *praise* him for it? *Readily believe* good of each other, as readily as we once believed evil?

*Speak* respectfully, honourably, kindly of each other: *defend* each other's character: speak all the good we can of each other: recommend one another where we have influence: each *help* the other on in his work, and *enlarge* his influence by all the honest means we can?

This is the *union* which I have long sought after. And is it not the duty of every one of us so to do? Would it not be far better for *ourselves*? A means of promoting both our holiness and happiness? Would it not remove much *guilt* from those who have been faulty in any of these instances? And much *pain* from those who have kept themselves pure? Would it not be far better for the *people*: who suffer severely from the clashings and contentions of their leaders, which seldom fail to occasion many unprofitable, yea, hurtful disputes among them? Would it not be better even for the poor, blind *world*, robbing them of their sport, "O they cannot agree among themselves?" Would it not be better for the *whole work* of God, which would then deepen and widen on every side?

"But it will never be: it is utterly impossible." Certainly it is *with men*. Who imagines *we* can do this?

this? That it can be effected by any *human power*? All nature is against it, every infirmity, every *wrong temper* and *passion*; love of honour and praise, of power, of pre-eminence; or anger, resentment, pride; long-contracted habit, and prejudice lurking in ten thousand forms. The *devil* and all his angels are against it. For if this takes place, how shall his kingdom stand? All *the world*, all that know not God are against it, though they may seem to favour it for a season. Let us settle this in our hearts, that we may be utterly cut off from all dependence on our own strength or wisdom.

But surely *with God all things are possible*. Therefore *all things are possible to him that believeth*. And this union is proposed only to them that believe, that shew *their faith by their works*.

When *Mr. C.* was objecting the impossibility of ever effecting such an union, I went up stairs, and after a little prayer, opened *Kempis* on these words:

“Expecta Dominum: Viriliter age: noli diffidere: Noli discedere, sed corpus & animam expone constanter pro gloria Dei.”\*

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant,

Scarborough,

JOHN WESLEY.”

April 29. 1764.

Of thirty-four Clergymen to whom he addressed the above, only three vouchsafed him an answer! The one which he received from the late Vicar of Shore-

\* *Wait upon the Lord: play the man: doubt not: shrink not: but sacrifice soul and body continually for the glory of God.*

ham, in Kent, is such a picture of that blessed man (now with God) that we doubt not but it will be acceptable to our readers.

Shoreham, April 1764.

My Reverend and dear brother,

“ Your’s of the 19th instant gave me both pain and pleasure.

“ I was highly delighted with your ardent wishes and endeavours for promoting the *spirit* of the *gospel* among the *preachers* and other *professors* of it:—but deeply concerned at the disappointment and opposition you have met with!

“ It has been always a *leading principle* with me (and I pray God confirm and strengthen it more and more) to *love* all those *labourers of Christ*, who give proof by their *diligence*, their *holy* and *heavenly behaviour*, that they *love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity*; even though their *sentiments*, in many things, should differ from mine.

“ And therefore, though it be *absurd* to expect an entire *union of sentiments* in all things;—yet the endeavouring, by every christian method, to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*,—is the indispensable duty of all christians. Where this *spiritual peace and union* are not,—there *faith working by love* is not: and where this *divine faith* is wanting,—there *Christ* is wanting: there his *Spirit* is wanting: and then, *neither circumcision nor uncircumcision will avail us any thing!*

“ In this melancholy situation, whilst we are strangers to the *divine fruits* of the *Holy Spirit*,—let our *gifts* and *talents* be what they may;—let us *speak with*

*the tongues of men and of angels; we are yet nothing in the sight of God! Nay, though his Spirit should spread the gospel, by our ministry, in the hearts of thousands; yet our own souls will remain but a barren wilderness! and Christ may say,—“I never knew you.”*

“How ought we therefore always to pray,—that the peace of God may ever rule in our hearts:—that we may be rooted and grounded in love; and that we may constantly follow after the things, which make for peace; and things wherewith one may edify another!

“This is the gospel of Jesus Christ! And may God impress it thoroughly upon the minds and hearts of all!—And may the poor despised flock grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

I am, dear Sir,

Your's most affectionately,

VINCENT PERRONET.”

A Writer of Mr. Wesley's Life mentions the above circular letter, (the only one he ever sent,) and the failure of the projected union: and then adds, “His only resource therefore was in Lay-preachers.” Must not his readers imagine from this observation, that those preachers were employed subsequently to that proposal, and to supply its failure? Whereas the real truth is, they were employed more than twenty years before the proposal was made! Besides, the very words of the letter clearly evidence, that no such union was proposed as would make the least difference with respect to the preachers. It is therefore



therefore surprising that the gentleman alluded to, who was himself employed as an itinerant preacher for several years, should deviate so much from the real truth. Many other particulars in the Life he has written, are related with the same fidelity and candour.

As we have spoken so little concerning the calling of those Preachers who laboured with Mr. *Wesley*, being desirous our readers might chiefly attend to *him* whose memoirs we write, and to the great work in which he was engaged, we believe it will not be unacceptable to lay before them his thoughts on this subject after almost twenty years trial. He has given them very fully in a letter to the Rev. Mr. *Walker* of *Truro*, which we here subjoin.

Rev. and dear Sir,

“ I have one point in view, To promote, as far as I am able, vital, practical religion; and by the grace of God, to beget, preserve, and increase, the life of God in the souls of men. On this single principle I have hitherto proceeded, and taken no step but in subserviency to it. With this view, when I found it to be absolutely necessary for the continuance of the work, which God had begun in many souls (which their *regular pastors* generally used all possible means to destroy) I permitted several of their brethren, whom I believe God had called thereto, and qualified for the work, to comfort, exhort, and instruct those who were athirst for God, or who walked in the light of his countenance. But, as the persons so qualified

were few, and those who wanted their assistance very many, it followed, that most of these were obliged to travel continually from place to place; and this occasioned several regulations from time to time, which were chiefly made in our Conferences.

“ So great a blessing has, from the beginning, attended the labours of these Itinerants, that we have been more and more convinced every year, of the more than lawfulness of this proceeding. And the inconveniencies, most of which we foresaw from the very first, have been both fewer and smaller than were expected. Rarely two in one year, out of the whole number of Preachers, have either separated themselves, or been rejected by us. A great majority have all along behaved as becometh the Gospel of Christ, and, I am clearly persuaded, still desire nothing more than to spend and be spent for their brethren.

“ But you advise, “ That as many of our Preachers as are fit for it, be ordained; and that the others be fixed to certain Societies, not as Preachers, but as readers or inspectors.”

“ You oblige me by speaking your sentiments so plainly: with the same plainness I will answer. So far as I know myself, I have no more concern for the reputation of Methodism, or my own, than for the reputation of *Priester John*. I have the same point in view, as when I set out, The promoting as I am able, vital, practical religion: and in all our discipline, I still aim at the continuance of the work which God has already begun in so many souls. With this view, and this only, I permitted those whom I believed God had

had called thereto, to comfort, exhort, and instruct their brethren. And if this end can be better answered some other way, I shall subscribe to it without delay.

“ But is that which you propose a better way? This should be coolly and calmly considered.

“ If I mistake not, there are now in the county of *Cornwall* about four and thirty little Societies, part of whom now experience the love of God; part are more or less earnestly seeking it. Four Preachers, *Peter Jaco*, *Thomas Johnson*, *William Crabb*, and *William Alwood*, design for the ensuing year, partly to call other sinners to repentance, but chiefly to feed and guide those few feeble sheep: to forward them, as of the ability which God giveth, in vital, practical religion.

“ Now suppose we can effect, That *Peter Jaco*, and *Thomas Johnson*, be ordained and settled in the Curacies of *Buryan* and *St. Just*: and suppose *William Crabb*, and *William Alwood*, fix at *Launceston* and *Plymouth-Dock* as readers and exhorters: will this answer the end which I have in view, so well as travelling through the county?

“ It will not answer it so well, even with regard to those Societies, among whom *Peter Jaco* and *Thomas Johnson* are settled. Be their talents ever so great, they will ere long grow dead themselves, and so will most of those that hear them. I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep. Nor can I believe, it was ever the will of our Lord, that

any congregation should have only one teacher. We have found by long and constant experience, that a frequent change of teachers is best. This Preacher has one talent, that another. No one whom I ever yet knew, has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation.

“ But suppose this would better answer the end, with regard to those two Societies, would it answer in those where *William Alwood* and *William Crabb* were settled as inspectors or readers? First, who shall feed them with the milk of the word? The Ministers of their parishes? Alas, they cannot: they themselves neither know, nor live, nor teach the Gospel. These readers? Can then either they, or I, or you, always find something to read to our congregation, which will be as exactly adapted to their wants, and as much blessed to them as our preaching? And here is another difficulty still: what authority have I to forbid their doing what I believe God has called them to do? I apprehend indeed, that there ought, if possible, to be both an outward and inward call to this work: yet, if one of the two be supposed wanting, I had rather want the outward than the inward call. I rejoice that I am called to preach the Gospel both by God and man. Yet I acknowledge, I had rather have the divine without the human, than the human without the divine call.

“ But waving this, and supposing these four Societies to be better provided for than they were before: what becomes of the other thirty? Will they prosper  
as

as well when they are left as sheep without a shepherd? The experiment has been tried again and again; and always with the same effect: even the strong in faith grew weak and faint; many of the weak made shipwreck of the faith. The awakened fell asleep; sinners changed for a while, returned as a dog to the vomit. And so, by our lack of service, many of the souls perished for whom Christ died. Now, had we willingly withdrawn our service from them, by voluntarily settling in one place, what account of this could we have given to the great Shepherd of all our souls?

“ I cannot therefore see, how any of those four Preachers, or any other in like circumstances, can ever, while they have health and strength, ordained or unordained, fix in one place, without a grievous wound to their own conscience, and damage to the *general* work of God. Yet I trust I am open to conviction; and your farther thoughts on this or any subject, will be always acceptable to,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother and fellow labourer,  
JOHN WESLEY.”

To the Rev. Mr. *Walker*.

We cannot here omit mentioning that excellent and laborious Minister, the late Mr. *Grimshaw*, Rector of *Haworth* in *Yorkshire*, who about this time went to his reward. He was indeed a man of God. He heartily joined Mr. *Wesley* in his work, and was so great an instrument of promoting the revival in *Yorkshire*, that

we shall be excused, if we give Mr. *Wesley's* own account of his truly christian life, and apostolic labours:

“ It was at this time that Mr. *Grimshaw* fell asleep. He was born Sept, 3, 1708, at *Brindle*, six miles south of *Preston* in *Lancashire*, and educated at the schools of *Blackburn* and *Heskin*, in the same county. Even then the thoughts of death and judgment made some impression upon him. At eighteen he was admitted at *Christ's College* in *Cambridge*. Here bad example so carried him away, that for more than two years he seemed utterly to have lost all sense of seriousness; which did not revive, till the day he was ordained deacon, in the year 1731. On that day he was much affected with the sense of the importance of the ministerial office. And this was increased by his conversing with some at *Rochdale*, who met once a week to read and sing and pray. But on his removal to *Todmorden* soon after, he quite dropped his pious acquaintance, conformed to the world, followed all its diversions, and contented himself with “doing his duty” on Sundays.

But about the year 1734, he began to think seriously again. He left off all his diversions; he began to catechise the young people, to preach the absolute necessity of a devout life; and to visit his people, not in order to be merry with them as before, but to press them to seek the salvation of their souls.

At this period also, he began himself to pray in secret four times a day. And the God of all grace, who prepared his heart to pray, soon gave the answer

to his prayer: not indeed as he expected; not in joy or peace, but by bringing upon him very strong and painful convictions of his own guilt, and helplessness, and misery; by discovering to him what he did not suspect before, that his heart was deceitful and desperately wicked; and what was more afflicting still, that all his duties and labours could not procure him pardon, or gain him a title to eternal life. In this trouble he continued more than three years, not acquainting any one with the distress he suffered; till one day, (in 1742,) being in the utmost agony of mind, there was clearly represented to him, Jesus Christ pleading for him with God the Father, and gaining a free pardon for him. In that moment all his fears vanished away, and he was filled with joy unspeakable. “I was now, says he, willing to renounce myself, and to embrace Christ for my all in all. O what light and comfort did I enjoy in my own soul, and what a taste of the pardoning love of God!”

All this time he was an entire stranger to the people called *Methodists*, whom afterwards he thought it his duty to countenance, and to labour with in his neighbourhood. He was an entire stranger also to all their writings, till he came to *Haworth*. And then the good effects of his preaching soon became visible. Many of his flock were brought into deep concern for salvation, and were, in a little time after, filled with peace and joy through believing. And as in ancient times, the whole congregation have been often seen in tears, on account of their provocations  
against

against God, and under a sense of his goodness in yet sparing them.

His lively manner of representing the truths of God could not fail of being much talked of, and bringing many hundreds out of curiosity to *Harworth* church: who received so much benefit by what they heard, that when the novelty was long over, the church continued to be full of people, many of whom came from far, and this for twenty years together.

Mr. *Grimshaw* was now too happy himself in the knowledge of Christ, to rest satisfied, without taking every method, he thought likely, to spread the knowledge of his God and Saviour. And as the very indigent constantly make their want of better cloaths to appear in, an excuse for not coming to church in the day-time, he contrived, for them chiefly, a lecture on Sunday-evenings, though he had preached twice in the day before. God was pleased to give great success to these attempts, which animated him still more to spend and be spent for Christ. So the next year he began a method, which was continued by him for ever after, of preaching in each of the four hamlets he had under his care three times every month. By this means the old and infirm, who could not attend the church, had the truth of God brought to their houses; and many, who were so profane as to make the distance from the house of God a reason for scarce ever coming to it, were allured to hear. By this time, the great labour with which he instructed his own people; the holiness of his conversation, and the benefit, which very many  
from



from the neighbouring parishes had obtained by attending his ministry; concurred to bring upon him many earnest intreaties to come to their houses, who lived in the neighbouring parishes, and expound the word of God to souls as ignorant as they had been themselves. This request he did not dare to refuse: so that while he provided abundantly for his own flock, he annually found opportunity of preaching near three hundred times, to congregations in other parts.

And for a course of fifteen years, or upwards, he used to preach every week, fifteen, twenty, and sometimes thirty times, besides visiting the sick, and other occasional duties of his function. It is not easy to ascribe such unwearied diligence, chiefly among the poor, to any motive but the real one. He thought he would never keep silence, while he could speak to the honour of that God, who had done so much for his soul. And while he saw sinners perishing for lack of knowledge, and no one breaking to them the bread of life, he was constrained, notwithstanding the reluctance he felt within, to give up his name to still greater reproach, as well as all his time and strength to the work of the ministry.

During this intense application to what was the delight of his heart, God was exceeding favourable to him. In sixteen years he was only once suspended from his labour by sickness, though he dared all weathers, upon the bleak mountains, and used his body with less compassion, than a merciful man would use his beast. His soul at various times en-  
joyed

joyed large manifestations of God's love; and he drank deep into his Spirit. His cup ran over, and at some seasons, his faith was so strong and his hope so abundant, that higher degrees of spiritual delight would have overpowered his mortal frame.

In this manner Mr. *Grimshaw* employed all his powers and talents even to his last illness. And his labours were not in vain in the Lord. He saw an effectual change take place in many of his flock; and a restraint from the commission of sin brought upon the parish in general. He saw the name of Jesus exalted, and many souls happy in the knowledge of him, and walking as became the gospel. Happy he was himself, in being kept by the power of God, unblamable in his conversation: happy in being beloved in several of the last years of his life, by every one in his parish; who, whether they would be persuaded by him to forsake the evil of their ways, or no, had no doubt that Mr. *Grimshaw* was their cordial friend. Hence, at his departure, a general concern was visible through his parish. Hence his body was interred with what is more ennobling than all the pomp of a royal funeral: for he was followed to the grave by a great multitude, with affectionate sighs, and many tears; who cannot still hear his much-loved name without weeping for the guide of their souls, to whom each of them was dear as children to their father.

His behaviour, throughout his last sickness, was of a piece with the last twenty years of his life. From the very first attack of his fever, he welcomed its approach. His intimate knowledge of Christ abolished

all the reluctance nature feels to a dissolution ; and triumphing in Him, who is the resurrection and the life, he departed April 7th, 1762, in the 55th year of his age, and the twenty-first of eminent usefulness."

Whoever seriously considers the foregoing pages, will readily conclude that the work carried on by Mr. Wesley and his assistants was really of God. The great concern for religion, which was evident in many thousands, who were before careless, or profane ; the *impression* made on their minds, of the importance of eternal things ; their being so deeply *convinced* of the *number* and *heinousness* of their sins, from which conviction sprung *fruits meet for repentance* : their being made happy partakers of *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, and walking in all holiness, were demonstrable proofs of this. For is there any name given under heaven, whereby men can be *thus* saved, but the name of Christ alone ?

But the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers places, poured out his Spirit in a remarkable manner. This religious concern, these divine *impressions*, and their consequent *fruits*, attended the preaching of God's word in so great a degree upon those occasions, that more were converted in a few months, or even weeks or days at such times, than for several years before. Many parts of these kingdoms have been thus favoured, at different seasons ; but especially about the year 1760, and for some years after. In *London* particularly this revival of religion was great and conspicuous ; many hundreds were added to the societies, and the word of the Lord was glorified among them.

The

The city of *London* had been highly favoured from the commencement of Mr. *Wesley's* labours. He usually resided there during the winter months. There were now several chapels therein under his direction. In some of these, on every Lord's day, the service of the church of England was performed, and the Lord's Supper administered. Mr. *Maxfield*, whom we have already mentioned, was ordained by the late Bishop of *Londonderry*, who resided for some time at *Bath* for the benefit of his health. The Bishop received him at Mr. *Wesley's* recommendation, saying, "Sir, I ordain you, to assist that good man, that he may not work himself to death." He did assist Mr. *Wesley* for some years, and was eminently useful.

At the beginning of this great revival of religion Mr. *Maxfield* was in *London*. For some time he laboured in concert with Mr. *Wesley* and the other preachers. But this did not continue. The sower of tares, the enemy of God and man, began now again to pervert the right ways of the Lord. While hundreds rejoiced in God their Saviour with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and yet walked humbly with him, being zealous of whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report; others were not so minded. Instead of the faith which worketh by love, *Antinomianism* reared its head again. Dreams, visions and revelations were now honoured more than the written word. Some of the preachers bluntly and sharply opposed the spreading errors; which seemed only to make things worse. But on Mr. *Wesley's* arrival in town, the visionaries stood reprov'd. For a  
considerable

considerable time, as he himself confesses, he knew not how to act. He saw that much good was done ; but he also saw that much evil was intermixed. Some who appeared to be very useful among the people, nevertheless encouraged those things which are subversive of true order, and contrary to Scripture. He loved Mr. *Maxfield* much, and hoped all good concerning him. Yet he could not but see that he rather encouraged those evils than opposed them. He therefore retired to *Canterbury* for a few days, from whence he sent him the following letter.

“ Without any preface or ceremony, which is needless between you and me, I will simply and plainly tell what I dislike, in your doctrine, spirit, or outward behaviour. When I say *your's*, I include brother *Bell* and *Owen*, and those who are most closely connected with them.

“ 1. I like your doctrine of *perfection*, or pure love : love excluding sin. Your insisting that it is merely by *faith* : that consequently it is *instantaneous*, (though preceded and followed by a gradual work) and that it may be *now*, at this instant.

“ But I dislike, your supposing man may be as perfect *as an angel*, that he can be *absolutely* perfect : that he can be *infallible*, or above being *tempted* : or, that the moment he is pure in heart, he *cannot fall* from it.

“ I dislike the saying, This was not known or taught among us, till within two or three years. I grant, *you* did not know it. You have over and over denied instantaneous sanctification to *me*. But  
I have

I have known and taught it (and so has my brother, as our writings shew) above these twenty years.

“ I dislike your directly or indirectly depreciating justification : saying, a justified person is not *in Christ*, is not *born of God*, is not *sanctified*, not a *temple of the Holy Ghost* ; or that he *cannot please God*, or cannot *grow in grace*.

“ I dislike your saying, that one saved from sin, needs nothing more than *looking to Jesus*, needs not to hear or think of any thing else : *believe, believe* is enough : that he needs no *self-examination*, no times of *private prayer* : needs not mind *little*, or *outward things* : and that he *cannot be taught* by any person, who is not in the same state.

“ I dislike your affirming, that justified persons in general persecute them that are saved from sin : that *they* have persecuted *you* on *this* account : and that for *two years* past, *you* have been more persecuted by *the two brothers*, than ever *you* was by the world in all your life.

“ 2. As to your spirit, I like your confidence in God, and your zeal for the salvation of souls.

“ But I dislike something which has the appearance of *pride*, of overvaluing yourselves and undervaluing others : particularly the Preachers, thinking not only that they are *blind*, and that they are not sent of God ; but even that they are *dead* ; dead to God, and walking in the way to hell : that “ they are going *one way*, *you another* ;” that “ they have *no life* in them !” Your speaking of *yourselves*, as though *you* were the *only men* who knew and taught the Gospel ;  
and

and as if, not only *all the Clergy*, but *all the Methodists* besides, were in utter darkness.

“ I dislike something that has the appearance of *enthusiasm* : overvaluing *feelings* and inward *impressions* : mistaking the mere work of *imagination* for the voice of the Spirit : expecting the end without the means, and undervaluing *reason, knowledge* and *wisdom* in general.

“ I dislike something that has the appearance of *Antinomianism* ; not magnifying the law, and making it honourable : not enough valuing *tenderness of conscience*, and exact *watchfulness* in order thereto : using *faith* rather as contradistinguished from *holiness*, than as productive of it.

“ But what I most of all dislike is, your *littleness of love* to your brethren, to your own society : your want of *union of heart* with them, and *bowels of mercies* toward them : your want of *meekness, gentleness, long-suffering* : your *impatience of contradiction* : your counting every man your enemy that reproves or admonishes you in love : your *bigotry* and *narrowness of spirit*, loving in a manner only those that love you : your *ensoriousness*, proneness to *think hardly* of all, who do not exactly agree with you : in one word, your *divisive spirit*. Indeed I do not believe, that any of you either design or desire a separation. But you do not enough *fear, abhor* and *detest* it, shuddering at the very thought. And all the preceding tempers tend to it, and gradually prepare you for it. Observe, I tell you before ! God grant you may immediately and affectionately take the warning !

“ 3. As to your outward behaviour, I like the general tenor of your life, devoted to God, and spent in doing good.

“ But I dislike your slighting any, the very least rules of the Bands or Society ; and your doing any thing that tends to hinder others from exactly observing them. Therefore

“ I dislike your appointing such meetings, as hinder others from attending either the public preaching, or their Clafs or Band ; or any other meeting, which the rules of the Society or their office require them to attend.

“ I dislike your spending so *much time* in several meetings, as many that attend can ill spare from their other duties of their calling, unless they omit either the preaching, or their Clafs or Band. This naturally tends to dissolve our Society, by cutting the sinews of it.

“ As to your more public meetings, I like the praying fervently and largely for all the blessings of God. And I know much good has been done hereby, and hope much more will be done.

“ But I dislike several things therein : 1. The singing, or speaking, or praying, of several at once : 2. The praying to the Son of God only, or more than to the Father : 3. The using improper expressions in prayer : sometimes too bold, if not irreverent : sometimes too pompous and magnificent, extolling yourselves rather than God, and telling him what you *are*, not what you *want* : 4. Using poor flat, bald, hymns : 5. The never kneeling at prayer : 6. Your using  
postures



postures or gestures highly indecent: 7. Your screaming, even so as to make the words unintelligible: 8. Your affirming people *will* be justified or sanctified just now: 9. The affirming *they* are, when they are not: 10. The bidding them say, I believe: 11. The bitterly condemning any that oppose, calling them wolves, &c. and pronouncing them hypocrites, or not justified.

“ Read this calmly and impartially before the Lord in prayer. So shall the evil cease, and the good remain. And you will then be more than ever united to

*Your affectionate Brother,*

Canterbury, Nov. 2, 1762.

J. WESLEY.”

It does not appear that this letter had any effect. *George Bell*, mentioned above as an intimate of Mr. *Maxfield*, was a Serjeant in the Life-guards. He was at one time unquestionably a man of piety, of deep communion with God, and of extraordinary zeal for the conversion of souls. But he was not a man of understanding: his imagination was lively, but his judgment weak. While therefore he hearkened to the advice of those who had longer experience in the ways of God than himself, as well as more knowledge of the devices of Satan, he was a pattern to all, and eminently useful to his brethren. But not continuing to regard either them or his Bible, he fell into enthusiasm, pride, and great uncharitableness. Yet Mr.

*Wesley*, it appears, was very tender over this poor man. "Being determined," says he, "to hear for myself, I stood where I could hear and see without being seen. *George Bell* prayed, in the whole, pretty near an hour. His fervour of spirit I could not but admire. I afterwards told him what I did not admire: namely. 1. His screaming every now and then in so strange a manner, that one could scarce tell what he said: 2. His thinking he had the miraculous discernment of spirits: and 3. His sharply condemning his opposers."

A member of the Society, soon after, observed to *Mr. Wesley*, "Sir, I employ several men. Now, if one of my servants will not follow my directions, is it not right in me to discard him at once? Pray, Sir, apply this to *Mr. Bell*." He answered, "It is right to discard such a *servant*. But what would you do, if he were your Son?" All this time, he was blamed on every hand: *by some*, because he did not reprove those persons: *by themselves*, because, as they said, he was continually reprovving them. "I had a second opportunity," observes *Mr. Wesley*, "of hearing *George Bell*. I believe, part of what he said, was from God (this was my reflection *at that time*) part from an heated imagination. But as he did not *scream*, and there was nothing dangerously wrong, I do not yet see cause to hinder him." He heard him once more on that day fennight. "I was then convinced," says he, "that he must not continue to pray at the Foundery. The reproach of Christ I am willing to bear; but

but not the reproach of Enthufiasm, if I can help it."

"All this time," he proceeds, "I did not want information from all quarters, That Mr. *Maxfield* was at the bottom of all this: that he was the life of the cause: that he was continually fpiriting up all with whom he was intimate, againft me: that he told them, I was not capable of teaching them; and in-  
finuated, that none was but himfelf; and that the inevitable confequence muft be, a divifion in the Society."

But *George Bell* became ftill more wild: and as he took every ftong impreflion made upon his mind, as a revelation from God, he at laft prophesied, in Jan. 1763, That "the end of the world would be on the 28th. of February following." Mr. *Wefley* explicitly declared againft this, firft in the Society, then in preaching, and afterwards in the public papers. When the day arrived, he preached at *Spitalfields* in the evening on "Prepare to meet thy God;" thus turning to religious profit, the terror which had feized upon many. After expounding the paffage, he largely fhewed the utter abfurdity of the fuppo-  
fition, that the world would be at an end that night. But notwithstanding all he could fay, many were afraid to go to bed, and fome wandered about in the fields, being perfuaded, that if the world did not end, at leaft *London* would be fwallowed up by an earth-quake. But *he* went to bed at his ufual time, and was faft afleep about ten o'clock.

Things now ripened apace for a separation: to prevent which (if possible) he desired all the Preachers, as they had time, to be present at all meetings, when he could not himself; particularly at the Friday-meeting, in the chapel at *West-Street*. At this Mr. *Maxfield* was highly offended, and wrote to him as follows:

“ I wrote to you, to ask if those who before met at brother *Gulford's*, might not meet in the chapel. Soon after you came to town, the Preachers were brought into the meeting, though you told me again, and again, they should not come.” (True; remarks Mr. *Wesley*, but since I said this, there has been an entire change in the situation of things.) “ Had I known this, I would rather have paid for a room out of my own pocket. I am not speaking of the people that met at the *Foundery* before: though I let some of them come to that meeting.—If you intend to have the Preachers there to watch, and others that *I think very unfit*, and will not give me liberty to give leave to some that *I think fit* to be there, I shall not think it my duty to meet them.”—So from this time he kept a separate meeting elsewhere.

Shortly after this, Mr. *Maxfield* refused to preach at the *Foundery* according to appointment. Mr. *Wesley* who was at *Westminster*, where he intended to preach, hearing this, immediately returned to the *Foundery*, and preached himself on the words of Jacob, *If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved*. Thus was that breach

breach made, which could never afterwards be made up.

Mr. *Maxfield* lived about twenty years after this separation, and preached in a meeting-house near *Moorfields* to a large congregation. Several who separated with him, continued with him to the last: though far the greater part returned. Mr. *Wesley* mourned over him, as an old and valuable friend, and as the first Preacher of the Gospel, who submitted to his direction. But he always considered his behaviour in the present instance, as both ungrateful and unjust: as well as giving a stab to the cause of true religion in *London*, which it did not entirely recover for several years. Poor *George Bell* is still alive; but he makes no pretensions to religion. He has been for many years a deplorable instance of the danger which arises even to truly pious persons, from giving place to any *impression* that does not agree with the only true standard, *The word of God*.

The great revival of religion was not however stopped by this unhappy separation, or by the extravagance which led to it. Mr. *Wesley* soon after visited many parts of *England*, in which he found the same deep concern for genuine piety, with the same inward, experimental knowledge and love of God, as our Redeemer and Sanctifier, which had been so remarkable in *London*. Mean time the crowds that flocked to hear the word of God, were immense. At *Newcastle upon Tyne*, he was obliged to preach in the open air at five in the morning!

On his return to *London* he examined the Society, and found that one hundred and seventy-five persons had separated from their brethren. But the gracious work of God still continued among those who remained.

“ I stood and looked back,” says he, “ on the late occurrences. The peculiar work of this season has been, what *St. Paul* calls *The perfecting of the saints*. Many persons in *London, Bristol, York*, and in various parts both of *England* and *Ireland*, have experienced so deep and universal a change, as it had not before entered into their hearts to conceive. After a deep conviction of inbred sin, of their total fall from God, they have been so filled with faith and love, (and generally in a moment) that sin vanished, and they found from that time, no pride, anger, evil desire, or unbelief. They could rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. Now whether we call this the *destruction* or *suspension* of sin, it is a glorious work of God : such a work, as considering both the depth and extent of it, we never saw in these kingdoms before.

“ It is possible, some who spoke in this manner were mistaken : and it is certain, some have lost what they then received. A few (very few compared to the whole number) first gave way to enthusiasm, then to pride, next to prejudice and offence, and at last separated from their brethren. But although this laid a huge stumbling-block in the way, still the work of God went on. Nor has it ceased to this day in any of its branches. God still convinces, justifies, sanctifies.

We

We have lost only the dross, the enthusiasm, the prejudice and offence. The pure gold remains, faith working by love, and we have ground to believe, increases daily."

The doctrines of the Bible, of the reformation, and of the Church of *England*, were now preached in almost every part of the land. Present salvation by grace through faith, and *universal obedience* as the fruit thereof, urged on the consciences of men, caused *practical christianity* again to revive. And to use the words of a pious and elegant writer,\* "Leaning on her fair daughters *Truth* and *Love*, She took a solemn walk through the kingdom, and gave a foretaste of heaven to all that entertained her." "She might," says he, "by this time have turned this favourite isle into a land flowing with spiritual milk and honey: if Apollyon, disguised in his *angelic* robes, had not played, and did not continue to play, his old (antinomian) game."

We have already seen this mystery of iniquity break out on particular occasions. But the deadly leaven spread far and wide: and many of those, whose hearts it had alienated from God, had still "a name to live." Some of them were even accounted pillars in their respective congregations, who, while the truly pious wept and prayed for them, were "at ease in Zion," having only the form of godliness, with a confidence at the same

\* The late Rev. Mr. *Fletcher*, Vicar of *Madeley*, *Salop*.

time that their state was good, because *they knew not what spirit they were of.*

It may not be unacceptable, if we give a picture of this fatal delusion, drawn by the same masterly hand.

“ At this time we stand particularly in danger of splitting upon the Antinomian rock. Many smatterers in Christian experience talk of finished salvation in Christ, or boast of being in a state of justification and sanctification, while they know little of themselves, and less of Christ. Their whole behaviour testifies, that their heart is void of humble love, and full of carnal confidence. They cry, *Lord, Lord*, with as much assurance, and as little right, as the foolish virgins. They pass for sweet Christians, dear children of God, and good believers; but their secret reserves evidence them to be only such believers as *Simon Magus, Ananias, and Sapphira.*

“ Some with *Diotrephes*, love to have the pre-eminence, and prate malicious words, and not content therewith, they do not themselves receive the brethren, and forbid them that would. Some have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of *Balaam*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; they are wells without water, clouds without rain, and trees without fruit: with *Judas* they try to load themselves with thick clay, endeavour to lay up treasures on earth, and make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof. Some, with the incestuous Corinthian, are led captive by fleshly lusts, and fall into the greatest enormities. Others with the language of the awakened publican in their mouths, are fast asleep in their spirits: you hear them speak of

the



the corruptions of their hearts in as unaffected and airy a manner, as if they talked of freckles upon their faces : it seems they run down their sinful nature, only to apologize for their sinful practices ; or to appear great proficient in self-knowledge, and court the praise due to genuine humility.

“ Others quietly *settled on the lees* of the Laodicean state, by the whole tenor of their life *say they are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing* : utter strangers to *hunger and thirst after righteousness*, they never importunately beg, never wrestle hard for the hidden manna : on the contrary, they sing a requiem to their poor dead souls, and say, “ *Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up in Christ for many years, yea, for ever and ever ;*” and thus, like *Demas*, they go on talking of Christ and heaven, but *loving their ease*, and enjoying *this present world*.

“ Yet many of these, like *Herod*, hear and entertain us gladly ; but like him also they keep their beloved sin, pleading for it as a right eye, and saving it as a right hand. To this day their bosom-corruption is not only alive, but indulged ; their treacherous *Delilah* is hugged ; and their spiritual *Agag* walks delicately, and boasts that *the bitterness of death is past*, and he shall never be *hewed in pieces before the Lord* : nay, to dare so much as to talk of his *dying* before the body, becomes an almost unpardonable crime.

“ Forms and fair shows of godliness deceive us : many, whom our Lord might well compare to *whited sepulchres*, look like angels of light when they are abroad, and prove tormenting fiends at home. We see

see them weep under sermons, we hear them pray and sing with the tongues of men and angels; they even profess the faith that removes mountains; and yet by and by we discover they stumble at every mole-hill; every trifling temptation throws them into peevishness, fretfulness, impatience, ill humour, discontent, anger, and sometimes into loud passion.

“Relative duties are by many grossly neglected; husbands slight their wives, or wives neglect and plague their husbands; children are spoiled, parents disregarded, and masters disobeyed: yea, so many are the complaints against servants professing godliness on account of their unfaithfulness, indolence, pert answering again, forgetfulness of their menial condition, or insolent expectations, that some serious persons prefer those who have no knowledge of the truth, to those who make a high profession of it.

“*Knowledge is certainly increased; many run to and fro after it, but it is seldom experimental; the power of God is frequently talked of, but rarely felt, and too often cried down under the despicable name of frames and feelings. Numbers seek, by hearing a variety of Gospel-ministers, reading all the religious books that are published, learning the best tunes to our hymns, disputing on controverted points of doctrine, telling or hearing Church-news, and listening to or retailing spiritual scandal. But alas! few strive in pangs of heart-felt convictions, few deny themselves and take up their cross daily; few take the kingdom of heaven by the holy violence of wrestling faith, and agonizing prayer; few see, and fewer live in, the kingdom of God, which*

is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. In a word, many say, *Lo! Christ is here; and lo! he is there;* but few can consistently witness, that *the kingdom of heaven is within them.*

“ Many assert that the *clothing of the King’s daughter is of wrought gold*, but few, very few experience that *she is all glorious within*; and it is well, if many are not bold enough to maintain that she is “ all full of corruptions.” With more truth than ever we may say,

Ye different sects, who all declare  
Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there;  
Your stronger proofs divinely give,  
And shew us where *the Christians* live.  
Your claim, alas! ye cannot prove,  
Ye want the genuine mark of *love.*

“ The consequences of this high, and yet lifeless profession, are as evident as they are deplorable. Selfish views, sinister designs, inveterate prejudice, pitiful bigotry, party-spirit, self-sufficiency, contempt of others, envy, jealousy, *making men offenders for a word*—possibly a scriptural word too, taking advantage of each other’s infirmities, magnifying innocent mistakes, putting the worst construction upon each other’s words and actions, false accusations, backbiting, malice, revenge, persecution, and a hundred such evils, prevail among religious people, to the great astonishment of the children of the world, and the unspeakable grief of the true Israelites that yet remain among us.

“ But

“ But this is not all. Some of our hearers do not even keep to the great outlines of heathen morality: not satisfied practically to reject Christ’s declaration, that *it is more blessed to give than to receive*, they proceed to that pitch of covetousness and daring injustice, as not to pay their just debts; yea, and to cheat and extort, whenever they have a fair opportunity. How few of our Societies are there, where this or some other evil has not broken out, and given such shakes to the ark of the gospel, that had not the Lord wonderfully interposed, it must long ago have been overset? And you know how to this day *the name and truth of God* are openly blasphemed among the baptized *Heathen*, through the Antinomian lives of many, who *say they are Jews when they are not*, but by their works declare they are of the *synagogue of Satan*. At your peril therefore, my brethren, countenance them not: I know you would not do it designedly, but you may do it unawares; therefore take heed——more than ever take heed to your doctrine. Let it be scripturally evangelical: give not the children’s bread unto dogs: comfort not people that do not mourn. When you should give emetics, do not administer cordials, and by that means strengthen the hands of the slothful and unprofitable servant.”

Mr. *Wesley* had from the beginning borne a faithful testimony against this delusion. In his sermon preached before the University of *Oxford*, so early as the year 1738, he admitted that the doctrine of salvation by faith was often thus abused. “ Many,” says he, “ will now, as in the Apostles’ days, *continue in sin, that grace*  
may

*may abound.* But their blood is on their own head. The goodness of God ought to lead them to repentance; and so it will, those who are sincere of heart." After a trial of more than thirty years, he was abundantly confirmed in this sentiment.

Therefore, to raise a bulwark against this overflowing of ungodliness, the evil principle which occasioned it was taken into consideration, in the Conference of the year 1770. Minutes of this Conference were soon afterwards published, in which were inserted the following propositions.

"Take heed to your doctrine."

We said in 1744, "We have leaned too much toward Calvinism." Wherein?

1. With regard to *man's faithfulness*. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression, therefore we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert upon His Authority, that if a man is *not faithful in the unrighteous mammon, God will not give him the true riches*.

2. With regard to *working for life*, which our Lord expressly commands us to do. *Labour, (ἐργάζεσθε) literally, work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life.* And in fact, every believer, till he comes to glory, works *for*, as well as *from* life.

3. We have received it as a maxim, That "a man is to do nothing, *in order to Justification.*" Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God, should *cease from evil and learn to do well.* So God himself teaches by the Prophet *Isaiah*. Whoever repents, should *do works meet for repentance.* And  
if

if this is not *in order* to find favour, what does he do them for?

Once more review the whole affair:

1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God?

He that now believes in Christ, with a loving, obedient heart.

2. But who among those that never heard of Christ?

He that according to the light he has, *feareth God and worketh righteousness.*

3. Is this the same with he that is *sincere*?

Nearly, if not quite.

4. Is not this *Salvation by works*?

Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition.*

5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years?

I am afraid, *about words*: (Namely, in some of the foregoing instances.)

6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: We are rewarded *according to our works, yea, because of our works.* How does this differ from, *for the sake of our works*? And how differs this from *Secundum merita operum*? Which is no more than, *as our works deserve*? Can you split this hair? I doubt, I cannot.

7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions, is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those, who by their own confession neither *feared God, nor wrought righteousness.* Is this an exception to the general Rule?

It is a doubt, whether God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question, never did fear God and work righteousness? His own thinking so, is no proof. For we know, how all that are convinced of sin, under-value themselves in every respect.

8. Does not talking, without proper caution, of a *justified* or *sanctified state*, tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in *one moment*? Whereas, we are every moment *pleasing* or *displeasing* to God, *according to our works*: According to the whole of our present inward tempers, and outward behaviour."

It is hardly possible for us to give a just idea of the noise which these propositions occasioned among the religious professors of the land. Some, whose carnal confidence was shaken by them, cried out amain, that they were contrary to the Gospel, and that Mr. *Wesley* had in them contradicted all his former declarations. Some even of the truly pious seemed staggered at them; and though they lamented the abuse of Gospel-truths, could hardly bear so strong an antidote. The late Honourable and Rev. Mr. *Shirley*, Chaplain to the truly pious Countess of *Huntingdon* lately deceased, entered the lists in form. He wrote a circular letter to all the serious Clergy of the land, inviting them to protest against this dreadful heresy in a body.

This open attack called forth Mr. *Fletcher* from his "beloved obscurity." The temper of this Gentleman, as a Writer of the present day has well observed,

served, did not incline him to Polemic Divinity. He was devout, pious, and laborious in his calling, in a degree seldom equalled since the days of the Apostles. But being stimulated by his love of truth to engage in the controversy, he shewed himself a complete master of his subject. In his hands, the ablest of his antagonists were as the lion in the hands of *Sampson*. He demonstrated, that those propositions were equally agreeable to scripture, reason, and the writings of the soundest, even of the Calvinistic Divines. He largely shewed, that as the *day of judgment* differs from the *day of conversion*, so must the conditions of *justification*. That as in the *one* we are considered as *mere sinners*, and raised out of guilt and misery by an act of God's mercy, through faith in the merits of his Son: so, in the *other*, we are considered as members of the mystical Body of Christ; and being enabled by his grace to do works acceptable to God, we are justified in that awful day by the evidence of those works, inward and outward: and yet, that we are indebted for *both* to that glorious act of divine love, proclaimed by St. Paul, "*God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.*" And, lastly, that the propositions in question secured the one without at all weakening the other.

In all the controversies, in which Mr. *Wesley* was hitherto concerned, he stood alone. In this he had but little to do. He wrote one or two small tracts; but, as the Reviewers of that day observed, he soon retired from the field, and went quietly on in his labour,



labour, happy in being succeeded by so able an auxiliary. Mr. *Fletcher* abounded in time as well as talents for the work. He equally excelled in temper as in skill. And while he exposed the errors of his mistaken opponents, he did honour to their piety. He died in the year 1785, lamented by all the lovers of true religion and useful learning, that were acquainted either with his person or his writings. Our admiration of his character would lead us to speak much more concerning him, but that his life is published. To it we refer our readers.

From this time Mr. *Wesley* was but little troubled by the advocates for absolute predestination. Mr. *Fletcher's* works have been a standing answer to all those who assert it; as well as highly useful to those who have been troubled concerning questions on this subject. They are published in seven volumes duodecimo, and are well worthy the attention of all serious persons.

Religion was now greatly increased in the land. In every county, and in most of the towns and villages of *England*, Societies were formed, and Chapels erected for public worship. These were supplied by more than two hundred Itinerants, assisted by many hundred local Preachers. Mr. *Wesley's* great desire to remain in union with the Church of *England*, so far as the work he was engaged in would permit, would not allow him to apply for a legal establishment, or for any thing which might give to the Societies under his care the form of a separate Body.

With respect to the Chapels, there was but little fear, that any of them would be alienated, while he lived, from the purpose for which they were built. Most of them were settled on trustees, who were to permit him and those he should appoint, to preach in them from time to time. After his death, those who should be appointed at the yearly Conferences of the Preachers, were to enjoy the same privilege.

But a question arose, whenever the Trust-Deeds were mentioned, "Who are *The Conference*?" It was difficult to define the term: and it was thought a court of law, or even of equity, could not easily decide upon it, in case of any dispute with the trustees. He saw, if some remedy was not provided, Itinerant preaching would probably soon be at an end. Therefore at the desire of the Conference, assembled at *Bristol* in the year 1783, he took the opinion of one of the greatest lawyers in the kingdom, who answered, "There is no way of doing this, but by naming a determinate number of persons. The Deed which names these, must be enrolled in Chancery. Then it will stand good in law."

Mr. *Wesley* executed a Deed agreeably to this advice. But as this step has occasioned much conversation, and given much pain to several persons, we shall give his own explanation and defence of this measure, as published in the *Arminian Magazine*.

"My first thought was to name a very few, suppose ten or twelve persons. Count *Zinzendorff* named only six, who were to preside over the Community  
after

after his decease. But on second thoughts, I believed there would be more safety in a greater number of Counsellors, and therefore named a hundred, as many as I judged could meet without too great an expence, and without leaving any Circuit naked of Preachers while the Conference was assembled.

“ In naming these Preachers, as I had no adviser, so I had no respect of persons ; but I simply set down those, that according to the best of my judgment were most proper. But I am not infallible. I might mistake, and think better of some of them than they deserved. However, I did my best ; and if I did wrong, it was not the error of my will, but of my judgment.

“ But what need was there for any Deed at all ? There was the utmost need of it. Without some authentic Deed fixing the meaning of the term, the moment I died the Conference had been nothing. Therefore any of the proprietors of the land, on which our Preaching-houses were built, might have seized them for their own use, and there would have been none to hinder them, for the Conference would have been nobody, a mere empty name.

“ You see then, in all the pains I have taken about this absolutely necessary Deed, I have been labouring not for myself, (I have no interest therein ;) but for the whole Body of Methodists : in order to fix them upon such a foundation as is likely to stand as long as the sun and moon endure ; That is, if they continue to walk by faith, and to shew forth their faith by

their works: otherwise I pray God to root out the memorial of them from the earth.

JOHN WESLEY."

Mr. *Wesley* says, "he had no adviser." He means, in respect to the *number* or *choice* of the persons mentioned. And this we know to be strictly the truth, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary.

Mr. *Wesley* having found, that the fears of many were alarmed, lest the powers he had invested in the Conference should be abused through interest or partiality, wrote the following letter, which he deposited in the hands of a friend, to be by him presented to the Conference at their first meeting after his decease.

Chester, April 7th, 1785.

To the Methodist Conference.

My dear Brethren,

"SOME of our travelling Preachers have expressed a fear, That after my decease you would exclude them either from preaching in connexion with you, or from some other privileges which they now enjoy. I know no other way to prevent any such inconvenience, than to leave these my last words with you.

I beseech you by the mercies of God, that you never avail yourselves of the Deed of declaration, to assume any superiority over your brethren: but let all things go on, among those Itinerants who chuse to remain together, exactly in the same manner as when I was with you, so far as circumstances will permit.

In particular I beseech you, if you ever loved me, and if you now love God and your brethren : to have no respect of persons, in stationing the Preachers, in chusing children for *Kingswood-school*, in disposing of the yearly contribution and the Preachers' Fund, or any other public money. But do all things with a single eye, as I have done from the beginning. Go on thus, doing all things without prejudice or partiality, and God will be with you even to the end.

JOHN WESLEY."

Though it does not exactly follow in the order of time, we think it proper, as the conclusion of this subject, to observe, that the above letter was accordingly presented in July 1791. Mr. *Joseph Bradford*, who delivered it, being delayed on the road, did not arrive till the Conference had assembled several hours. And it is with great pleasure we add, that they had passed a vote to the same purport, and almost in the same words, before they knew of such a request's being in existence!

From this time Mr. *Wesley* held on his way, without interruption. The work of God increased every year. New Societies were formed, in all of which the same rules were observed. Though now declining in the vale of years, he slackened not his pace. He still rose at four in the morning, preached two, three or four times a day, and travelled between four and five thousand miles a year, going once in two years through *Great Britain* and *Ireland*. He saw continually more and more fruit of his labour, and of the labour of those

those in connection with him. He laid *no stress* on opinions or modes of worship, desiring only that the love of God and man through living faith in Christ as “God manifest in the flesh,” should be the ruling principle of the life, and shew itself by an uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth. He accordingly gave the right-hand of fellowship to all who walked by this rule, however they might differ from him in those speculative points, of which they are to give an account to God alone.

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The LIFE of the  
Reverend JOHN WESLEY.

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BOOK the THIRD.

*Containing an Account of the Labours of Mr. WESLEY and of the Preachers in connexion with him, in Ireland, Scotland, the Isles of Man, Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney, on the Continent of America, in Newfoundland, and in the Islands of the West-Indies: a review of Mr. WESLEY's Writings: several incidents in the three last years of his Life: his last Illness, Death and Character; and the conclusion.*

C H A P. I.

*Of the Progress of Christianity in Ireland to the year 1747: and of the Labours of Mr. WESLEY, and of the Preachers in connexion with him, from that period to the year 1789.*

S E C T I O N I.

THE accounts transmitted down to us of the introduction and progress of Christianity in *Ireland*, during the earlier ages, are so full of legends and fables, that no dependence can be placed upon them. *St. Patrick* visited that kingdom about the middle of the fifth century. But it is certain that Christianity had

had

had been propagated there for a considerable time before that period. The venerable *Bede* informs us, that about the middle of the seventh century many of the pious *Anglo-saxons*, some of whom were of considerable rank, went over to *Ireland*, both for the sake of religion and of learning, and were received by the *Irish* with the utmost benevolence: yea, they were maintained, instructed, and furnished with books, without fee or reward; “a most honourable testimony,” says Lord *Lyttleton*, “not only to the learning, but likewise to the hospitality and bounty of that nation.” And it is very probable that vital religion then flourished in some degree.

Soon after this, *Ireland* became the school of learning for all *Europe*. In the beginning of the eighth century the *Hibernians* were chiefly known by the name of *Scots*: and their Clergy were the only Ministers in *Europe* (the *Culdees* in *North-Britain* excepted) who refused to submit their understandings to implicit authority. They travelled through distant lands to receive and communicate knowledge both spiritual and natural, and were deservedly distinguished above all other people for their culture of the sciences, and for their improvement in and propagation of all the useful knowledge, which those times of ignorance would admit. This character of them has been established beyond a doubt by the most authentic records of antiquity. *Benedict* of *Aniane* in *Languedoc* proves, that they were the first introducers of the *Scholastic Theology* in *Europe*, which indeed was the least of their commendations. At this period, and perhaps



perhaps some time before, “the *Irish* scholars,” to use the words of *Camden*, “had profited so notably in Christianity, that *Ireland* was termed *Sanctorum Patria*, the country of Saints.”

The superiority of that kingdom in those times for piety and learning over all the other nations of *Europe*, and the surprizing ignorance of the people in the succeeding ages, probably arose from the following causes. When the *Goths* and *Vandals* invaded the *Roman* empire in the year 250, and continued their ravages till the empire was totally destroyed in the year 476, *Ireland* being very remote from the horrid scene, and having never been a part of the *Roman* empire as *England* was, enjoyed peace and tranquillity in the midst of those troubles, and became an asylum from those barbarous conquerors. In consequence of which, the arts and sciences were much cultivated there, the genius of the people being turned to literature. Several Princes were therefore sent there from the Continent for their education.

But, in the latter end of the eighth century, when the *Danes* (those northern ravagers) and afterwards the *Saxons*, broke in upon their repose, invaded their fertile country, and carried war and rapine, wherever they came, *Ireland* was made a scene of blood: and the generality of the inhabitants were reduced for a long series of years to the most abject state of slavery.

This easily accounts for the decay of learning in *Ireland*. The people became dispirited, and the men of literature were destroyed: or if any of them survived, it was impossible for them to pursue their studies

studies amidst war and slaughter. However, those northern plunderers were at length entirely driven out of the kingdom after many bloody battles: and in the years that followed, matters were changed for the better.

In the twelfth century arose *Malcolmus*, Archbishop of *Armagh*, a most excellent man, if we make allowances for the errors of Popery, which were at that time embraced by the whole nation. *Bernard* compares him to the sun, arising upon the earth, and dispelling darkness.

In the fourteenth century, the grace and providence of God raised up another Archbishop of the same See, to bless mankind. His name was *Richard Fitzralph*. He was a man of genuine piety, and a zealous opposer of the order of mendicant Friars, and also of some of the opinions of the church of *Rome*. He was therefore cited to appear before a Consistory of the Pope and Cardinals, at *Avignon*, where he defended himself in a manner, which evidenced him one of the most learned men of the age. *Bellarmino*, that grand defender of Popery, gives a special caution against the reading of his writings, declaring that they favoured of heresy, and that *John Wickliffe*, the first *English* Reformer, received some of his *heresies* from him.

Yet notwithstanding this early appearance of good, the *Reformation* which made so rapid a progress in many other countries, moved on very slowly in *Ireland*. *Brown*, Archbishop of *Dublin*, under the reign of *Henry* the eighth, exerted his utmost influence to overturn the authority of the church of *Rome*, and met with  
considerable

considerable success in his own diocese: and in the reign of *Edward* the sixth, Protestantism became the established religion of the country. The attention of the *English* Government, during the short reign of *Mary*, was wholly employed in the attempts that were made to extirpate Protestantism in *England*. They had not time to begin their bloody plan in *Ireland*.

From that period the Protestant religion has in general had the ascendancy, though the *Romanists* have been always far more numerous than the Protestants, and even now bear the proportion of about three to one. But the *Romanists* of that country, as a body, are at present the most deeply ignorant of any in *Europe*, and the most superstitious of any, except perhaps the lower people in *Spain* and *Portugal*.

The Protestants in *Ireland* have had a few shining lights among them. Bishop *Bedell* can never be forgotten, while piety remains in the world. He was appointed to the united Bishopricks of *Kilmore* and *Ardagh* in the year 1628. When he entered on his diocese, he found it so full of disorders, that there was scarcely a sound part in it. But he laboured in the mighty power of God, and religion lifted up her head. Many even of the Popish Priests were converted by him, not only from their false opinions, but from the error of their ways.

*James Usher*, Archbishop of *Armagh*, was a cotemporary of Bishop *Bedell*. His writings will ever be held in the highest estimation by the learned world. And he was also a man of prayer, a man that delighted in communion with God. But he was softness itself:

He

He wanted the courage which was necessary to manage the hard work of reforming abuses: and therefore he left things in the state in which he found them. In his days the dreadful massacre of the Protestants happened; when about 200,000 of them were butchered in the most cruel manner.

From the death of Archbishop *Usher*, the established church of *Ireland* sunk more and more into mere formality, so that soon there was (with some exceptions among the Clergy and Laity) a general ignorance concerning the nature of true godliness.

During the persecuting reign of *Charles* the second, multitudes of the pious members of the church of *Scotland* crossed the channel, (which is at the narrowest part but a few leagues in breadth,) and took refuge in the province of *Ulster*. Their descendents are now so increased in number, that they make perhaps the majority of the inhabitants of that province. Much of the power of God rested on their churches for a considerable time: but through the common abuse of ease and affluence, they fell by degrees. They are now divided into two grand parties, generally distinguished by the names of *Old Lights* and *New Lights*. Among the *Old Lights*, who hold the sentiments of the church of *Scotland*, there are several holy and zealous Ministers, and many truly pious persons that are private members of their churches. The *New Lights*, among whom are almost all the rich *Dissenters*, are either *Arians* or *Socinians*, with perhaps a very few exceptions to the contrary.

From all that has been advanced, a judgment may be formed of the state of religion in *Ireland*, when Mr. *Wesley* made his first visit to that kingdom. In the established church there was hardly any thing but the form remaining. Among the *Dissenters* a very considerable, if not the major part of them, had embraced very dangerous errors; and but few, comparatively, knew any thing of the power of religion: and the *Roman Catholics* were buried in the profoundest ignorance and superstition.

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## SECTION II.

*Of the labours of Mr. Wesley and of the Preachers in Connection with him, in Ireland.*

**M**R. *WESLEY* seems to have had but one design from the commencement of his Ministry, and which he invariably pursued till his Spirit returned to God, viz. To be as useful as possible to his fellow-creatures, especially with regard to the salvation of their souls. He therefore never said, upon any success which he met with, "It is enough." In this respect also, he "forgot the things behind, and reached forth to those before." The same he continually inculcated upon those who laboured with him. Accordingly one of the charges which he gave them at their admission, as we have already observed, was—  
 "Observe! It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that Society, but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many  
 sinners

sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord."

Agreeably to this, they have from the beginning gone from place to place: and having formed Societies of those who turned to God, (for they take charge of none else,) they immediately visited new places, beginning to preach generally in the open air, on a horse-block, or on whatever offered. At length one of the Preachers, a Mr. Williams, then zealous for God, crossed the channel, and began to preach in *Dublin*. Multitudes flocked to hear; and for some time there was such disturbance, chiefly though not wholly from the lower class, who are mostly *Romanists*. He soon formed a small Society, several of whom were happy witnesses of the truth they had heard, viz. That God does now also "give the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins," to those who repent, and believe the Gospel.

Mr. Williams wrote an account of his success to Mr. Wesley, who determined to visit *Ireland* immediately. Accordingly, on Tuesday, August the 4th. 1747, he set out from *Bristol*, and passing through *Wales*, arrived in *Dublin* on Sunday the 9th. about ten o'clock in the forenoon. A circumstance almost instantly occurred, which he considered as a token for good. We will relate it in his own words:

"Soon after we landed, hearing the bells ringing for church, I went thither directly. Mr. Lunell (the chief member of the Society) came to the Quay just after I was gone, and left word at the house where our

things

things were, "He would call again at one." He did so, and took us to his house. About three I wrote a line to the Curate of *St. Mary's*; who sent me word "He should be glad of my assistance." So I preached there (another gentleman reading prayers) to as gay and senseless a congregation as ever I saw. After sermon Mr. R. thanked me very affectionately, and desired I would favour him with my company in the morning.

"Monday 10. I met the Society at five, and at six preached, on *Repent ye, and believe the gospel*. The room, large as it was, would not contain the people, who all seemed to taste the good word.

"Between eight and nine I went to Mr. R. (the Curate of *St. Mary's*.) He professed abundance of good-will, commended my sermon in strong terms, and begged he might see me again the next morning. But at the same time he expressed the most rooted prejudice against Lay-preachers, or preaching out of a church; and said, the Archbishop of *Dublin* was resolved to suffer no such irregularities in his diocese.

"I went to our brethren, that we might pour out our souls before God. I then went straight to wait upon the Archbishop myself. But he was gone out of town.

"In the afternoon a gentleman desired to speak with me. He was troubled that it was not with him as in times past. At the age of fourteen, the power of God came mightily upon him, constraining him to rise out of bed, to pour out his prayers and tears, from a heart overflowed with love and joy in the

Holy Ghost. For some months he scarce knew whether he was in the body, continually walking and talking with God. He has now an abiding peace; but cannot rest, till the love of God again fills his heart."

The house, then used for preaching, was situate in *Marlborough-street*, and was originally designed for a *Lutheran* church. It contained about four hundred people: but four or five times the number might stand in the yard which was very spacious. An immense multitude assembled there to hear him, on Monday evening, among whom were many of the rich, and Ministers of all denominations. He spoke strongly and closely on, *The Scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe*; and observes, that no person seemed offended. All, for the present at least, seemed convinced that he *spoke as the oracles of God*.

The next day he waited on the Archbishop. They conversed for two or three hours, in which time he answered an abundance of objections. He continued to preach morning and evening to large congregations, and had more and more reason to hope they would not all be unfruitful hearers.

Having examined the Society, which then consisted of about two hundred and eighty members, and explained at large *the rules* (already mentioned) he sailed for *England*, leaving Mr. *Williams* and Mr. *Trembath* to take care of this little flock. Many of these, he observes, were strong in faith, and of an exceeding teachable spirit: and therefore on this account should



be watched over with the more care, as being almost equally susceptible of good or ill impressions.

Mr. *Charles Wesley* went over shortly after, and preached in *Dublin*, and in other parts of the kingdom, chiefly *Cork*, *Athlone*, and *Bandon* : and had reason to bless God, that in every place he saw fruit of his labours. Near *Athlone* he was in imminent hazard of his life. For, within about a mile of the town, he was way-laid by a very numerous Popish mob, which he very narrowly escaped by setting spurs to his horse. But this had a happy effect, as it prejudiced all the Protestants in his favour. Soon after this, Mr. *John Wesley* published an Address to the Roman Catholics : a very small tract ; but clearly stating the points wherein we agree, and wherein we differ ; and equally conspicuous for argument and temper.

The Society in *Dublin* enjoyed their sunshine but for a little time. A persecution commenced, on which Mr. *Trembath*, in a letter to Mr. *Wesley*, makes the following observations. “ I believe this persecution was permitted for good, that we might not trust in an arm of flesh. We thought that the Magistrates would do us justice ; but in this we were disappointed. It likewise drives us all to prayer and watchfulness, and also causes us to love each other better than ever ; so that we are like sheep driven by the wolf into the fold. When we went out, we carried our lives in our hands ; but all this did not hinder us once from meeting together at the usual hours. The Society still increased, and those who had the root in them-

elves stood like marble pillars ; and, by the grace of God, were resolved rather to die with Christ, than to deny him. All the city was in an uproar: some said, it is a shame; the men do no harm. Others said, the dogs deserve all to be hanged. Blessed be God, we walk unhurt in fire! Now we can literally say, we live by faith: and the less we have of human help, the more we shall have of divine."

Mr. *Wesley*, accompanied by Messrs *Meriton* and *Swindells*, arrived early in the spring of the following year 1748, before his brother sailed for *England*. He no longer confined himself to the house, but preached on *Oxmantown-Green*, adjoining the Barrack. He preached also at *Newgate*; and after a few days spent in *Dublin*, he visited many parts of the country. In several places he was constrained to preach in the open air, by reason of the multitude that attended. Many of the soldiers also in every place, gladly heard the word, and forty troopers were at this time members of the Society at *Philipstown*. In many of the towns in the provinces of *Leinster* and *Munster*, and in some of *Connaught*, Societies were formed, which have increased continually since that time, and have adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour. What he had to encounter, even when no violence was offered to him, we may learn from a passage in his Journal.

"Tuesday, May 3, 1748. I rode to *Birr*, twenty miles from *Athlone*; and the key of the Sessions-house not being to be found, declared *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, in the street, to a dull, rude, senseless multitude. Many laughed the greater part

of the time. Some went away just in the middle of a sentence. And yet when one cried out (a Carmelite Friar, Clerk to the Priest) "You lie, you lie:" the zealous Protestants cried out, "Knock him down." And it was no sooner said than done. I saw some bustle, but knew not what was the matter, till the whole was over."

But the Lord gave a balance to this contempt. For on the 10th, when he left *Athlone* (which he visited after *Birr*) he with much difficulty broke away from that *immeasurably loving people* (to use his own expression;) and not so soon as he imagined neither; for when he drew near to the turnpike, about a mile from the city, a multitude waited for him at the top of the hill. They fell back on each side, to make him way, and then joined, and closed him in. After singing two or three verses, he put forward, when on a sudden he was surpris'd by such a cry of men, women and children, as he had never heard before. "Yet a little while," said he, speaking of this interesting occurrence, "and we shall meet to part no more; and sorrow and fighting shall flee away for ever."

On his return to *Dublin*, he spent some days there previous to his departure for *England*. On one of these days, while he was preaching on the Green near the Barrack, a man cried out, "Aye, he is a Jesuit: that's plain." To which a Popish Priest, who happened to be near, replied, "No, he is not. I would to God he was!"

Soon after he failed, the zealous mob, who for some time had greatly incommoded those who attended at the Preaching-house in *Marlborough-street*, made an attack in form. They abused the Preacher and the congregation in a very gross manner. They then pulled down the pulpit, and carrying it with the benches, into the street, made a large fire of them, round which they shouted for several hours.

Those Preachers, who remained in the kingdom, continued their labour with much success. Mr. *Swindells* visited *Limerick*, one of the most considerable cities in the province of *Munster*. The Lord much blessed his labours there, so that a Society was soon formed; and the religious impression was so great on the inhabitants in general, that Mr. *Wesley* observes, on his visit to that city the following year, that "he found no opposition; but every one seemed to say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

But in *Cork* the scene was very different. For more than three months, a riotous mob, headed by a Ballad-singer, whose name was *Butler*, had declared open war against these new reformers, and all who attended their preaching. To give a detail of their violence would be almost too shocking to human nature. They fell upon men and women, old and young, with clubs and swords, and beat and wounded them in a dreadful manner. But they were not content with thus abusing the people when attending the preaching. They surrounded their houses, wounded their customers, broke their windows, and threatened to pull their houses down, unless they would engage

*to leave this way!* The common epithets used on those occasions by *Butler* and his party, were *heretic dog*, and *heretic b——s*: and several even of the magistrates rather encouraged, than strove to prevent these disorders.

A Mr. *Jones*, a considerable merchant, who was a member of the Society, applied to the mayor, but could obtain no redress. The house of a Mr. *Sullivan* being beset, and the mob beginning to pull it down, he applied to the mayor, who after much importunity came with him to the spot. When they were in the midst of the mob, the mayor said aloud, "It is your own fault for entertaining those Preachers: if you will turn them out of your house, I will engage there shall be no harm done; but if you will not turn them out, you must take what you get." On this the mob set up an *huzza*, and threw stones faster than before. Mr. *Sullivan* exclaimed, "This is fine usage under a Protestant Government. If I had a priest saying mass in every room of it, my house would not be touched." The mayor replied, "The priests are tolerated; but you are not. You talk too much: go in, and shut up your doors." Seeing no remedy, he did so; and the mob continued breaking the windows, and throwing stones into the house, till near twelve at night. A poor woman having expressed some concern at seeing *Butler* with his ballads in one hand and a Bible in the other, out of which he *preached* in *his* way, Mr. *Sheriff Reily* ordered his bailiff to carry her to *Bridewell*, where she was confined for two days!

After this, it was not, for those who had any regard either to their persons or goods, to oppose Mr. *Butler*. So the poor people patiently suffered whatever he or his mob thought proper to inflict upon them, 'till the assizes drew on, at which time they doubted not to find a sufficient, though late relief.

Accordingly on August 19, 1749, twenty-eight depositions (from which the above facts are taken) were laid before the Grand Jury. But they did not find any one of these bills. Instead of this, they made that memorable presentment, which is worthy to be preserved in their records to all succeeding generations.

“ We find and present *Charles Wesley*, to be a person of ill fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of his Majesty's peace, and we pray that he may be transported.

We find and present *Thomas Williams*, &c.

We find and present *Robert Swindells*, &c.

We find and present *Jonathan Reeves*, &c.

We find and present *James Wheatly*, &c.

We find and present *John Larwood*, &c.

We find and present *Joseph McAuliff*, &c.

We find and present *Charles Skelton*, &c.

We find and present *William Tooker*, &c.

We find and present *Daniel Sullivan*, &c.

*Butler* and his mob were now in higher spirits than ever. They scoured the streets, day and night; frequently hallowing as they went along, “ Five pounds

pounds for a \* swaddler's head:" Their Chief declaring to them all, " He had full liberty now, to do whatever he would."

In the midst of this brutality and injustice, religion shed her cheering light, and diffused happiness almost at the gates of the city. At *Rathcormick*, within about twelve miles of *Cork*, the Rev. Mr. *Lloyd*, the Rector, had received Mr. *Wesley* into his church, and sincerely strove to advance the good work in which he was engaged. A letter received from that Gentleman about this time, forms a striking contrast to the disorders we have been relating.

Rev. Sir,

" Your favour of the 15th instant, I received the 22d. I am more satisfied than ever, that you aim at nothing but what has an immediate tendency to the glory of God and the salvation of mankind.

" I cannot help thinking that your design, considered in this light (allowing even of some mistakes) must be deemed very praise-worthy. As to myself, in particular, I must own it gives me infinite satisfaction, to find that you have spoken to so good an effect in our town and neighbourhood. My church is more frequented than ever it was; and I have the pleasure of seeing a greater decency, and more of zeal and attention than I could have dared to promise myself; which has also this effect upon me, that I find myself

\* A name first given to Mr. *Cennick*, from his preaching on those words, " *Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.*"

myself better disposed than ever, to distribute to those who attend my ministry, such food, as may yield them comfort here, and happiness hereafter. I heartily wish this may continue, and that the people may not cool. If so, we may hope to see wickedness generally decline, and virtue and godliness take place. I see this work of yours, through God's blessing, thus successfully carried on, without any ill-will or jealousy, and could wish that all the Clergy were, in that respect, of the same mind with me.

“Your society here keeps up well; and is, I believe, considerably increased since you left it. I frequently attend the preaching; and though I am much reflected on for it, this does not in any-wise discourage me. While I am conscious to myself that I do no harm, I am careless of what men can say of me.

“*Michael Poor*, lately a *Romanist*, who is now of your society, read his recantation on Sunday last.—Pray let us know, when you or your brother intend for this kingdom and town: for be sure, none wish more sincerely to see and converse with you than I, who am sincerely,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Aug. 29, 1749.

Your very affectionate

Brother and servant,

*Richard Lloyd.*”

In consequence of the shameful refusal of justice above-mentioned, the rioters continued the same outrages during the greater part of the following winter. At the lent-assizes, the Preachers (who made up the whole



whole number then travelling in the kingdom, or at least as many of them as had ever been in *Cork* or its neighbourhood) assembled at the house of Mr. *Jones*, and went from thence in a body to the Court, accompanied by Mr. *Jones* and other reputable inhabitants. His Majesty's judge behaved as became him. He inquired where were the persons presented. On their being pointed out to him, he seemed for some time visibly agitated, and unable to proceed. He at length called for the evidence, on which *Butler* appeared. On his saying, in answer to the first question, that he was a ballad-finger, the judge desired him to withdraw, observing, That it was a pity *he* had not been presented. No other person appearing, he turned to the Preachers, and said, "Gentlemen, there is no evidence against you: you may retire: I am sorry that you have been treated so very improperly. I hope the police of this city will be better attended to for the time to come."

It was now generally believed that there would be no more riots in *Cork*. But the flame of persecution was not yet extinct. Mr. *Wesley* arrived in *Ireland* in the month of *April*, 1750; and having preached in *Dublin*, and the intermediate places, he arrived in *Cork*: and at the repeated invitation of Mr. Alderman *Pembrock* came to his house. On the morrow, being the Lord's-day, he went about eight o'clock to *Hammond's Marsh*, being informed that the usual place of preaching would by no means contain those who desired to hear. The congregation was large and attentive.

tive. A few of the rabble gathered at a distance; but by little and little they drew near, and mixed with the congregation: and he preached to as quiet and orderly an assembly, as he could have met with in any church in *England* or *Ireland*.

In the afternoon, a report being spread abroad, that the mayor designed to hinder his preaching on the *Marsh* in the evening, he desired Mr. *Skelton* and Mr. *Jones* to wait upon him, and inquire concerning it. Mr. *Skelton* asked, If Mr. *Wesley's* preaching there, would be disagreeable to him? Adding, "Sir, if it is, Mr. *Wesley* will not do it." He replied warmly, "Sir, I'll have no mobbing." Mr. *Skelton* said, "Sir, there was none this morning." He answered, "There was. Are there not churches and meeting-houses enough? I will have no more mobs and riots." Mr. *Skelton* replied, "Sir, neither Mr. *Wesley*, nor they that heard him, made either mobs or riots." He then answered plainly, "I will have no more preaching: and if Mr. *Wesley* attempts to preach, I am prepared for him."

He, however, began preaching in the house soon after five. Mr. Mayor in the mean time was walking in the Exchange, and giving orders to the town-drummers and to his serjeants—doubtless to go down and keep the peace! They accordingly came down to the house, with an innumerable mob attending them. They continued drumming, and Mr. *Wesley* continued preaching, till he had finished his discourse. When he came out, the mob immediately closed him in. Observing one of the serjeants standing by, he desired  
him

him to keep the King's peace : but he replied, " Sir, I have *no orders* to do that." As soon as he came into the street, the rabble threw whatever came to hand. But all went by him, or flew over his head ; nor did one thing touch him. He walked on straight through the midst of the rabble, looking every man before him in the face : and they opened on the right and left, till he came near *Dant's Bridge*. A large party had taken possession of this, one of whom was bawling out, " Now, hey for the Romans !" When he came up, *they* likewise shrunk back, and he walked through them to Mr. *Jenkins's* house. But a Romanist stood just within the door, and endeavoured to hinder him from going in ; till one of the mob (aiming at him, but missing) knocked down the Romanist. He then went in, and God restrained the wild beasts, so that not one attempted to follow him.

But many of the congregation were more roughly handled ; particularly Mr. *Jones*, who was covered with dirt, and escaped with his life almost by miracle. The main body of the mob then went to the house, brought out all the seats and benches, tore up the floor, the door, the frames of the windows, and whatever of wood-work remained ; part of which they carried off for their own use, and the rest they burnt in the open street.

Finding there was no probability of their dispersing, Mr. *Wesley* sent to Alderman *Pembrock*, who immediately desired Mr. Alderman *Winthrop*, his nephew, to go down to him at Mr. *Jenkins's* : with whom he walked

up

up the street, none giving him an unkind or disrespectful word.

Monday 21. He rode on to *Bandon*. From three in the afternoon till past seven, the mob of *Cork* marched in grand procession, and then burnt him in effigy near *Dant's-Bridge*.

While they were so busily employed, Mr. *Haughton*, one of the Preachers, took the opportunity of going down to *Hammond's Marsh*. He called at a friend's house there; where the good woman in great care locked him in. But observing many people were met, he threw up the sash, and preached to them out of the window. Many seemed deeply affected, even of those who had been persecutors before. And they all quietly retired to their several homes, before the mob was at leisure to attend them.

Tuesday 22. The mob and drummers were moving again, between three and four in the morning. The same evening they came down to the Marsh, but stood at a distance from Mr. *Stockdale's* house, till the drums beat, and the Mayor's serjeant beckoned to them, on which they drew up, and began the attack. The Mayor being sent for, came with a party of soldiers, and said to the mob, "Lads, once, twice, thrice, I bid you go home. Now I have done." He then went back, taking the soldiers with him. On which the mob, pursuant to their instructions, went on and broke all the glass, and most of the window-frames in pieces.

Wednesday 23. The mob was still patrolling the streets, abusing all that were called *Methodists*, and threatening

threatening to murder them, and pull down their houses, if they did not leave *this way*.

Thursday 24. They again assaulted Mr. *Stockdale's* house, broke down the boards he had nailed up against the windows, destroyed what little remained of the window-frames and shutters, and damaged a considerable part of his goods.

Friday 25. One *Roger O'Farrel* fixed up an advertisement at the public Exchange, that he was ready to head any mob, in order to pull down any house that should dare to harbour a *Swaddler*.

All this time Mr. *Wesley* enjoyed peace at *Bandon*, notwithstanding the unwearied labours, both public and private, of Dr. —, to stir up the people. But

Saturday 26. Many were under great apprehensions of what was to be done in the evening. He began preaching in the main street at the usual hour, but to more than twice the usual congregation. After he had spoken about a quarter of an hour, a Clergyman who had planted himself near him, with a very large stick in his hand, according to agreement, opened the scene. (Indeed his friends said, "he was *in drink*, or he would not have done it.") But before he had uttered many words, two or three resolute women, by main strength, pulled him into a house, and, after expostulating a little, sent him away through the garden. But here he fell violently on her that conducted him, not in anger, but love, (such as it was) so that she was constrained to repel force by force, and cuff him soundly, before he would let her go.

The next champion that appeared, was one Mr. M——, a young gentleman of the town. He was attended by two others, with pistols in their hands. But his triumph too was but short: for some of the people quickly bore him away, though with much gentleness and civility.

The third came on with far greater fury: but he was encountered by a butcher of the town, (not one of the society) who used him as he would an ox, bestowing one or two hearty blows upon his head. This cooled his courage, especially as none took his part. So Mr. *Wesley* quietly finished his discourse.

Sunday 27. At eight in the evening, he was favoured with such a glorious shower as usually follows a storm. After the church-service, he began preaching again on, *The Scripture hath concluded all under sin*. In the evening a large multitude flocked together; such a congregation was probably never before seen in *Bandon*; and the fear of God was in the midst. A solemn awe seemed to run through the whole multitude, while he enlarged on, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

In the midst of the above riots, he wrote the following hymn, which is so excellent, and was so suitable to the time in which it was composed, that, though it is probably known to the majority of our readers, we cannot refrain from adorning our history with it: and more particularly, as it will give an admirable view of the spirit, in which he bore this unjust and cruel treatment; as well as afford another instance of his genius for poetry, though he chose to give the laurel to his brother.

“ Ye

“ YE simple souls, that stray  
 Far from the path of peace,  
 (That unfrequented way  
 To life and happiness)  
 How long will ye your folly love,  
 And throug the downward road,  
 And hate the wisdom from above,  
 And mock the sons of God ?

Madness and misery  
 Ye count our life beneath ;  
 And nothing great can see,  
 Or glorious in our death :  
 As born to suffer and to grieve,  
 Beneath your feet we lie,  
 And utterly contemn'd we live,  
 And unlamented die.

Poor pensive sojourners,  
 O'erwhelm'd with griefs and woes ;  
 Perplex'd with needless fears,  
 And pleasure's mortal foes :  
 More irksome than a gaping tomb,  
 Our sight ye cannot bear,  
 Wrapt in the melancholy gloom  
 Of fanciful despair.

So wretched, and obscure,  
 The men whom ye despise ;  
 So foolish, weak, and poor,  
 Above your scorn we rise ;  
 Our conscience in the Holy Ghost  
 Can witness better things ;  
 For He whose blood is all our boast,  
 - Hath made us priests and kings.

Riches unsearchable

In Jesu's love we know,  
And pleasures from the well  
Of life our souls o'erflow.

From him the spirit we receive  
Of wisdom, love, and power;  
And alway sorrowful we live,  
Rejoicing evermore.

Angels our servants are,

And keep in all our ways,  
And in their hands they bear  
The sacred sons of grace:

Our guardians to that heavenly bliss,  
They all our steps attend;  
And God himself our Father is,  
And Jesus is our Friend.

With him we walk in white,

We in his image shine;  
Our robes are robes of light,  
Our righteousness divine:

On all the groveling kings of earth  
With pity we look down,  
And claim in virtue of our birth  
A never-fading crown."

Shortly after these riots in *Cork*, *Butler* went to *Waterford*, and raised disturbances in that city. But happening to quarrel with some who were as ready to shed blood as himself, his right arm was cut off in the fray. Being thus disabled, the wretch dragged on the remainder of his life in unpitied misery. His fellow-rioters at *Cork*, were intimidated by the soldiers in garrison, many of whom began now to attend the preaching.



preaching. At length peace was restored; and the next time Mr. *Wesley* visited that city, he preached without disturbance. A large Preaching-house was soon after built, in which the people quietly assembled.

There are few places, where religion has prospered more than in *Cork*. *Being reviled for the name of Christ, the Spirit of glory and of God has rested upon them*: and many have been the living and dying witnesses of the power of true religion. The principal inhabitants have been long convinced of the folly and wickedness of the authors and encouragers of those persecutions: and on a late visit, the Mayor invited Mr. *Wesley* to the Mansion-house, and seemed to consider his company as an honour.

Several circuits were now formed. The Preachers who came over with Mr. *Wesley* from time to time, visited the Societies regularly, and preached in new places, as the way was opened for them. Several Preachers were also raised up among the natives: men, who, after they had found acceptance with God themselves, and seen the deplorable state of the people around them, had no rest till they declared the way of salvation. Some of these had been *Romanists*, and for many years depended for salvation on the pageantry and forms, used by men as wicked as themselves. These were as flames of fire, when they found the *new and living way* of faith in Christ, and love to God and man. They laboured and suffered, if by any means they might save souls from death.

The late Mr. *Thomas Walsh* was an eminent instance of this kind. His conversion was conspicuous; his

communion with God was deep and solid, and his labours and sufferings remarkable. We doubt not, but a short extract from the Journal of this man of God will be acceptable to our readers, especially as it clearly shews what the Preachers of that day had to encounter, in testifying the gospel of the grace of God.

“ Thursday, January 4, 1750. With much weakness of body, I preached this morning, and soon after set out for *Roscrea*. About a mile from the town, I met a large company, armed with clubs. Seventy-eight men were sworn upon the occasion. At the first sight of them, I was a little daunted; but I prayed to the Lord for direction, and was strengthened. They compelled me to alight, saying, they would bring a Minister of the Church of *England* and a *Romish* Priest to talk with me. I let them know I contended with no man concerning opinions, nor preached against any particular church, but against sin and wickedness in *all*. I said, supposing three persons among you of different denominations; it may be a Churchman, a Quaker, and a Romanist, sitting down and drinking to excess, begin to dispute, each affirming, that his was the best religion: where is the religion of all these men? Surely they are without any, unless it be that of *Belial*. They are of their father the devil, while his works they do. And if they live and die in this condition, hell must be their eternal portion. This they could not gainsay.

“ After some further discourse on the design of my coming to preach the gospel to them, and appealing

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